

Greetings Travelers!

Time is quickly passing and soon you all will be thinking about what to pack for your upcoming adventure to South Africa! I have put together a little information package for you to help you with your planning and perhaps with your curiosity about the incredible places you are going.

Please also see the other attachment which provides detailed information about your Energy Excursions arranged by your committee.

Some of the most common questions asked so far...

Vaccinations

There are **no REQUIRED vaccinations for entry into South Africa**. Yellow Fever certificate is only required if you are coming from, or transiting through, a region with Yellow Fever, it is not present in South Africa. So now that you are in South Africa, what precautions are **recommended?** Always when traveling – **HEPATITIS A & B**, and if you need boosters of the common ones such as **Typhoid and Diphtheria, cholera** that wouldn't hurt. **Tetanus** is always a good idea, traveling or not. Rabies is on the recommend list for South Africa but unless you are planning to get up close and personal with the animals, or fight the baboon for your sandwich, you shouldn't have to be too concerned about this. I also understand from some of you that it is quite expensive! The last item in my personal opinion is **REQUIRED**. We will be entering **Malaria** zones on this trip, potentially in Kruger National Park, and for sure in Zimbabwe. There is a simple precaution against malaria in the form of tablets that you take prior to entering the malaria zone and continue on until a specified time after leaving the area. Despite all the information I have provided here, it doesn't take the place of having a conversation with your personal physician, or contact at your travel clinic, who know your personal health situation and can advise you the best. As some of these vaccinations require a series of shots, if you haven't already had your consultation, I highly recommend that you put that on your list of things to do right away.

Luggage (notes from Collette Vacations)

Please consult with your scheduled airline (United, South African Airways, AC, or British Airways) as luggage fees and restrictions vary by carrier and destination. Due to the limited motorcoach capacity, **one checked luggage (62 inches in length, height and width; weight not to exceed 23kg/50lbs) is allowed on tour.**

We also encourage just **one carry-on bag per individual** (for carrying items that might be needed during the day's sightseeing excursions or camera/video equipment). Dimensions for carry-ons should not exceed **17" x 12" x 10"**, allowing it to fit under the seat or in the overhead rack of most motor coaches. If you exceed the limit of 2 bags, we cannot guarantee that your additional luggage will be able to fit in the touring vehicle. Storage or shipment of additional luggage will be at your own expense. If we are able to accommodate your additional luggage, we will assess a fee of 4 USD per bag per hotel.

We (Collette Vacations) cannot assume liability or accept claims for loss or damage to luggage and personal effects due to breakage, theft or normal wear and tear that results from hotel, airline and group carrier handling. It is in your best interest to have adequate insurance (such as our comprehensive "No Worries Travel Protection") to cover these eventualities. For your inter-flights within Africa, there is a maximum of 20 kilos (approximately 44lbs) for your carry-on bag. Most airlines charge by weight over instead of a flat over weight fee for each leg of the journey.

Frequent Flyer Miles

If you are a member of a participating frequent flyer program, provide the number upon booking and retain the passenger copy of your ticket and boarding pass to ensure that you receive proper credit of your mileage. Some air tickets are not eligible for mileage accrual.

Smoking Restrictions: Our tours are non-smoking throughout. If you require a smoking room, please alert your agent upon tour booking. Please be mindful of locations where smoking is prohibited: the motorcoach, at dining venues and other restricted areas on tour including most hotels. Customers are responsible for any fines incurred for failure to comply with smoking restrictions.

Currency – South Africa - South Africa's currency is the rand, which offers visitors great value for money. The rand comes in a range of coins (R1 = 100 cents) and note denominations of R10, R50, R100. **Presently 1 Canadian dollar is equal to ~9.5 South African Rand (ZAR)**

Import-Export rules:

Import: NON-RESIDENTS: local currency: ZAR 5,000.00 In cash. Foreign currencies and traveller's cheques: unlimited, provided declared upon arrival.

Export: NON-RESIDENTS: local currency: ZAR 5,000.00 in cash. Foreign currencies and traveller's cheques (also in ZAR): up to the amounts imported and declared and provided departure is within 12 months after entry.

Your personal bank card may work at local ATM machines in the destination you are traveling to and would dispense local currency. Please contact your bank to determine if this option is available, that your PIN number will be accepted, to inform them that you are traveling and to determine if any charges apply for each transaction.

You may exchange your money at airports, banks, and exchange bureaus. **Most hotels in South Africa do not offer foreign exchange, and if they do it is for small sums of money.** In most cases, a commission charge will be assessed to exchange your money. **The city generally offers a better currency exchange rate than airports.**

We recommend carrying **only a few major credit cards**. Credit card purchases often provide an extra guarantee on your purchase (check with your specific credit card company for details and fees). It is advisable to contact any credit card company you intend utilizing while on tour before you depart to notify them where you will be traveling, to avoid any rejection of services.

