

Pre-Departure Information 2026 / 2027

Welcome to Your African Overland Tour!

Thank you for booking your tour with **African Overland Tours**. We're excited to welcome you and share this incredible experience with you. Thousands of travellers from around the world have enjoyed our journeys, and with a great attitude, an open mind, and a little preparation, we believe your time on tour will be truly unforgettable, offering an adventure of a lifetime.

For detailed route information, refer to your **Tour Dossier (Itinerary)**, provided by your Travel Consultant. We recommend downloading your dossier 7 days before departure, as these documents are updated regularly. Please note that dossiers are intended as a guideline and may be subject to change.

Remember, you're travelling to Africa! This is a continent of big distances, changing conditions, and spontaneous moments. Standards may differ from those in first-world countries, but that's part of the magic. Plans may occasionally change, but always with the group's best interest in mind. Embrace the unexpected as it's included in the adventure!

With this **Pre-Departure Document**, we aim to give you all the information you need before you travel. Therefore, please read the information below to help prepare for your tour. It includes additional and useful detail: luggage and packing guidelines, meal and dietary details, and other important notes for your trip.

Thank you for choosing African Overland Tours! At the end of your tour, you'll receive a confidential feedback form from your guide. Please place it in a sealed envelope and hand it to your crew.

If you prefer, you can email us directly at info@africanoverlandtours.com. Your feedback is highly valued and helps us keep improving.

We're absolutely thrilled about building our travel community, and we *love* seeing your incredible journey unfold! If you plan to share your tour photos, please connect with us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/africanoverlandtours/> - and remember to tag us!

If we've missed anything or you need assistance, just reach out as we're here to help.

Regards
The AOT Team



Key points and a few things to keep in Mind!

✓ Know what kind of tour you've booked.

AOT offers a range of tour styles, each suited to different travel preferences and comfort levels. Our tours are Value Safari Tours and not European coach tour experiences, so it's important to understand the style you've booked. Taking a moment to familiarize yourself with your tour type will help you know what to expect and ensure you're fully prepared to make the most of your African adventure.

✓ Tour Dossier / Itineraries

We recommend referring to your Tour Dossier (Itinerary) for detailed information about your specific tour. The tour dossier includes accommodation type, meal inclusions, key highlights, vehicle style, and the max participants on your departure.

A reminder that the dossier is a guideline and changes may occur. If a change to the itinerary is required, we will do our best to find a suitable alternative or replace it with a comparable experience.

✓ Disconnect and enjoy.

Many of the campsites and lodges are in remote, wild areas, and internet or mobile signal is often limited and sometimes only available in reception areas, if at all. There is no Wi-Fi on the trucks or on the road, so please plan accordingly. Take this as an opportunity to switch off, unwind, and truly immerse yourself in nature. Enjoy the sounds of the bush, the open skies, and the rare chance to disconnect from the outside world. ([Get an E-sim with AOT](#))

✓ Pack smart.

Please refer to our luggage section for details on luggage space and packing suggestions. We provide helpful recommendations on what to bring (and what to leave behind) to ensure your comfort and to make the most of the limited space on the truck.

✓ Tour Rates.

Rates are set throughout the year, and the tours operate in all seasons. This means you may experience a variety of weather conditions; cold, hot, windy, or rainy, depending on when you travel. Please come prepared for all possibilities so you can enjoy the journey comfortably.

✓ Linked itineraries.

Some tours are linked to others, which means your itinerary may form part of a longer journey. Depending on your booking, you might join or leave the tour partway through, and other travellers may do the same. If new faces appear or familiar ones depart along the way, it's completely normal and part of the overland experience. We're confident you'll offer a warm welcome to those joining, just as you'd appreciate in return.

✓ Respect your fellow travellers.

You'll be travelling with people of different ages, nationalities, and backgrounds (each with their own story). Take the chance to connect, listen, and enjoy the diversity that makes group travel so rewarding.

