



General Travel Information for Kenya

GENERAL TRAVEL INFORMATION

BAGGAGE

When traveling on safari as well as to the coast, baggage should be kept to a minimum as charter flights and vehicle transfers do not allow a large amount of baggage. Soft duffel bags should be used rather than suitcases, as frequently the airplane baggage lockers cannot fit a large suitcase inside. Please note that most safari oriented domestic flights have a strict weight allowance of 15 kg (33 lb) per person. Scheduled flights to the coast allow the standard 20kg.

Towels are supplied and laundry service (excluding underwear on safari) is available in most of the properties; therefore you do not need to pack large amounts of clothing.

Large camps and lodges provide electricity to use items such as shavers and hair-dryers. Some bush lodges also run generator electricity in the evenings, which may allow you to use appliances. However, most camps do not have electricity so items such as hair-dryers and electric shavers are not useable. We provide hair dryers in all rooms at Hemingways and have normal power 24/7.

CLIMATE

Kenya has a climate based upon altitude. Inland, the days are warm to hot and the evenings cool to cold. Only at the Coast are the temperatures less varied, remaining warm to hot throughout the day and night.

The coldest months are June, July and August; the hottest months are January, February and March.

Please see our [Climate and Rainfall section](#) for more details

CLOTHING

Please see our Safari Traveler Checklist for a complete list. However, in general, long-sleeved, lightweight shirts and trousers, with a sweater and/or light jacket are appropriate for the evenings on safari. Shorts and t-shirts are suitable for the hot days, as dress is casual. The camps do not have heating, so bring something warm in which to sleep.

A good pair of walking shoes or boots is advisable when out on walks or horse rides. However, within the camps, lodges and hotels, light footwear may be worn.

Neutral colors, such as grey, khaki, browns or greens, are best on safari; bright colors and patterns, including white, can spook animals and birds. Try to avoid black or navy blue as these can attract tsetse fly.

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Some lodges and hotels have swimming pools and thus a swimming costume may be required. A lightweight rain jacket is useful; a wide-brimmed hat is vital.

At Hemingways we suggest lightweight summer clothing throughout the year but in the months between June and October there is a cool wind, especially at night and you'll need a cotton jumper or pashmina despite being in the tropics.

Please do not forget that in the evenings we do ask that you do not wear shorts or jeans and gentlemen must wear a shirt with a collar; polo shirts are accepted.

CURRENCY

US Dollars are the most widely used foreign currency. Most European currencies are also freely exchangeable at most major banks and hotels.

MasterCard and Visa are widely accepted in large hotels; American Express has limited acceptance although we do take Amex at Hemingways. Many of the smaller hotels and most camps and lodges do not accept credit cards.

We would suggest changing some money at the airport upon arrival, as ready access to banks is difficult when on safari. Watamu village near Hemingways has two banks at which you can change money or get cash on your card.

DOCUMENTS

A passport valid for at least six months beyond your planned departure is required for foreign citizens to enter Kenya. Visa requirements should be checked with your consulate or embassy. You should keep your passport, cash and travelers checks with you at all times. A money belt is the best option. Visas are easily and quickly obtained upon arrival at the airport and do not need to be obtained in advance. You can download the form to fill out before arrival on www.kenyahighcommission.net/visas.html. You need form V1 and you do not need the passport photos when obtaining the visa on arrival. Do bring the visa charge of US\$ 50 in exact change as this makes it much faster!

EQUIPMENT

If possible, bring your own pair of binoculars along with a daypack (to carry sunscreen, extra film, cameras, medicines etc.) for a safari.

Bring all camera equipment, including spare batteries and film (100-400ASA), as well as cleansing fluid, tissues and dust spray, as they are difficult to obtain and extremely expensive in East Africa. Please ensure that you bring dust covers of some kind for your camera equipment. A small beanbag to use as a tripod when in a vehicle is useful. If using a 35mm camera, we suggest a wide-angle lens of 25mm to 35mm and two

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additional lenses that allow a range of 35mm to 300mm. Please note that when staying in small mobile camps, it is unlikely to be able to re-charge video cameras.