Local currency will be needed for lunches, gratuities and small items such as postcards and postage and for shopping in the markets.

If optional tours are made available to purchase, please note that credit cards must have an expiration date of greater than 30 days from the start of the tour.

Currency – Zimbabwe:

Currency **Import** regulations: Local currency Zimbabwe Dollar-ZWR no longer in circulation, USD widely in use. GBP, EUR and ZAR also accepted): foreign currencies: unlimited. However, amounts of USD 10,000.00 (or equivalent) must be declared.

Currency **Export** regulations: Local currency (Zimbabwe Dollar-ZWR no longer in circulation, USD widely in use. GBP, EUR and ZAR also accepted). Foreign currencies: **Non-residents:** limited to the amount imported. Amounts over USD 10,000.00 (or equivalent) must be declared.

Currency – Botswana:

Local currency (Botswana Pula-BWP) and foreign currencies: no restrictions, provided declared.

Travel Visas and Departure Taxes:

South Africa:

Canadians must present a passport to visit South Africa, which must be valid for at least 30 days beyond the date of expected departure from that country. However, it is recommended that your passport is valid for at least six months beyond the date of your departure. **Canadians arriving in South Africa with a full passport, such as a passport that does not contain at least two empty visa pages for the necessary South African Temporary Resident Permit or visa, will be denied entry.** You can also be denied boarding the aircraft at the point of departure if the necessary visa pages are not available. **Tourist visa (90 days or less): Not required**

There are no embarkation (departure) taxes for South Africa.

Zimbabwe:

Canadians must present a passport to visit Zimbabwe, which must be valid for at least six months beyond the date of expected departure from that country and have two blank pages. Canadians must also be in possession of a visa. A single entry visa may be obtained at a port of entry into Zimbabwe for US\$75. *Passengers purchasing Chobe need to purchase two single entry visas or a double entry for \$130. Visas are also available in advance through the consulate or visa processing company for an additional service fee. I have written (and still await a reply) to the consulate to determine if there is a more efficient way to handle our group. I'll keep you posted! **Tourist visa: Required**

Zimbabwe Tax: Airport Embarkation Tax- I am still waiting for confirmation if any of these charges have been included on our air ticket. But in the meantime, you won't be surprised at the airport.

1. Airport Passenger Service Charge of USD 20.- is levied on passengers embarking on international flights.

Place of payment: Airport of departure.

Exempt:

1. Children under 2 years of age.
2. Crew travelling on duty.
3. Transit passengers continuing their journey from same airport within 24 hours.

2. Departure Tax is levied on passengers departing on:

- a. Domestic flights: USD 5.-
- b. International flights: USD 30.- (levied upon ticket issuance).

Place of payment: Airport of departure.

Botswana:

Canadians must present a valid passport to visit Botswana. Your passport must be valid for at least six months beyond the date of your expected departure from that country. **Tourist visa: Not required (for stays up to 90 days)**

Clothing & Packing Tips

As you prepare to explore South Africa, enjoy a casual dress style and be sure to pack comfortable walking shoes. Lightweight cottons are suggested for shorts, slacks, tee shirts, as well as hats and one warm jacket and/or sweatshirt. It is recommended to bring clothing that may be worn in layers which may be added or removed as the temperature changes. You may want to pack a hat and sunscreen as well.

If you are taking **prescription medication**, please be sure to take an adequate supply for your tour and a few additional days, in original prescription containers. Medication should be packed in your carry-on baggage. Do not place it in your checked luggage. You may want to carry an extra prescription in a separate bag in case medication is lost.

A Few Fast Facts About South Africa:

Time Zone

South Africa is 7 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time, 6 hours during daylight savings.

Electricity

The South African electricity supply is 220/230 volts AC 50 HZ. With a few exceptions (in deep rural areas) electricity is available almost everywhere. An adaptor (which changes the physical plug) and/or converter (which changes the electric current) are necessary if you plan to use an appliance with voltage different from the standard within the country you are visiting. Please note, if your appliance has dual voltage you may still need an adaptor for the plug.

When packing your electronic items for travel, please review the converter electric current level to make sure it is the same or greater than the items you are planning on using. If you plan on utilizing or transporting a sleep apnea machine, please remember to pack an extension cord and adapter plug to ensure proper function.

Elevation

Johannesburg has an elevation of 6,000 ft above sea level.

