

Travel Tips

Spectacular South Africa

Listed below is important information to assist you in preparing for your upcoming trip. This information provided will help you have a more enjoyable experience while you are on your tour.

Included Features

The following are included in your tour package: transportation via motorcoach, accommodations, hotel luggage handling, meals, sightseeing, admission charges (as outlined in your itinerary), and applicable gratuities for bellmen, doormen and dining room wait staff. Customary gratuities for hotel housekeeping staff, local sightseeing guides, drivers and tour managers have not been included.

Tour Manager

We pride ourselves on having the best-trained and most experienced tour managers in the industry. Gratuities should be extended on a voluntary basis and should be in direct proportion to the level of professionalism and personal service extended to you throughout the tour. Past experience has shown that a guideline of 4-6 USD per person for each traveling day is a customary amount for the tour manager. A customary amount of 3-5 USD per person per day is suggested for the driver.

Name Badges

Collette Vacations provides name badges to our travelers in order to facilitate conversation among fellow travelers. The name badge also ensures that a Collette Vacations representative can easily recognize you, especially at airports upon arrival.

Luggage

Please consult with your scheduled airline 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.

Please remember to label your luggage and important items with your name, home address and telephone number.

We recommend labeling your luggage on both the outside and inside of the bag.

Please attach only the plastic luggage tag included in this mailing to your checked luggage before checking in for your flight.

Your paper luggage tag is to be attached at the first hotel.

We 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.

Transportation

Flight Information, Departure Taxes & Fees

Land Only Vacations:

If you chose to purchase a land only vacation, pay particular attention to flight segments that occur during the tour which are not included in your land only rate.

You must purchase these internal flight segments and the schedule must match the flights that we utilize on the

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group tour.

Please provide us with your flight schedules for the entire tour six weeks prior to departure so we may secure services if you purchased transfers from us, as well as maintain emergency contact.

Air Inclusive Vacations

Air inclusive vacations cover air transport to and from your origin gateway as well as all internal air segments on tour.

In order to comply with Homeland Security's "Secure Flight" mandate, all passengers must provide full name, date of birth and gender at time of reservation. Your airline ticket must match the name on your valid, non-expired, government issued photo ID to be shown at the airport (including middle name, first or middle initial).

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.

Whenever possible, we will add charges for air departure taxes to your invoice. Some international arrival and departure fees are not included in your air ticket and must be paid by you on tour in local currency.

Transfers

We are pleased to provide you with complimentary airport to hotel, and hotel to airport transfers at the beginning and end of an escorted tour when you purchase an air-inclusive vacation.

Land-only clients who have purchased round trip transfers will be accommodated at the same times as air inclusive clients.

Arrival meeting locations and transfer departure times are provided on your document booklets.

On some programs there may be a waiting period at the airport due to varying flight schedules of other arriving passengers.

If you have secured your own transfer, you may meet your tour manager at the hotel.

Motorcoach Information: We do not own or operate vehicles. We charter quality coaches that are temperature controlled vehicles. Coach size may vary based upon the number of tour patrons. In certain countries, lavatory equipped motorcoaches are not available or the lavatory is for emergency use only.

Frequent stops will be made en route for comfort and convenience.

Seat Rotation: Seats are rotated for the benefit of our tour guests. This fosters communication and enables our guests to enjoy a variety of vantage points on the motorcoach. Guests will rotate seats at least once a day, as directed by the tour manager. In fairness to all, there will be no exceptions to this policy.

ADA

The Americans with Disabilities Act does not apply outside of the United States.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, we will make reasonable efforts to accommodate the special needs of tour participants. Persons requiring individual assistance must be accompanied by a companion who is capable of, and totally responsible for, providing the necessary assistance. Neither our personnel nor its suppliers may physically lift or assist clients onto transportation vehicles.

We regret that we cannot provide individual assistance to a tour member who has special mobility, dietary or other like needs.

Smoking

Smoking Restrictions:

Our tours are non-smoking throughout.

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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.

Accommodations

On some programs, there are a limited number of single and triple rooms. Double rooms usually consist of 2 beds. Triple rooms are normally a standard double room with 2 beds. A cot or rollaway bed may be added to the double room at some hotels, based on room size and fire codes. When triples are not available, appropriate charges for single and twin accommodations will be assessed.

We make every effort to accommodate your specific requests and forward them to the hotels. These requests cannot be guaranteed as hotels may not always be able to honor them.

Check-in times are set by individual hotel properties and vary by hotel. Depending on your arrival time, there may be a delay in gaining access to your room as most hotels offer afternoon check-in. We ask guests to observe check-out times at all properties as designated by the hotel.

Some hotels require a credit card imprint or your passport information upon check-in in order to activate telephones in the rooms and for potential incidental charges. Most hotels charge an access fee for using phones in hotel rooms. Please check with the front desk personnel at each hotel for specific policies.

