FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Africa

40 questions · October 31, 2026

1. What passport and visa requirements apply to Africa tours?

Requirements depend on your nationality, destination countries, transit route, and length of stay. Some countries offer electronic visas or visas on arrival, while others require an application before departure.

Confirm the rules for every country through its official immigration authority and the U.S. Department of State travel site.

2. How long should my passport remain valid?

Many African destinations require a passport that remains valid for several months beyond the planned departure date and has enough blank pages for visas or entry stamps. Exact rules vary by country.

Check all destinations and transit points before booking because airlines may refuse boarding when documents do not meet entry requirements.

3. Could I need proof of yellow fever vaccination?

Some countries require proof of yellow fever vaccination based on where you are arriving from or where you have recently traveled. Requirements can also apply during transit through certain countries.

Consult a travel-health professional and verify official entry rules well before departure. Keep any required vaccination certificate with your passport.

4. What health preparations should I make before traveling to Africa?

Health recommendations depend on the countries, season, activities, and length of travel. Make sure routine vaccinations are current and schedule a travel-health consultation well before departure.

Official destination guidance is available through the CDC Travelers' Health destination pages.

5. Could malaria prevention be recommended?

Malaria risk varies by country, region, altitude, season, and itinerary. A travel-health professional can determine whether preventive medicine is appropriate for your trip.

Medication does not replace mosquito precautions, so use repellent, suitable clothing, and screened or air-conditioned lodging when recommended.

6. How can I reduce mosquito and insect bites?

Use an effective insect repellent, wear long sleeves and trousers when practical, and keep doors and windows screened. Mosquitoes and other insects may be active during the day, evening, or night.

Follow destination-specific health advice and reapply repellent according to the product instructions.

7. How should I pack prescription medicines?

Carry medicines in their original labeled containers in your hand luggage and bring enough for the entire trip, plus a reasonable reserve for delays. A copy of the prescription or a physician’s letter may be useful.

Verify restrictions before traveling with controlled, injectable, or specialized medication.

8. Is travel insurance especially important for Africa tours?

Comprehensive travel insurance is strongly recommended, particularly when an itinerary includes remote areas, safaris, small aircraft, or limited medical facilities. Coverage may help with cancellation, interruption, medical treatment, baggage problems, or emergency transportation.

Review exclusions, activity limits, evacuation provisions, and pre-existing-condition rules carefully.

9. Should my insurance include medical evacuation?

Medical evacuation coverage is important when traveling far from major hospitals or in regions where specialized treatment may not be available. Evacuation can be expensive and may require coordination across borders.

Confirm the policy limits, approval process, and assistance contact before departure.

10. What should I know about medical care in Africa?

Medical care varies widely between major cities and remote areas. Some facilities may require payment or proof of insurance before providing non-emergency treatment.

Carry your insurer’s assistance details, a list of medicines and conditions, and emergency contact information throughout the trip.

11. How should I monitor current safety conditions?

Safety conditions differ by country and region and may change because of elections, demonstrations, conflict, crime, weather, or local emergencies. Review current government advisories and follow instructions from local authorities and the tour team.

U.S. travelers can consult the official travel advisories.

12. How can I protect money and valuables?

Carry only what you need for the day and keep passports, cards, and extra cash in a secure place. Avoid displaying valuables or leaving them unattended in vehicles, restaurants, tents, or unlocked rooms.

Use hotel or lodge safes when appropriate and remain alert in busy markets, transport hubs, and tourist areas.

13. What weather should I expect in Africa?

Africa includes desert, tropical, Mediterranean, highland, coastal, and temperate climates. Conditions can vary sharply between daytime and nighttime and between different elevations.

Check forecasts for each destination shortly before departure and pack for the full range of expected temperatures.

14. How do dry and rainy seasons affect safari travel?

Wildlife visibility, road conditions, vegetation, temperatures, and animal movement can differ between dry and rainy seasons. Rainy periods may bring greener scenery and birdlife but can also affect roads or activities.

No season guarantees a particular sighting, so travelers should remain flexible and appreciate the conditions they encounter.

15. What clothing should I pack for a safari?

Pack lightweight, breathable layers in neutral or muted colors, along with a warm layer for cool mornings and evenings. Long sleeves and trousers can help with sun, dust, and insects.

Comfortable closed shoes, a hat, sunglasses, and a light rain layer may also be useful.

16. What level of physical activity should I expect?

Activity levels vary. Some tours involve long drives and easy wildlife viewing, while others include walking safaris, uneven trails, boat transfers, stairs, or repeated entry into high vehicles.

Review the itinerary carefully and discuss any mobility or medical concerns before booking.

17. Are Africa tours suitable for travelers with limited mobility?

Suitability depends on the itinerary, vehicle type, lodge design, and activities. Remote camps, small aircraft, boats, and historic sites may not meet North American accessibility standards.

Discuss mobility needs with Holy Land Tours and Travel before booking so the agency can explain limitations and available arrangements.

18. Are safari vehicles easy to enter and exit?

Some safari vehicles have high steps, narrow openings, or bench seating that can be difficult for travelers with reduced mobility, balance problems, or joint pain. Vehicle design varies by destination and operator.

Ask about the expected vehicle type before booking and advise the agency of any assistance needs.

19. What wildlife safety rules should I follow?

Always follow the guide’s instructions, remain inside the vehicle unless specifically told otherwise, and never feed, touch, chase, or approach wildlife. Keep noise low and avoid sudden movements.

Wild animals are unpredictable, even when they appear calm or familiar with vehicles.

