

BEYOND AFRICA

PRIVATE SAFARIS & CAPE TOWN JOURNEYS · EST. 2008

THE COMPLETE 2026 EDITION

# The Insider's Safari Planning Guide

*Everything you need to plan an unforgettable African journey —  
when to go, where to stay, what it truly costs and how to travel well.*

CAPE TOWN · KRUGER & SABI SAND · OKAVANGO DELTA · MASAI MARA · SERENGETI ·  
VICTORIA FALLS

# Welcome — your first safari starts here

A safari is not a holiday you book; it is a journey you remember for the rest of your life. The questions are always the same — when should we go, where, how much, and how do we get it right the first time. This guide answers them honestly, from a team that plans these trips every single day.

We are a Cape Town-based travel team. We do not sell packages off a shelf — we design private, tailor-made itineraries around the people travelling. Over the next pages you will find the same advice we give our own guests: the seasons that reward you, the regions worth your nights, real budget tiers, and the small decisions that separate a good trip from an extraordinary one.

## INSIDE THIS GUIDE

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## HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

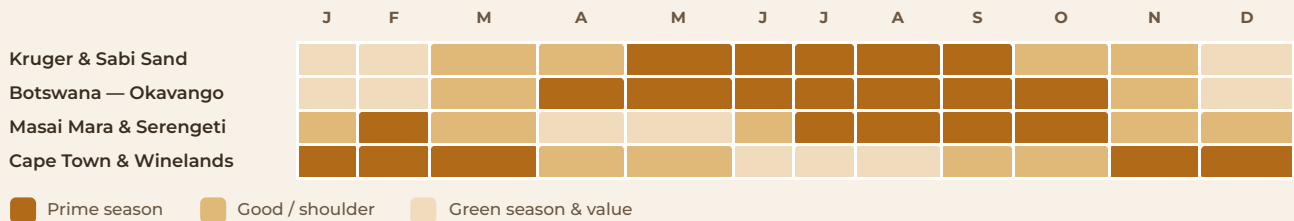
Read it cover to cover, or jump to the part you need. When you are ready, the last page tells you exactly how to reach a real human on our team — no call centres, no pressure, ever.

# When to go



Africa rewards travellers all year — the art is matching the season to what you most want to see. As a rule, the dry winter months deliver the finest big-game viewing; thinning bush and shrinking waterholes draw animals into the open.

## THE YEAR AT A GLANCE



### Dry season · May–September

Prime game viewing across Southern Africa. Cool mornings, sunny days, very little rain — the easiest choice for first-time safari-goers.

### Green season · December–March

Lush scenery, newborn animals and superb birding. Short afternoon showers, great value and far fewer vehicles.

### The Great Migration

Dramatic river crossings in the Masai Mara peak **July to October**; the calving on the Serengeti plains runs **late January to February**.

#### INSIDER TIP

Shoulder months — April and November — give you near-dry-season wildlife at low-season prices. We hold quiet-camp allocations our walk-up guests rarely find.

# Where to go

Your first safari need not be far-flung or complicated. These are the regions we send the most travellers to — and exactly why each one earns its place on an itinerary.



## Cape Town & the Winelands

**SOUTH AFRICA**

Mountain, ocean and vineyard in one place — the perfect three-night start or finish to any safari. Table Mountain, Cape Point, penguins at Boulders and world-class wine an hour away.

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Best for · First & last nights · Couples · Food & wine



## Greater Kruger & Sabi Sand

**SOUTH AFRICA**

The most reliable Big Five viewing on the continent, in malaria-low private reserves with superb guiding and an easy flight from Cape Town or Johannesburg. Our pick for first-timers and families.

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Best for · Big Five · First-timers · Families



## The Okavango Delta

**BOTSWANA**

Water-based game viewing by mokoro and boat through a maze of channels and islands. Intimate camps, low visitor numbers and a genuine sense of untouched wilderness.

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Best for · Exclusivity · Wilderness · Repeat travellers



## Masai Mara & Serengeti

**KENYA & TANZANIA**

Endless plains, classic open-vehicle drives and the theatre of the Great Migration — thundering river crossings and big cats in extraordinary density.

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Best for · The migration · Big cats · Open plains



## Victoria Falls

**ZAMBIA & ZIMBABWE**

One of the seven natural wonders of the world, and a thrilling few days that pairs beautifully with any Southern African safari — sunset cruises, white water and the thunder of the falls.