Hotel membership programs are not applicable.

In certain countries, hotel rooms tend to be smaller than standard U.S. accommodations. Please be assured that we use high quality properties throughout each country.

Helpful Hints

Bring a copy of your passport/identification and pack it separately from the original.

Leave a copy of your tour itinerary at home with your emergency contact and a copy of your passport.

Remember when flying you can only take one quart size bag with no more than 3 ounces of any one liquid.

Liquids that do not fit in the one quart size bag and are larger than 3 ounces will be discarded by security.

Remember to hydrate and get up and stretch while flying.

If you are considering using your cell phone while traveling internationally, you should check with your cell provider concerning their access and charges for overseas calls, texting and emailing for the specific destination you are traveling to.

Bring a camera, memory cards, film, and batteries and be sure to bring enough photography supplies for your entire trip. If you have a video camera, bring an extra battery, plus proper recharging equipment. Due to security screening, we recommend storing your equipment in your carry-on luggage.

Bring a travel alarm clock, travel sewing kit and an alcohol based gel hand sanitizer when soap and water is not accessible.

Pack items that may leak in plastic bags. Do not pack any articles of value in your checked luggage.

As a precaution, we suggest that you divide the contents of your suitcase with your traveling companion.

Avoid over packing and leave room for souvenirs that you plan to take back home.

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.

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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.

Meals

Most meals are included as indicated in your document itinerary.

Guests with special dietary requirements must advise their travel counselor at the time of booking and also the tour manager upon joining the tour.

When information is provided, every effort will be made to accommodate these requests.

Please be advised that the average cost of meals (not inclusive of tax and gratuity) that are not included in your tour are as follows: lunch 10 to 15 USD and dinner 10 to 20 USD.

Local Cuisine

You're in for a treat as you sample the truly unique flavors of Africa. The cuisine is sometimes called "rainbow cuisine", as it enjoys a variety of multicultural sources. Eating and drinking in South Africa is a culinary experience not to be missed. Seafood is popular here – particularly red roman, hake, cod, sole, pilchards oysters, mussels, calamari, shrimps and spiny rock lobster – which is called crayfish by locals. Ostrich – a popular meat found on local tables – is cooked with a variety of methods from stewing and filleting to grilling as well. South Africa is known for its wines; mostly in the Western Cape region, and has a rich history in the winelands region. For those of you who prefer beer, South Africa is also known for its breweries; the most popular brand being Castle as well as Mitchel's.

Local Guides

In order to further enhance your experience of this destination, two local guides have been arranged throughout this tour. Customary gratuities for these guides are not included in the cost of the tour. Gratuities should be extended on a voluntary and individual basis at a suggested amount of 1-2 USD per day, per guide. Your tour manager will review customary tipping amounts and timing with you when you are on your tour.

Currency

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.

The local currency of South Africa is the South African Rand.

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.

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Arrival Day Suggestions

Due to varied flight schedules and different arrival times of our tour guests, you may have time for some independent exploration of Johannesburg. Perhaps you'll want to see some of Africa's Wild life in Lion Park. Neither a zoo nor a reserve, Lion Park does offer you the opportunity to view Lions, Zebras, Antelope and Giraffes. Perhaps visit the Johannesburg Zoo for a different wildlife experience. If you are interested in learning more about the new and old cultures in South Africa, a visit to Lesedi Cultural Village is a must. Here you will experience five traditional homesteads including Zulu, Xhosa, Pedi, Basotho and Ndebele. Experience the theatre as well as a tour though the various villages. Wondercave, the third largest cave in South Africa, is a stunning historic cave located in the heart of the city. If you are looking for an indoor experience, the Museum of Africa offers a variety of exhibits, most of which focus on the Africa's rich history. Also, visit Nelson Mandela Square.

Shopping

If you purchase DVDs or other electronic equipment abroad, check that it is compatible with your PC or other home equipment.

One of the best parts of traveling is coming back home with souvenirs that really reflect the place you've just been. In South Africa you'll find a plethora of cultural products like carvings of animals made of soap stone, ebony, or other woods; wooden masks, bowls, jewelry and chess sets; jewelry made of precious stones like diamonds and semi precious stones such as malachite, lapis and topaz; native art paintings, murals and sculptures; safari clothing; and tie-dyed prints of animals.

Please note that there are strict laws forbidding the purchase and sale of ivory and other items made from animals. Ostrich eggs presently are not allowed to come in to the US. Please refrain from any purchase (Ostrich egg lamp covers, egg bowls etc.) as they will be taken away from you upon your arrival in the United States. Ostrich feathers and leather are fine to purchase.

Time Zone

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

Electricity

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.