20. Can I leave my room or tent at night in a safari camp?

Many camps require guests to be escorted after dark because wildlife may move through the property. Never ignore lodge rules or walk alone when an escort is required.

Keep doors or tent fastenings secured and use the provided method to request assistance.

21. May I take photographs of wildlife and local communities?

Wildlife photography is generally allowed when it does not disturb animals or interfere with the guide. Flash, drones, and leaving the vehicle may be restricted.

Ask permission before photographing individuals, homes, ceremonies, or community activities, and respect any request not to take pictures.

22. What should I know about drones in Africa?

Drone rules vary by country, national park, airport, and protected area. Permits may be required, and unauthorized use can result in confiscation or penalties.

Do not bring or operate a drone unless you have verified all official requirements and received any necessary written approvals.

23. What food should I expect on an Africa tour?

Meals may include regional dishes, grilled meats, fish, rice, grains, vegetables, stews, breads, fruit, and international options. Safari lodges and hotels usually plan menus for group travel.

Selection may be more limited in remote properties, so inform the agency of dietary needs before departure.

24. Can dietary restrictions and allergies be accommodated?

Many hotels and lodges can assist with common dietary needs when notified in advance, but remote kitchens may have limited ingredients and greater risk of cross-contact. Provide clear written details before departure.

Travelers with severe allergies should carry prescribed emergency medication and a translated allergy card.

25. Is tap water safe to drink throughout Africa?

Water quality varies by country and location. Use sealed bottled or properly treated water whenever local guidance recommends it, including for brushing teeth if advised.

Check that bottle seals are intact and avoid ice when its water source is uncertain.

26. How can I reduce the risk of foodborne illness?

Choose food that is thoroughly cooked and served hot, wash or sanitize your hands before eating, and follow the guide's recommendations. Be cautious with raw foods, unpeeled produce, and food that has been sitting at room temperature.

Travelers with sensitive stomachs should introduce unfamiliar foods gradually.

27. What currencies and payment methods are used in Africa?

Each country has its own currency and payment practices. Cards are common in many hotels and larger businesses, while cash may be necessary in markets, rural areas, small shops, and for local tips.

Carry more than one payment method and ask your bank about foreign transaction and ATM fees.

28. Are U.S. dollars or euros accepted?

Foreign currency may be accepted in some tourism settings, but this varies by country, business, and condition of the banknotes. Older, damaged, or marked bills may be refused.

Do not rely entirely on foreign cash; carry local currency and other payment options as directed in the pre-departure materials.

29. Are tips expected on safari and tour programs?

Tipping practices vary by country, lodge, and itinerary, but gratuities are commonly given to guides, drivers, trackers, porters, and lodge staff. Some programs collect tips in advance or provide suggested amounts.

Review the current tour documents rather than relying on figures from an older trip.

30. What electrical adapters will I need?

Voltage and plug types vary across Africa, and a multi-country itinerary may use several socket standards. Check the voltage label on every device before connecting it.

A universal adapter is useful, while a voltage converter is needed only for appliances that are not compatible with the local supply.

31. Will electricity be available at remote lodges?

Remote lodges may rely on generators, solar power, or limited operating hours. High-wattage appliances may be prohibited, and charging outlets may be shared or available only in common areas.

Bring a power bank if permitted and charge essential devices whenever electricity is available.

32. Will I have Wi-Fi and mobile service?

Connectivity is often reliable in cities and major hotels but may be slow, limited, or unavailable in remote parks and camps. Mobile coverage can disappear between destinations.

Download important documents and maps before travel and tell family that communication may be intermittent.

33. What should I know about small aircraft and bush flights?

Safari itineraries may use small aircraft to reach remote lodges. These flights can have strict baggage weight, size, and bag-type limits, and passengers may need to climb a few steps or walk on uneven ground.

Follow the specific allowance in your final documents because international airline rules may not apply.

34. Why might soft-sided luggage be required?

Small aircraft and safari vehicles often have compact or irregular storage spaces. Soft-sided bags can be easier to fit than rigid suitcases and may be required by the operator.

Confirm the permitted dimensions, weight, and bag type before departure.

35. How much luggage should I bring?

Pack lightly enough to manage your own bags through airports, lodges, boats, and vehicle-loading areas. Internal flights and small vehicles may have much lower limits than international airlines.

Follow the baggage allowance in your final travel documents and confirm it with the operating carrier.

36. What should I pack in my carry-on bag?

Keep medicines, travel documents, valuables, essential electronics, basic toiletries, and one change of clothing with you. Liquids, batteries, sharp objects, and other restricted items must comply with airline and security rules.

Review the TSA What Can I Bring page and each operating airline's policy before packing.

37. What should I know about long road transfers?

Distances can be substantial, and some roads may be rough, dusty, or affected by weather. Rest stops and restroom facilities may be less frequent outside cities.

Bring water, essential medication, sun protection, and a small personal bag for the day's journey.

38. What cultural etiquette should I follow?

Customs vary across countries and communities. Dress respectfully, ask before photographing people, follow local greetings, and avoid treating community visits as staged attractions.

Your guide will explain expectations concerning religion, elders, homes, markets, and ceremonies.

39. What should I wear in religious or conservative communities?

Modest clothing that covers shoulders and knees is generally appropriate. In some places, head coverings or additional dress rules may apply at religious sites.

Carry a lightweight scarf and follow posted rules and the guide's instructions.

40. Can weather or wildlife conditions change the itinerary?

Yes. Rain, flooding, road conditions, fire risk, animal movement, park rules, or lodge operations can require changes. Wildlife sightings are never guaranteed.

The tour team may change routes, timing, or activities to protect guests and comply with local conditions.