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Best for · Grand finale · Adventure · Add-on stay



## The Cape Winelands

**SOUTH AFRICA**

Stellenbosch, Franschhoek and Constantia — gabled estates, mountain backdrops and some of the finest wine and food on earth, all within an hour of Cape Town.

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Best for · Wine & food · Slow days · Honeymoons

### HOW TO COMBINE — OUR FAVOURITE ROUTE

A classic seven-to-ten-night journey: **Cape Town** for the city and coast, then a private **Sabi Sand** reserve for the wildlife, finishing at **Victoria Falls** for a grand finale. We tune the nights to your pace.

# The Big Five & the wildlife

The phrase was coined by old hunters for the five animals hardest to track on foot. Today the only thing we shoot is a photograph — but the thrill of finding all five is every bit as real.



## INSIDER TRUTH

Do not measure a safari by a checklist. Some of the finest mornings are a leopard asleep in a marula tree, wild dogs on a hunt, or a thousand zebra crossing a plain. A good guide reads the bush — and gives you sightings no list could predict.

# Ways to safari

The open-vehicle game drive is the heart of any safari — but it is only the beginning. These are the experiences our guests remember longest.



## Walking safari

On foot with an armed ranger, we look at every level, every track and scent explained.



## Balloon at sunrise

Drift over the Mara or Serengeti at first light, then a Champagne breakfast on the plains.



## Water safari

Slide the Okavango by mokoro, or cruise the Chobe at sunset among elephant and hippo.



## Gorilla trekking

An hour with a mountain gorilla family in Rwanda or Uganda — a profound, once-in-a-lifetime hour.

### HOW WE BUILD A DAY

A typical safari day starts early — out at first light when animals are active, back for a late breakfast and a slow afternoon, then out again until sunset. Between, there is time to read, swim and do nothing at all. We never overload a day.

# What it costs

Safari pricing is quoted per person, per night, and it includes far more than a hotel rate. Here is what each tier really buys you — so you can plan with open eyes.

## Classic

**\$350–700** pp / night

Comfortable, well-run camps and lodges. Shared game drives with excellent guides, full board, house drinks. The sweet spot for first-time safaris and families.

## Premium

**\$800–1,800** pp / night

Private reserves, smaller camps, fewer vehicles at a sighting. Often a private guide, finer food and wine, and the space and service that make a real difference.

## Ultra-exclusive

**\$2,000+** pp / night

The finest camps on the continent, exclusive-use villas, private vehicles and guides throughout, helicopter transfers. Privacy and service without compromise.

### ALMOST ALWAYS INCLUDED

- All meals & most drinks
- Twice-daily game activities
- Expert guides & trackers
- Park & conservation fees
- Laundry at most camps

### USUALLY EXTRA

- International flights
- Visas & travel insurance
- Premium wines & Champagne
- Balloon & private vehicle
- Gratuities for staff & guides

### OUR PROMISE

We quote one all-in price with everything itemised — no hidden mark-ups, no surprises. Tell us your budget honestly and we will design the very best trip it can buy.

# Where to stay



Where you sleep shapes the whole trip. The right camp puts you in the best wildlife area, with guides who know the ground and a style that fits how you like to travel.



**Tented & classic camps**

Canvas under the stars, with every comfort within



**Lodges & suites**

Private decks, plunge pools and long views



**Exclusive-use villas**

The whole house, staff and vehicle — yours alone

## OUR ADVICE

Stay a minimum of three nights in any reserve — one night is a blur, three lets the place reveal itself. We pair camps so each leg feels different: a riverside lodge, then a tented camp deep in the bush.

# Families & honeymoons

The same wild places serve very different journeys. Here is how we shape a safari around who is travelling, and what they came for.



## For families

Choose malaria-free reserves for young children, lodges with family suites and pools, and guides who know how to keep little ones spellbound. Days are gently paced, with games, junior-ranger time and early dinners. Many camps welcome children from age six; some have no minimum at all.



## For honeymoons

Private decks, candle-lit dinners in the bush, a sleep-out under the stars and a plunge pool of your own. We pair a few nights on safari with the beaches of Mauritius, Zanzibar or the Cape coast — wild mornings, slow afternoons, a celebration to remember.

### A QUIET WORD ON AGE & PACE

There is no wrong age for a first safari — only the right camp for it. Tell us who is coming, from grandparents to toddlers, and we will match every night to the group so no one is left out and no one is worn out.

# What to pack

Pack light and pack soft. Light aircraft between camps limit luggage to around 15–20kg in a soft bag, and most camps do same-day laundry — so you need far less than you think.