Geography

Situated at the southern tip of Africa, South Africa has a landmass of 1 233 404 km² edged on 3 sides by a nearly 3000km coastline washed by the Indian Ocean and the Atlantic. It is bordered in the north by Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe and Mozambique, and also wraps itself around two independent countries, the Lesotho and Swaziland.

Capitals:

South Africa has 3 capitals: Cape Town (Legislative), Pretoria (Administrative and Bloemfontein (Judicial).

Political system:

A well-known fact about South Africa is that since 1994 we have enjoyed democratic government, the apartheid policies of the past overthrown. Our constitution is regarded as an example to the world, and enshrines a wide scope of human rights

protected by an independent judiciary. The country is headed by a State President, Jacob Zuma, of the African National Congress (ANC).

Economy:

A lesser-known fact on South Africa is that it has achieved steady economic growth in gross domestic product (GDP) since the late 90s. The country, regarded as an emerging market, has a well developed financial sector and active stock exchange. Financial policies have focused on building solid macroeconomic structures. The country's central bank is the Reserve Bank.

Tourism:

Since the demise of apartheid, international tourist arrivals have surged, making tourism one of the fastest growing sectors. The tourism industry is well-established with an exciting sector of emerging entrepreneurs. The country is strong on adventure, sport, nature and wildlife travel and is a pioneer and global leader in responsible tourism.

Population:

The South African population of more than 47m people is extremely diverse. Africans are in the majority, approx. 80% of the population, followed by the white population approx. 4,4m; the coloured population approx. 4,2 million and the Indian/Asian population at approx. 1,2m.

Climate: See a couple average temperature/rainfall charts below to give you some ideas.

South Africa has a temperate climate and is known for its long sunny days, hence the title: 'Sunny South Africa'. Most of the provinces have summer rainfall, except for the Western Cape (winter rainfall). Winter is from May to August; Spring from September to October; Summer from November to February and Autumn is from March to April.

Communications:

South Africa has an exceptionally well-developed communications infrastructure. A number of cell-phone providers provide national coverage and there are well-established landline phone networks. Internet and Wi-Fi are easily accessible in most urban areas.

Provinces:

There are 9 provinces in South Africa, namely: Eastern Cape, Free State, Western Cape, KwaZulu-Natal; Gauteng, North West, Northern Cape, Limpopo and Mpumalanga

National Symbols:

The South African flag is a much-loved symbol of patriotism and other significant national emblems include: National bird: blue crane; National animal: the springbok; National fish: galjoen; National flower: protea and National tree: the yellowwood.

Languages:

South Africa is a multi-lingual country and there are 11 official languages including: English, Afrikaans, isiNdebele, isiXhosa, isiZulu, Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, Siswati, Tshivenda and Xitsonga. Composed by Enoch Sontonga in 1899, the Xhosa hymn 'Nkosi Sikelele' iAfrika is South Africa's national anthem

Religions:

Almost 80% of South Africa's population is Christian. Other major religious groups include Hindus, Muslims, Jews and Buddhists. A minority don't belong to any of the major religions. The Constitution guarantees freedom of worship.

Water:

Tap water is potable. However, ensure that you take bottled water with you when travelling to remote rural areas and the bush.

Animals and Plants:

South Africa has been declared one of the 18 megadiverse destinations in the world. As a pioneer and leader in responsible tourism, South Africa has numerous conservation projects to protect its natural heritage - travellers can support and take part in many of these projects. The country is home to the famous Big Five (rhino, elephant, lion, leopard and buffalo).

Airports:

The 3 major international airports in South Africa are: OR Tambo International Airport (Johannesburg), Cape Town

international Airport and King Shaka International Airport (Durban) as well as 90 regional airports including the Kruger Mpumalanga International Airport (KMIA) in Nelspruit.

Entry requirements:

South Africa requires a valid yellow fever certificate from all foreign visitors and citizens over 1 year of age travelling from an infected area or having been in transit through infected areas. For visa requirements, please contact your nearest South African diplomatic mission.

Health and safety:

South Africa is well-known for its medical skill since Professor Christiaan Barnard performed the first successful heart transplant in 1967. There are many world-class private hospitals and medical centres around the country, especially in the urban centres. Most of South Africa is malaria-free, but always check with the game reserves you're planning to visit and take precautions if necessary. Make sure you have the latest safety tips from the establishment where you will be staying and take common sense precautions as you would when travelling.

