

TRAVEL TIPS



TRANSPORTATION

Driving

- ✓ An International Driving Permit is recommended (valid driver's licences are accepted, provided they have a clear photograph and English print).
- ✓ South Africans drive on the left hand side of the road.
- ✓ Wearing a seatbelt is compulsory and strictly enforced by law.
- ✓ Urban areas 60 km/h (35 mph), rural areas 100 km/h (60 mph), and freeways 120 km/h (75 mph).
- ✓ Road signs are in English and distances are indicated in metres and kilometres.
- ✓ Toll fees are payable on some of the major highways

Caution

General traffic is relatively light, except during peak hours, which sometimes tempts drivers to speed. The accident rate is therefore high, especially during peak holiday seasons. Pedestrians are also apt to jaywalk, even on freeways, and drivers should be careful, especially at night. Some rural roads are not in peak condition but road signs will warn drivers of danger. Another danger on rural roads is the presence of people and animals such as sheep and goats and in some areas, wild animals. Drivers need to be extremely careful, especially in areas where rural communities are established.

Public Transport

South Africa does not have a well-developed public transport system. All the cities have a municipal bus service, which runs according to an established schedule, but only until a certain time of night. The service is infrequent and even more limited over the weekends and public holidays. Towns do not offer a municipal bus service.

Taxi's

There are mainly two types of taxis in South Africa. Metered taxis are more expensive and to be found mainly in the cities although some small towns may have a limited number. They cannot be hailed from the street and must either be ordered by phone or at the taxi ranks, which are scarce. Minibus taxis are the cheapest but also the most uncomfortable. Violence connected with minibus taxis and a relatively high accident rate makes this the least preferable mode of transport.

*Enjoy
the warm welcome of a
rainbow nation*



WEATHER

Climate

Seasons are opposite to those of the Northern Hemisphere. Warm temperate conditions are typical of South Africa, making it a popular destination for sunshine-seekers. South Africa is renowned for almost seven months of sunshine.

From May to August, temperatures drop. However, generally speaking, April and May are the most temperate months. In certain areas, however, notably the hot, humid KwaZulu-Natal coast, Mpumalanga and the Northern Province, June and July are the ideal holiday months. The wide expanses of ocean on three sides of South Africa have a moderating influence on its climate.

More apparent, however, are the effects of the warm Agulhas and cold Benguela currents along the east and west coasts, respectively. While Durban (east coast) and Port Nolloth (West Coast) lie more or less on the same latitude, there is a difference of at least 6 degrees centigrade in their mean annual temperatures.

Temperatures

Despite a latitudinal span of 13 degrees, average annual temperatures are remarkably uniform throughout the country. Owing to the increase in the height of the plateau towards the Northeast, there is hardly any increase in temperature from south to north, as might be expected. There is a striking contrast between temperatures on the east and west coasts.

Temperatures above 32°C are fairly common in summer, and frequently exceed 38°C in the lower Orange River valley and the Mpumalanga Lowveld.

The average temperatures in degrees Celsius are:

City	Province	Summer	Winter
Cape Town	Western Cape	24°C	22°C
Port Elizabeth	Eastern Cape	25°C	20°C
Johannesburg	Gauteng	24°C	18°C
Pretoria	Gauteng	27°C	22°C
Polokwane	Limpopo	27°C	22°C
Nelspruit	Mpumalanga	28°C	23°C
Durban	KwaZulu-Natal	25°C	23°C
Bloemfontein	Free State	29°C	18°C
Kimberley	Northern Cape	32°C	20°C

Rainfall

South Africa has an average annual rainfall of 464 mm, compared with a world average of 860 mm. About 20% of the country has a total annual rainfall of less than 200 mm, 48% between 200 and 600 mm, while only about 30% records more than 600 mm. Only the Western Cape experiences winter rainfall whilst the rest of the country has summer rains.

Caution

South Africa has one of the world's highest sunshine rates and everyone should take extra care, especially between 11h00 and 15h00. Sunscreen lotion with a protection factor of at least 20 is advised against the high UV rating.

MONEY MATTERS

Currency

The currency unit is the Rand - denoted by the symbol R. Rand (R) = 100 cents. Most international traveller's cheques are accepted, however, it is advised that you bring them in a hard currency, such as US dollars or British Pounds. Currency can be exchanged at banks, forex bureaus and sometimes at hotels. Please refer to your VIP Card listing for your nearest AMEX branch.

Denominations

Coins - 5c, 10c, 20c, 50c, R1, R2, R5; notes - R10, R20, R50, R100, R200.

Banks

Most banks are open Monday to Friday 09h00 to 15h30 and Saturday from 08h30 to 11h00.

Various teller machines (ATM's) are found in every large town. Several international banks have branches in the main cities. The banks and the Bureau de change at most airports offer the best exchange rates, but it is also possible to change money at the hotel reception.