Reading List

Interested in reading about your destination before you depart? We have pre-selected travel guides, novels and books on history, nature and art to help enhance your total vacation experience. You can access the complete list by typing the following into your web browser. Select the region of the world to find your tour:

<http://www.longitudebooks.com/find/d/77/r/CV/mcms.html>

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Average Temperatures

Cape Town	Highs		Lows		Rainfall	
	F	C	F	C	Inches	Centimeters
January	77	25	63	17	0.60	2.00
February	78	26	63	17	0.60	2.00
March	76	24	60	16	0.90	2.00
April	72	22	56	13	1.90	5.00
May	67	19	52	11	3.60	9.00
June	64	18	48	9	4.10	10.00
July	62	17	47	8	3.60	9.00
August	63	17	48	9	3.30	8.00
September	65	18	51	11	2.10	5.00
October	69	21	54	12	1.60	4.00
November	70	21	58	14	1.00	3.00
December	75	24	61	16	0.80	2.00

Johannesburg	Highs		Lows		Rainfall	
	F	C	F	C	Inches	Centimeters
January	77	25	60	16	4.90	12.00
February	75	24	59	15	3.80	10.00
March	74	23	58	14	3.30	8.00
April	69	21	56	13	2.10	5.00
May	66	19	48	9	0.70	2.00
June	60	16	42	6	0.30	1.00
July	61	16	42	6	0.20	1.00
August	65	18	46	8	0.20	1.00
September	71	22	51	11	1.10	3.00
October	73	23	54	12	2.90	7.00
November	74	23	56	13	4.70	12.00
December	76	24	59	15	4.30	11.00

Knysna	Highs		Lows		Rainfall	
	F	C	F	C	Inches	Centimeters
January	76	24	66	19	1.30	3.00
February	76	24	67	19	1.40	4.00
March	75	24	64	18	2.00	5.00
April	74	23	60	16	1.90	5.00

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May	70	21	55	13	2.40	6.00
June	68	20	51	11	2.00	5.00
July	66	19	50	10	2.00	5.00
August	66	19	52	11	2.20	6.00
September	66	19	55	13	2.40	6.00
October	68	20	57	14	2.30	6.00
November	71	22	60	16	2.20	6.00
December	74	23	64	18	1.60	4.00

Port Elizabeth	Highs		Lows		Rainfall	
	F	C	F	C	Inches	Centimeters
January	82	28	63	17	1.70	4.00
February	85	29	64	18	1.11	3.00
March	81	27	62	17	2.73	7.00
April	78	26	57	14	1.54	4.00
May	75	24	52	11	0.59	1.00
June	72	22	46	8	0.38	1.00
July	71	22	46	8	1.09	3.00
August	72	22	47	8	1.76	4.00
September	73	23	50	10	1.08	3.00
October	77	25	55	13	0.94	2.00
November	79	26	58	14	1.84	5.00
December	82	28	62	17	2.14	5.00

Sandton	Highs		Lows		Rainfall	
	F	C	F	C	Inches	Centimeters
January	78	26	58	14	3.73	9.00
February	78	26	58	14	3.91	10.00
March	76	24	56	13	3.22	8.00
April	72	22	51	11	1.15	3.00
May	67	19	45	7	0.59	1.00
June	62	17	39	4	0.28	1.00
July	62	17	38	3	0.10	0.00
August	67	19	43	6	0.27	1.00
September	73	23	49	9	0.94	2.00
October	76	24	52	11	2.56	7.00
November	76	24	55	13	3.12	8.00
December	77	25	57	14	4.07	10.00

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Soweto	Highs		Lows		Rainfall	
	F	C	F	C	Inches	Centimeters
	January	78	26	58	14	3.73
February	78	26	58	14	3.91	10.00
March	76	24	56	13	3.22	8.00
April	72	22	51	11	1.15	3.00
May	67	19	45	7	0.59	1.00
June	62	17	39	4	0.28	1.00
July	67	19	38	3	0.10	0.00
August	73	23	43	6	0.27	1.00
September	76	24	49	9	0.94	2.00
October	76	24	52	11	2.56	7.00
November	77	25	55	13	3.12	8.00
December	77	25	57	14	4.07	10.00

Stellenbosch	Highs		Lows		Rainfall	
	F	C	F	C	Inches	Centimeters
	January	79	26	61	16	0.30
February	80	27	61	16	0.36	1.00
March	78	26	58	14	0.44	1.00
April	74	23	54	12	1.56	4.00
May	69	21	50	10	1.95	5.00
June	65	18	46	8	2.81	7.00
July	64	18	45	7	2.87	7.00
August	65	18	46	8	2.22	6.00
September	67	19	49	9	1.33	3.00
October	71	22	52	11	0.94	2.00
November	74	23	56	13	0.49	1.00
December	77	25	60	16	0.46	1.00