As this is a group tour, please be patient, flexible, and respectful toward your fellow travellers. Avoid being overly assertive or taking charge so everyone can enjoy the experience equally and make room for a shared adventure.

✓ Embrace the journey.

Our tours are as much about the journey as they are about the destination. Prepare yourself for long travel days. Africa's distances are vast, and some days will be longer than others. Expect a mix of early sunrises, action-packed days filled with highlights, and more relaxed days on the road.

Because towns, villages, and attractions can be far apart, some travel days may involve up to 8-10 hours in the truck or on the road. Make the most of this time and bring a good book, some music, a few games, or simply sit back, relax, and enjoy the ever-changing African landscapes (or even catch up on a quick nap!).

✓ Each region is unique.

Southern Africa and East Africa are completely different destinations, each with its own character, landscapes, and rhythm. If your travels have taken you through Africa before, please remember not to compare one region to another. Each destination offers its own unique charm, culture, and experiences.

Enjoy what each area has to offer, from its people and wildlife to its scenery and pace of life. Every journey through Africa is special in its own way.

Who Travels with AOT?

African Overland Tours attract a diverse mix of travellers. While traditional overlanding catered mostly to young backpackers, today (2026) our travellers range from 6 to 80 years old. Classic Overland tours accommodate up to 20 Guests per tour.

Average ages:

- Camping (Explorer) Tours: 20–45+
- Accommodated (Classic) Tours: 35–80+ (This varies depending on the tour.)

Traveller mix:

- Guests come from all over the world
- You'll meet solo travellers, couples, and friends
- Most people get along well, sharing similar interests and values

Senior travellers & Disabilities

Guests 65+ are welcome on tour. A medical questionnaire will be sent to you to complete before departure.

Fitness is useful, but the key ingredients are:

- Flexibility
- A good sense of humour
- Willingness to join in and embrace the adventure

Please also keep in mind that guests should be able to climb 4–5 steps to get into the truck and comfortably get in and out of safari vehicles. Some activities may include hikes; please check with your guide regarding the difficulty level, as they will be able to offer appropriate guidance.

Travellers With Disabilities

We welcome guests with disabilities; however, please note that most tours are active and may involve steps, uneven terrain, and extended walking. Before booking, please share your level of mobility or other restrictions with us so we can confirm whether the tour can accommodate your needs. In some cases, a tailored or private option may be more suitable to ensure your comfort and safety.

Children

- Children 6 years and older are permitted on tour. (Approval from operator required for ages 6-9)

Participation & Interaction:

What's Expected of You

Although our crew manages most of the work, these are active and busy tours, and a little teamwork makes a big difference. Your participation allows the guides to focus on creating the best experience for everyone, and getting involved makes the journey more fun and rewarding!

How you can help & participate on tour

- Assist with washing up after meals
- Lend a hand with food prep when time is tight
- Load and unload the truck and your own bag
- Set up and take down your tent
- Pitch in around camp when needed
- Help keep the truck and cooler box clean

Travelling in a Group

- Travelling on an Overland Tour means joining others who share your sense of travel. Group travel offers safety, affordability, and the chance to meet people from around the world.
- With guests from different cultures, an open mind and friendly attitude help create a positive experience for everyone.
- Our guides help maintain a smooth tour and a healthy group dynamic. If another traveller's behaviour concerns you, address it politely or speak with a crew member.
- Being considerate, following instructions, keeping the vehicle tidy, and respecting group space help ensure a great journey for all. Passenger conflict is rare, and many guests leave with lifelong friendships (and sometimes more!).

Communication

- Good communication ensures an enjoyable experience for everyone.
- Positivity, respect, and openness go a long way when sharing experiences with people from around the world.
- Keep communication open with your guides and fellow travellers. If something is bothering you, speak up early so it can be resolved quickly.
- Your comfort, safety, and overall experience matter, so please let the

- Up to four children may join a tour without prior notice. (ages 6-15)
- Requests for additional children will be reviewed by management.