Credit Cards

Visa and MasterCard are widely accepted throughout the country. American Express and Diners are less widely accepted, however more acceptable in the main city centres. **Be aware of credit card fraud!**

Taxes

There is currently a 14% VAT levied on all goods and services manufactured or rendered within South Africa. On goods only where the total value exceeds R250, you may reclaim the 14% VAT on departure from Johannesburg International Airport before you embark on your flight home and will have to produce the original tax invoice of the items that you have purchased.

HEALTH

There are a few basic health matters that require care and attention. We are obviously not medical practitioners and the following points are recommended guidelines only. Please consult your doctor and also check with your health department prior to departure for any changes in health regulations.

Entry requirements

A valid passport is required to all foreign passport holders entering SA, are required to have a minimum of two blank pages in their passport in order to be allowed entry. This passport must be valid for 6 months beyond the date of departure from South Africa. Visitors arriving from a yellow fever zone require a valid international yellow fever inoculation certificate (Infants under the age of one are exempt).

Medical Services

South Africa has excellent medical facilities, with doctors listed under 'Medical Practitioners' in the local telephone directories. Insurance covering travel, accidents, illness and hospitalisation is advised for the duration of your stay and must be arranged at time of booking. Medical facilities in cities and larger towns are world-class, but you will find that in rural areas the clinics and hospitals deal with primary health needs, and therefore do not offer the range of medical care that the large metropolitan hospitals do. Trained medical caregivers are deployed round the country, so help is never far away.

Malaria

Malaria within South Africa's borders is only prevalent in a few areas. It is encountered mainly in northern and eastern Mpumalanga, northern Kwa-Zulu Natal, and the border areas of the Northern and North West Provinces. Malaria is also common in the lower lying areas of Swaziland. It can also be found throughout Mozambique and Zimbabwe, and much of Botswana. Should you be visiting these areas malaria precautions are advised. Malaria transmission is at its highest during the warmer and wetter months of November through to April. From May through to October the risks of acquiring malaria are reduced.

Anti malaria prophylactics are advisable year round. Expert opinion differs regarding the best approach to malaria prophylaxis. It is important to bear in mind that malaria may be contracted despite chemoprophylaxis, especially in areas where chloroquine resistance has been reported. Please remember that the best insurance is the preventative kind: avoid being bitten by using mosquito repellents liberally. Wear long-sleeved shirts and trousers/slacks in the evenings. If staying in a bungalow or tent, spray with an insecticide like Doom to kill any mosquitoes that may have flown into your room. Mosquito coils are effective.

Water

High quality of tap water is available everywhere (cities, Town, rural and game reserves) and is 100% purified and safe to drink straight from the tap and It is safe to put ice as much as you like in your drink a good thing, too, after a day on the beach or in the bush and is both palatable. It is very important that you drink plenty of water especially during the warmer months. It is generally recommended that guests drink at least 2 to 3 litres (4 to 6 pints) of water per day to limit the effects of dehydration. This excludes tea, coffee and alcoholic beverages, which act as diuretics and can actually contribute to dehydration. Generally, water throughout Southern Africa is safe to drink directly from the tap. However, bottled water is readily available, so please do not allow yourself to become dehydrated.

Other Health Issues

There are no other health issues that one needs to be overly concerned with. Vaccinations for cholera and smallpox are not required, but travellers from a yellow fever zone must have a valid yellow fever vaccination certificate. Visitors to game parks must take anti-malaria tablets, which are available across the counter at any pharmacy.

GENERAL

Time difference

Throughout the year Standard Time in South Africa is two hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time, one hour ahead of Central European Winter Time, and seven hours in advance of Eastern Standard Winter Time in the USA.

Measures

South Africa operates on the metric system.

Distances are measured in metres and kilometres (1 mile = 621km)

Weight is measured in grams and kilograms

Liquids are measured in litres

Temperature is measured in degrees Celcius ($10^{\circ}\text{C} = 50^{\circ}\text{F}$)

Electricity

220/230 volts AC

All electrical appliances run on 220 volts. Outlets are round 3 pin, 15-amp plug. Special adapters for video cameras, chargers and hairdryers are needed and can sometimes be supplied by some hotel receptions. Various safari camps and lodges may not have 220 volts and may operate on solar powered 12-volt electricity. Remember to bring spare batteries to have charged at the lodge while out on safari. US-made appliances may need a transformer. Most hotel rooms have 110-volt outlets for electric shavers and appliances.

Shopping hours

Most shops are open from 09h00 to 18h00 Monday through Saturday and on Sundays until 13h00. Most major cities boast magnificent Flea Markets over weekends. Check with your hotel's concierge desk.