Please see our Safari Traveler Checklist for other items to bring.

If you are taking any prescribed medicines, please ensure you have an adequate supply for the duration of your trip.

If wearing contact lenses, please remember that it will be dusty and you will need extra cleaning fluid. Sunglasses are essential!

HEALTH

There are no required vaccinations for Kenya. However, we do recommend keeping your Tetanus up to date and if coming from South Africa you will need to have a valid Yellow Fever Vaccination Card with you on your return back home. Tanzania, Zanzibar or Rwanda extensions to your Kenyan holiday will also require Yellow Fever.

Please drink lots of fluid while visiting Kenya. Dehydration mixed with our strong sun causes nausea and upset stomachs and can turn easily into sunstroke. Have a glass of water with every glass of wine for example.

You should take precautions against malaria. There are a number of prophylaxes available. Some have mild side effects so you should check with your doctor for advice. We recommend starting your course of tablets early, in order to determine if you have any side effects before your safari begins. Malarone has the fewest side effects with the best protection.

If you are allergic to the anti-malarial drugs, we have found that a good insect repellent spray is very effective as protection.

Whilst in East Africa, only drink bottled water. It is recommended that you drink at least 4 liters of non-alcoholic fluid each day to prevent dehydration. The most common cause of stomach upsets and diarrhea is dehydration; increasing your fluid intake should prevent this illness.

All countries have their own 'bugs' to which residents develop immunity. The African gastro-enteritis 'bugs' are the next most common cause of 'traveler's tummy.' This mild form of stomach upset is most commonly caught from hand to mouth contact with people. If you have shaken hands (harmless) with children or people, please wash your hands afterwards before you accidentally brush your mouth and transfer the germs. Generally, antibiotics will cure this illness within 24 hours.

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Hotels, camps and lodges use clean water for their food preparation. East Africans take great pride in their fresh, good quality food; you do not need to go hungry! If you are not sure about the preparation of any type of food, simply ask. You will not offend.

Perfume, cologne and scented body lotions can attract mosquitoes and other flying insects. Therefore, it is recommended that you do not wear perfumes or colognes during your stay.

Nairobi and Mombasa have excellent, European standard hospitals. Should evacuation be necessary, excellent medical care is a short flight away.

MISC

Electricity – 240 volts, 50 cycles.

Language – KiSwahili is the National language and English the official language.

TIPPING

Unlike in the USA or most of Europe, tips in Kenya are considered a gift; they are not a part of wages or payment. They are considered a bonus and are not expected or required.

An average daily wage in East Africa is just over US\$ 2.50. As such, giving a porter a tip of a dollar is very generous. Room or tent stewards would be delighted with a tip of between US\$0.50 - US\$ 1.00 per day.

At Hemingways we include a service charge in our accommodation rates that is paid to all of our staff. We also have a staff tip box at reception should you choose to give a little extra for our staff.

In general, the only person who will expect a tip from you is your driver/guide on safari, who would be very happy with a tip of approximately US\$ 8 per person, per day.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Whilst all of the hotels, camps and lodges you will visit have their own insurance policies, it is **STRONGLY** recommended that you obtain your own personal travel insurance to allow for emergency medical care in Nairobi or Mombasa, holiday cancellations due to ill health or other circumstances.

VISAS

Tourist entry visas to Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda are required for most tourists. These visas may easily be obtained from the airport immigration officers upon arrival. At present the fees are US\$ 50 per person for Kenya and for Tanzania, and US\$ 30 per person for Uganda. If you prefer to obtain your visa before your arrival, you will need

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to send a banker's cheque, your passport, two passport photos and proof of travel to
the appropriate Embassy or High Commission in your country.

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