Life on Tour

An Average Day

- Days usually start early (around 06:00–07:00) with departure after breakfast.
- Some days may begin earlier for sunrise activities or long travel legs.
- Travel times vary; in winter, shorter daylight may mean setting up camp in the dark or missing some optional activities.
- Guides plan regular stops for bathrooms, snacks, shopping, and photos, usually where facilities are good.
- Lunch is typically on the road. Afternoons may involve relaxing, exploring, or optional activities.
- To break long travel days, the tour may occasionally include two nights in one location.

Managing Expectations

- Africa is unpredictable therefore, weather, wildlife, road conditions, and vehicle challenges can affect the journey.
- It's important to distinguish between situations you can control and those managed by your operator. Some things simply fall outside anyone's control and understanding this helps maintain perspective and set realistic expectations.
- Tours explore remote and wild areas, and sometimes the itinerary may need to change.
- If adjustments are required, guides will manage them safely and professionally, aiming to provide a comparable experience and value to the original plan.
- Flexibility and a positive attitude go a long way, and unexpected moments often become the best parts of the story.



We encourage **seat rotation**. Please note there is **no air-conditioning or onboard toilets**. These are adventure trucks, not luxury coaches.

guides know if you need assistance or have any concerns.

The Guides

- Each tour has two experienced crew members; one will act as Tour Leader (driver or courier/cook).
- Guides are committed to sharing their love of Africa with you. Please treat them with respect.
- If you are unhappy or concerned, have a quiet conversation with your guide to resolve it during the tour.
- The Tour Leader and driver may make decisions based on health, safety, security, or unexpected conditions. These decisions may not always be popular, but your understanding is appreciated.
- At times, both crew members may be busy with operational matters and not always available at the back of the truck. Please ask if you need information or clarification.
- Guests differ in how much information they prefer; let the guides know if you want more or less so they can adjust.
- The Tour Leader has final authority throughout the tour, particularly regarding guest safety. Always inform the crew before leaving any overnight property.

Each tour always includes two crew members:

- A Tour Leader responsible for guest and crew wellbeing.
- A courier/cook managing meals and supplies.
- A driver responsible for truck maintenance and safety.
- Roles may be interchangeable, but support is always in place.

If you're not comfortable addressing a situation with a member of the crew, please reach out to your Consultant or AOT Support (info@africanoverlandtours.com or support@africanoverlandtours.com) or directly via WhatsApp on +27 (0) 65 887 4333

Before You Go & What to Prepare

Medical Insurance

- **Mandatory for all travellers;** you must provide your policy details before departure.
- Ensure your insurance covers trip cancellation and emergency evacuation (airlift), as many areas we travel through are remote and far from hospitals.
- Credit card “free” insurance may have limited coverage; we strongly recommend a comprehensive travel insurance policy from your home country.
- Check that your policy covers adventure activities (e.g., bungee jumping, skydiving) if you plan to participate.
- African insurance policies may only cover evacuation within the country; international coverage requires a policy from your home country.
- In an emergency, lack of insurance could mean paying thousands of USD or delaying critical care



Before you travel, it's a good idea to let family and friends know that you'll be on a Safari tour. You will have limited to no access to Wi-Fi on some days. We suggest leaving a copy of your itinerary with your family and friends so that they are aware of your whereabouts.

How Family Can Reach You

While you may not always have phone access, in an emergency, your family can contact us:

✉ Email: info@africanoverlandtours.com

☎ All hours: +27 (0) 21 448 0997

We will ensure urgent messages reach you, wherever you are.

Please remind family and friends that this line is for genuine emergencies

Pre- and Post-Tour Accommodation, Transfers & Onward Travel

- We're happy to help arrange accommodation and transfers before and after your tour.
- Add your accommodation and transfer requests when booking your tour.
- All services are provided by third-party operators and are subject to availability.
- Accommodation is usually at the tour departure point for your convenience, however, if our preferred supplier is fully booked, other recommendation will be available.
- If your transfer isn't there on arrival, call our emergency number: +27 (0) 21 448 0997. We'll resolve it right away.
- If issues arise, don't let them spoil your trip; rather, focus on enjoying your tour experience.