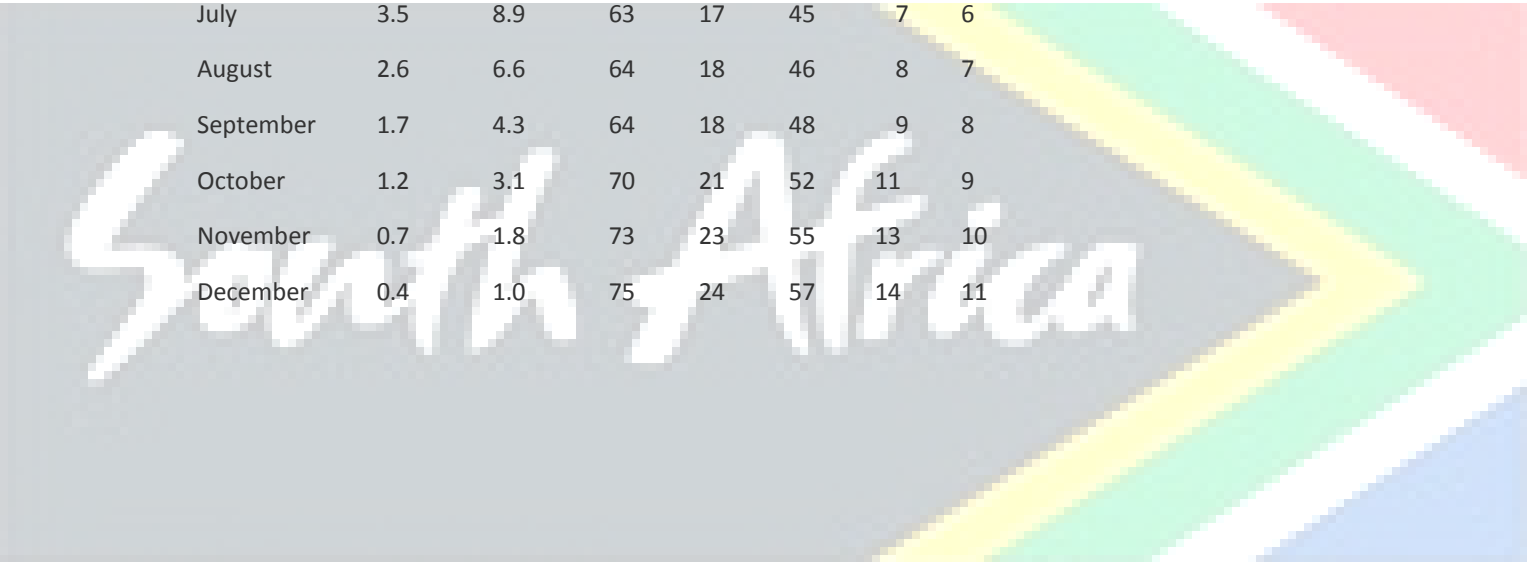
Johannesburg's Climate

Month	Precipitation		Maximum		Minimum		Average Sunlight
	in	cm	F	C	F	C	Hours
January	4.5	11.4	79	26	57	14	8
February	4.3	10.9	77	25	57	14	8
March	3.5	8.9	75	24	55	13	8
April	1.5	3.8	72	22	50	10	8
May	1.0	2.5	66	19	43	6	9
June	0.3	0.8	63	17	39	4	9
July	0.3	0.8	63	17	39	4	9
August	0.3	0.8	68	20	43	6	10
September	0.9	2.3	73	23	48	9	10
October	2.2	5.6	77	25	54	12	9
November	4.2	10.7	77	25	55	13	8
December	4.9	12.5	79	26	57	14	8

Cape Town's Climate

Month	Precipitation		Maximum		Minimum		Average Sunlight Hours
	in	cm	F	C	F	C	
January	0.6	1.5	79	26	61	16	11
February	0.3	0.8	79	26	61	16	10
March	0.7	1.8	77	25	57	14	9
April	1.9	4.8	72	22	53	12	8
May	3.1	7.9	66	19	48	9	6
June	3.3	8.4	64	18	46	8	6
July	3.5	8.9	63	17	45	7	6
August	2.6	6.6	64	18	46	8	7
September	1.7	4.3	64	18	48	9	8
October	1.2	3.1	70	21	52	11	9
November	0.7	1.8	73	23	55	13	10
December	0.4	1.0	75	24	57	14	11

South Africa



It's Possible

Victoria Falls – could be a little warm while we're there!

Temperature and Rainfall

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>Ave max temp °C</i>	30	29	30	29	27	25	25	28	32	33	32	30
<i>Ave min temp °C</i>	18	18	17	14	10	6	6	8	13	17	18	18
<i>Ave rainfall (mm)</i>	168	126	70	24	3	1	0	0	2	27	64	174
<i>Mean no. of rain days</i>	14	10	7	2	1	0	0	0	1	4	8	13