Telephones:

With a communication network that is 99% digital and includes the latest in fixed-line, wireless and satellite communication, South Africa has the most developed telecommunications network in Africa. Phoning from any hotel room can be very expensive. There are phone booths at some of the hotels. Inquire at the reception desk. The international code for South Africa when dialling from abroad is 27. Do not dial 0 before the city code, e.g. Johannesburg would be +27 11. To call overseas from your hotel room, dial 0 to get a line and then 09 (from S.A) then the international country code e.g. 44 (U.K) and the local number, once again omitting the "0" from the area code. For self-drive itineraries, we recommend the rental of a cell/mobile phone for the duration of your trip.

Where can I smoke?

The law prohibits smoking in most public spaces, shopping malls and theatres including airports and railway stations. Most restaurants have designated smoking and non-smoking areas; either ventilated indoor areas or outdoor open areas.

Public Holidays

New Years Day	01 January
Human Rights Day	21 March
Good Friday	29 March
Freedom Day	27 April
Workers Day	01 May
Youth Day	16 June
National Women's	09 August
Heritage Day	24 September
Day of Reconciliation	16 December
Christmas Day	25 December
Day of Goodwill	26 December

Please note that should a public holiday fall on a Sunday, then the Monday is considered a public holiday too.

SAFETY & SECURITY

Safety Guidelines when:

At the hotel:

- ✓ Never leave your luggage unattended
- ✓ Store valuables in the hotel's safety deposit box
- ✓ Keep your room locked, whether you're in it or not
- ✓ If someone knocks, check who it is before opening the door
- ✓ Leave your keys at the reception desk when leaving the hotel

In the street:

- ✓ Avoid ostentatious displays of expensive jewellery, cameras and other valuables
- ✓ It's definitely not advisable to carry large sums of money around
- ✓ At night, steer clear of dark, isolated areas
- ✓ Do not walk around the city looking like a tourist
- ✓ It's better to explore in groups and to stick to well-lit, busy streets
- ✓ Plan your route beforehand
- ✓ A policeman or traffic officer will be glad to direct you if you get lost
- ✓ If you want to call a taxi, your hotel or the nearest tourism information office can recommend a reliable service.

In a car:

- ✓ Keep the car doors locked at all times and wind the windows up
- ✓ Lock valuable items in the boot (trunk)
- ✓ At night, park in well-lit areas
- ✓ Never pick up strangers
- ✓ If in doubt about the safety of an area, phone a police station for advice

- ✓ Plan your route in advance
- ✓ We advise people to carry a reliable map with them at all times and to keep a certified copy of passports and other important documentation such as flight tickets in a safe place such as a bank or hotel's safety deposit box.

AIRPORTS & FLIGHTS

Reconfirmation of scheduled flights

Please ensure that all your onward flights are reconfirmed at least 72 hours prior to flying.

Flight Check in

Please check in early at all airports (at least one hour prior for domestic flights, three hours for all flights to the USA and two hours for regional and other international flights) as the flights are occasionally overbooked. Please be aware that during peak season, delays are often encountered on scheduled flights. Remember that you are on holiday ... relaxed and enjoy the ambience, which sometimes has no sense of urgency at all!

Duty Free

South Africa Customs passenger allowances entitle you to bring new or used goods of up to R3000.00 in value into the country without paying any duty. For additional duties you will be charge a flat rate of 20% duty. Cigarettes 200, Cigars 20, Cigarette or pipe tobacco 250g, Wine 2 litres, spirits or other alcoholic beverages 1 litre, Perfume 50ml, Eau de Toilette 250ml, Gifts, souvenirs and all other goods R300.00. No person under 18 is entitled to tobacco, cigarettes or alcohol allowance.

Customs Charges

You will have to pay on any items which are over limits. You will normally have to do that before you leave the custom hall.

Currency Control

SA bank notes n excess of R5000.00 will not be allowed back.

Register Valuables

Make sure that certain identification items such as cameras, Jewellery, watches, etc. are registered at customs for re-importation.

Luggage

Scheduled airlines generally carry a weight restriction of 20 kg (44lbs) per economy class traveller in one suitcase / bag as well as one item of hand baggage (the total dimensions – height, width and length may not exceed 115cm or 45 inches). Please note that if combining scheduled airline flights and air transfers, then the specified luggage restriction for air transfers will apply.

Lost luggage

Luggage that goes missing on scheduled flights is beyond the control of TIO and associates, and often the airline concerned too. The airport controls what happens

to passengers' luggage from when it is checked in until it is put on board the aircraft.

We would like to suggest that you take the following precautionary action: Please pack a small bag with your essentials including any life sustaining medication, that can be carried with you as hand luggage and pack a second bag containing non-essentials that can be loaded in the aircraft hold. If the second bag does not arrive, you will still have your essential items on hand to see you through the first couple of days while we try and recover your baggage.