Onward Travel

- Please arrange your onward travel before your tour starts; it's difficult to do while on tour.
- Recommended: Do not book flights or onward travel on your final tour day, unless your itinerary ends after breakfast with no travel.
- Tours may run late due to unforeseen delays, and African Overland Tours is not liable for missed flights or connections.
- We won't rush the tour on the last day, as safety and enjoyment come first. Always expect the unexpected.

Outstanding Payments

- All outstanding balances must be paid at least 75 days before your tour departure.
- We reserve the right to cancel your booking if full payment is not received on time.
- Travellers with unpaid balances will not be permitted to join the tour.

Passport

- Your passport must have at least two blank pages per country you'll be visiting.
- South Africa requires two clear pages for entry. Keep this in mind if you're flying home from South Africa after visiting multiple countries.
- Ensure your passport is valid for at least six months after you depart from Africa.
- Keep a copy of your passport at home or with someone you trust.
- It's also recommended to take a photo or scan of your passport and email it to yourself for backup.
- You are personally responsible for all travel documents, visas, and vaccination certificates, as well as any related costs.
- Do not travel with multiple passports to avoid visa payments. Immigration officials (e.g., in Namibia) must see the correct exit and entry stamps in the same passport.

Immigrations

Additional details for each country are available through the links below.

- Namibia:** <https://eservices.mhaiss.gov.na/>
Botswana: <https://evisa.gov.bw/#/>
Zimbabwe: <https://www.evisa.gov.zw/> **Zambia:** <https://eservices.zambiaimmigration.gov.zm>
Malawi: <https://evisa.gov.mw/>
Tanzania: <https://visa.immigration.go.tz/> **Kenya:** <https://etakenya.go.ke/>
Uganda: <https://visas.immigration.go.ug/>
Mozambique: <https://evisa.gov.mz/>
 Lesotho: <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.ls/e-visa/>
Eswatini: <https://www.gov.sz/index.php/services-sp-2224274/7/visa>

Visas

- Visa requirements vary depending on your nationality. Check with the relevant embassies or visa agencies at least four to six weeks before departure.
- Obtaining visas is the traveller's responsibility. African Overland Tours cannot be held liable if you are denied entry due to missing or incorrect visas.
- You must have a valid onward/return ticket or proof of funds (e.g., credit card) to show you can leave the final destination country.
- If your tour re-enters a country, make sure you have a multiple-entry visa where required.
- Visa regulations in Africa can change frequently; therefore always confirm with the embassies of the countries on your route before traveling.
- African Overland Tours does not arrange visas, and information provided may not always reflect the latest updates.
- On request, African Overland Tours can provide a visa letter for use as supporting documentation in your visa application. Please request this through your Travel Consultant.

Mandatory Inbound Insurance for Zanzibar

As of 01st October 2024, Zanzibar requires all visitors arriving in Zanzibar to purchase compulsory insurance. All foreign travelers must make necessary arrangements to obtain suitable inbound travel insurance ONLY from Zanzibar Insurance Corporation by visiting www.visitzanzibar.go.tz. The cost of the policy is approximately USD44 per visitor.



When travelling with a group, border crossings can occasionally take longer than expected.

To help your journey run smoothly, it's best to arrange any required visas before you depart. Because entry requirements and border rules can change at short notice, having your e-visas organised ahead of time offers added peace of mind. Keep in mind that visa approvals can take several weeks to process, so it's wise to apply well in advance.

Packing for Your Tour

Clothing Tips

- Pack light, versatile, and comfortable clothes for all weather:
- Shorts/skirts, T-shirts, long pants, long sleeves, jacket, pullover, raincoat
- Comfortable walking shoes, sandals
- Swimwear, hat, beanie, gloves (winter)
- Smart-casual outfit for evenings out
- Light fabrics, easy to wash and dry
- Remember: Africa can get cold!