## CLOTHING

- Neutral colours — khaki, olive, stone, brown
- Long sleeves & trousers for sun and evenings
- A warm fleece & jacket for cold dawn drives
- Wide-brim hat, buff or scarf
- Comfortable closed walking shoes
- Swimwear & one smart-casual outfit

*Avoid bright white and dark blue/black — blue and black attract tsetse flies.*

## KIT & ESSENTIALS

- Binoculars — one pair per person
- Camera, spare batteries & memory cards
- High-SPF sunscreen & lip balm
- Insect repellent (DEET-based)
- Universal adapter & power bank
- Personal medicines & a small first-aid kit
- Sunglasses & a soft head-torch

*Leave hard suitcases at home — soft duffels fit the small holds of bush planes.*

### OUR PACKING RULE

Lay out everything you think you need, then pack half the clothes and twice the camera storage. You will live in three outfits and wish you had taken more photographs.

# Health, visas & money

None of this is hard, and we guide you through every step. Here is the plain-English version of what to sort before you fly.

## Passports & visas

Carry a passport valid for at least six months beyond your return date, with two or more blank pages per country. Many nations offer visas on arrival or simple e-visas; we confirm exactly what your party needs once the route is set.

## Health & vaccinations

Much of Southern Africa's prime safari country is malaria-free or low-risk; East Africa generally calls for anti-malarials. A yellow-fever certificate is required for some routes. Always confirm with a travel clinic six weeks before you fly — we tell you what applies to your itinerary.

## Money & tipping

The US dollar is widely accepted; cards work in cities and most lodges. Carry some small cash for tips and curios. As a guide, allow roughly US\$10–20 per guest per day for your ranger and tracker, and a little for camp staff — we give you a clear note per trip.

## Travel insurance

Non-negotiable. Take comprehensive cover that includes medical evacuation. Many premier camps include emergency air-evacuation membership for the duration of your stay — we confirm this for each property.

### **YOU ARE NEVER ON YOUR OWN**

From the first enquiry to your flight home, you have a real person on our team and a 24-hour number while you travel. If anything shifts on the ground, we handle it.

# Sample itineraries

A starting point, never a fixed menu. Every journey we plan is private and tailored — these show how the pieces fit together.

## Cape & the Bush

7 NIGHTS

CAPE TOWN · WINELANDS · SABI SAND

Three nights in Cape Town for Table Mountain, the coast and the vineyards, then four nights of twice-daily game drives in a private Big Five reserve. The classic first safari.

## Rivers, Plains & Falls

9 NIGHTS

VICTORIA FALLS · CHOBE · OKAVANGO DELTA

Begin at the thundering Falls, cruise the elephant-lined Chobe, then fly into the water-world of the Delta for mokoro safaris and big-cat country. Pure wilderness.

## The Great Migration

8 NIGHTS


NAIROBI · MASAI MARA · SERENGETI

Follow the herds across the Mara and Serengeti in peak season, with a dawn balloon flight over the plains. Timed to the year's greatest wildlife spectacle.

### MAKE IT YOURS

Add a beach finish, an extra reserve, gorillas in Rwanda, or simply slow the whole thing down. Tell us the shape of the trip in your head and we will draw it for real.

# Photography & insider tips

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- A photograph of a savanna landscape featuring a herd of wildebeest in the foreground and several zebras grazing in the background. The scene is set in a dry, grassy field under bright, natural light.
- 01 Shoot the light, not just the animal.** The golden hour after dawn and before dusk is when the bush glows — and when the cats move. Be out for both.
  - 02 Lower your angle.** Ask your guide to position the vehicle so you shoot at eye level. It transforms a snapshot into a portrait.
  - 03 One long lens, one wide.** A 100–400mm covers most wildlife; a wide lens captures the landscape and camp life. Bring more storage than you think.
  - 04 Put the camera down.** Spend the first few minutes of any sighting simply watching. The memory matters more than the megapixels.
  - 05 Tip in the local way.** Ask your guide how staff prefer to be tipped — often a shared box at reception is fairer than handing out notes.
  - 06 Slow down.** The biggest mistake is too many camps in too few days. Fewer moves, longer stays — every time.

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THE NEXT STEP IS THE EASY ONE

# Let us plan it with you

*You have the knowledge -- now let us do the work. Tell us when you would like to travel, who is coming and the kind of trip in your head. We will design a private itinerary built entirely around you, with no obligation and no pressure.*

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*“The best safari is the one designed around you. We have spent 18 years learning how — let us put it to work on yours.”*

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