

SOUTH AFRICA TRAVEL INFORMATION

VISA:

Depending on the passport you hold, a visa may be required for entry to South Africa and is not included in the tour price. Please visit the South African Application Centre website below to find out more. <https://www.gov.za/services/temporary-residence/visa>

INSURANCE:

It is a condition of booking with us that you take out suitable travel insurance. You must provide us with the name of your insurer, policy number and their 24-hour emergency contact number when you book with us or as soon as possible thereafter. These details will be available to your national escort should they be required. Wendy Wu Tours will not be liable for any costs incurred by you due to your failure to take out suitable travel insurance from the date of booking.

EATING IN SOUTH AFRICA:

Eating in South Africa is a diverse and flavourful experience, reflecting the country's rich cultural heritage and its blend of indigenous, European, Asian, and African influences. The cuisine is influenced by the country's history and various ethnic groups. You'll find traditional African dishes, Dutch, British, Indian, and Malay-inspired foods, among others. The iconic braai, a barbecue feast of meats and traditional sauces, embodies communal gatherings. Biltong and droëwors offer savoury snacking options, while dishes like bobotie, a fragrant blend of spiced meat and custard, showcase Cape Malay influences. Indian-inspired samoosas and the unique bunny chow add further dimension to South African dining. From pap and wors, a staple pairing of maize porridge and sausages, to seafood harvested from the extensive coastline, the culinary scene is a celebration of diversity. Wine regions like Stellenbosch and cultural festivals highlight the country's love for wine and food. South African cuisine varies by region and cultural background, so there's a wide range of flavours and dishes to explore.

Ultimately, South African cuisine tells a story of cultural fusion and community, inviting locals and visitors alike to savour its distinctive flavours. Restaurants in South Africa offer good value. In every city you'll find fine restaurants with imaginative menus. Generally, restaurants are licensed (sell alcohol) except for Muslim establishments serving Cape Cuisine which don't sell alcohol at all. In big cities such as Cape Town, continental-style cafes are popular. Service is good and friendly. In addition to fine dining, South Africa has a string of franchise restaurants including popular Wimpy, Spur, Nando's, and KFC.

ACCOMMODATION:

All group tour hotels have private western bathroom facilities, TV, and a telephone. Electricity supplies can be erratic and quite often the power in hotel rooms is turned off while guests are out of the room. If you experience any difficulty, please speak to your Local Guide or National Escort.

Your accommodation has been selected for convenience of location, comfort, or character, and can range from a business hotel in one city to a family-run guesthouse in a smaller town or a heritage-type hotel. Hotels are generally rated as local three to four-star standard but do please note that there is no international classification system for hotels and differences in facilities and quality do exist between UK and South Africa. Rest assured that all hotels used by Wendy Wu Tours are regularly inspected by our staff and our partners to ensure that standards are met. Please be aware that there are security measures carried out at all hotels, on guests and vehicles entering the properties.

PARK RULES:

Game Drive Rules:

Guests should always remain seated.

Refrain from talking loudly when viewing animals.

Always keep arms and legs within the confines of the game drive vehicle.

Do not grab onto any branches or leaves whilst the vehicle is moving.

No feeding of animals.

Guests should note that game drive vehicles are open to the elements:

Ensure to wear comfortable / neutral colouring clothing.

Sun Hats and Sun Glasses are advisable.

Bring a light jacket with as it tends to be chilly during the early morning and once the sun sets on afternoon drives.

Warmer jackets, beanies and scarves are advisable for winter months.

SOUVENIRS:

We want to be able to give you an opportunity to buy souvenirs, so we include some stops at museums or exhibitions that demonstrates a craft or product unique to that region with pieces available to buy. We understand that souvenir hunting is not for everyone, so we aim to take you to places that hold local interest. We trust you will enjoy these opportunities to learn about local arts and crafts and understand their historical and cultural importance.

TIPPING POLICY:

Tipping while on holiday is common in most parts of the world and South Africa is no exception. However, it is not always clear who it is appropriate to tip and how much. Furthermore, travellers may not have the right amounts of cash available at the right time. To avoid any inconvenience Wendy Wu Tours operates a tipping policy where a stated amount is given to your national escort at the beginning of your tour and tips are disbursed amongst your main service providers (for example local guides, drivers, trackers and rangers) throughout your tour. The amount is designed to be at a reasonable level for travellers while being fair to the local people and includes

a gratuity for the national escort. Any other tipping, such as tips for bathroom attendants, restaurant staff or hotel porters that are taking luggage to your room, is at your discretion based on satisfaction of services received, as are gratuities for additional requested special services.

We generally find that most customers appreciate the convenience of our tipping policy, but we do recognize that it may not suit everyone. However, as this is a group tour, we ask that everyone follows the same protocol to be fair to other group members and to ensure smooth operation of your tour.

TRANSPORT:

Coaches: Coaches with air conditioning are used on our group tours for city sightseeing, short excursions to the countryside and longer transfers where necessary. Main and inner-city roads in South Africa have a reputation for being very congested. For this reason, it may not always be possible to return to your hotel after sightseeing to freshen up before going to the restaurant for dinner. Roads in South Africa have generally been improved over recent years, but traffic and/or weather conditions may extend driving times. Road construction work usually covers an enormous section of road - not just one or two kilometres as you may be used to. For this reason, the timings listed in the sections above are approximations only.

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. It is not recommended that tourists use public transport.

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.

APPROPRIATE DRESS:

When traveling to South Africa, especially in warm and sunny climates, it's advisable to pack light and comfortable clothing made from cotton in light colours to stay cool. Long-sleeved shirts and trousers can provide protection from the sun and insects. Carrying a lightweight waterproof jacket is also a good idea in case of unexpected rain. A sturdy pair of trainers or hiking shoes is essential for exploring various terrains comfortably. To shield yourself from the sun, a wide-brimmed hat, sunscreen, and sunglasses are important items to have. Don't forget to capture the stunning landscapes and experiences with a camera, and make sure to bring along chargers and spare memory cards. A lightweight flashlight can be handy for navigating in low-light conditions. Prioritize your well-being by packing a medical kit that includes essentials like first aid supplies and any personal medications you might need. If you're visiting malaria-prone areas, remember to take appropriate anti-malarial precautions. With these essentials in your luggage, you'll be well-prepared for a memorable and comfortable adventure in South Africa.

WEATHER:

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, 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 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.

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.

SAFETY AND 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.

VACCINATIONS AND YOUR HEALTH:

We recommend that you contact either your GP for advice on vaccinations and travel health.

The risk of contracting malaria is often a concern when visiting the Kruger National Park. The Kruger is one of the two South African National Parks that are situated in **malaria risk areas**. It is important to note that the risk of malaria is usually low, even in the summer months. The highest risk period is between November and April - the end of the summer rainy season.

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. 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.

Wendy Wu Tours is committed to always providing a safe and healthy environment for all passengers. We work closely with our airline partners to take effective measures to protect you from contracting and spreading COVID-19, in accordance with legal requirements and government guidelines. Please follow the below link for more details on our COVID vaccination policy:

<https://www.wendywutours.co.uk/help-and-advice/travel-health/>

ITINERARY CHANGES:

It is our intention is to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however, the order of events or sightseeing may change as we look to improve our tours or as local conditions dictate; in these circumstances we will make the best possible arrangements whilst maintaining the integrity of your trip.

AFTER YOUR BOOKING:

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation invoice including a visa application form (if applicable), and a help sheet. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approximately 2-3 weeks prior to departure.

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