Suggested Extras

- Towel, toiletries, wet wipes
- Torch/flashlight or headlamp + spare batteries
- Camera + memory cards
- Water bottle (trucks provide filtered water)
- Insect repellent, sunscreen, sunglasses
- Money belt, padlock, penknife
- Laundry detergent, clothesline, pegs
- Small first-aid kit & vaccination certificates
- Pillow & sleeping bag (for camping tours)
- Gloves (for gorilla trekking)
- Spare glasses or contact lenses
- Towel for use at the swimming pool



Keep in Mind / Day Pack



If your tour includes travel to the Okavango Delta/ Khwai conservation area, Serengeti or the Masai Mara, you will need to pack your essentials into your day bag for this portion of the trip. Your main luggage will stay safely stored on the truck while you're away for 2-3 days, and you'll be reunited with your bags once you return. Must fit **toiletries and clothes for up to 2 nights** when separated from the truck.

reunited with your bags once you return. Must fit **toiletries and clothes for up to 2 nights** when separated from the truck.

Meals on Tour:

Included Meals

Your tour includes three meals per day (unless otherwise specified in your tour dossier). Please refer to your specific day-to-day tour itinerary, which indicates which meals are included each day, for example: breakfast, lunch, and/or dinner.

Personal Medical Kit

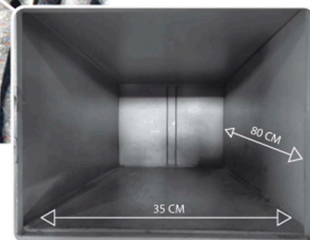
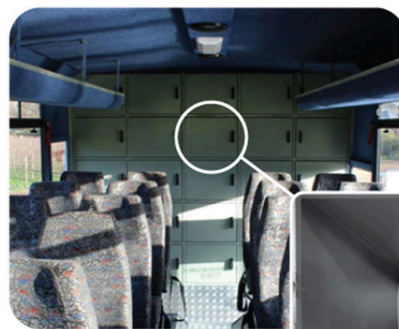
- Suggested items for a personal kit:
- Antihistamine cream or tablets
- Lip balm, Sunscreen & after-sun balm
- Pain killers, Anti-diarrhoea remedy
- Moisturiser, Rehydration salts
- Band-aids / Elastoplast
- Insect repellent, Antiseptic cream
- Sterile dressings, Personal hand sanitizer

Luggage Allowance

Camping & Accommodated) Tours:

- Limit: 1 backpack/Hiking bag/duffel bag (max 23 kg) + 1 day pack (Smaller backpack).
- **If you can't lift it yourself, you've packed too much!**
- Larger baggage requests can be emailed to your Tour Consultant (subject to availability).
- Recommend using a soft, flexible duffel bag (hard suitcases or trolley bags are not recommended as they don't always fit in lockers and are difficult to handle on safari trucks).
- Locker size: **±35cm x 35cm x 80cm deep.****

*** Some Trucks may have one large luggage storage compartment instead of individual lockers.*



Clients doing a Camping Tour

- Tent – Provided - Est Size 2.5x2.5 (Base) 2.3 Height
- Sleeping Bag - Bring your own (not supplied)
- For hygiene reasons, sleeping bags cannot be rented.

Cooking on Tour

Your guides handle the cooking, but you're welcome to share your culinary skills if you'd like. The more you participate, the better the group dynamic becomes.

- Meals are prepared on two gas burners in a group setting by your Guide, so it's not possible to cook multiple specialized meals simultaneously.
- The Guides shop mostly at supermarkets only for hygiene and sustainability reasons.
- All meals indicated as included in the package i.e. breakfast, lunch, and dinner, are prepared and served by your Guide from the truck. Meals are cooked on board, allowing you to dine under the stars or open air, while enjoying the sights and sounds of Africa. A table and small fold-up chair are provided during mealtimes for your comfort.

Meal Structure

Breakfast:

- Served early, around 6–7 am, before departures or activities.
- Usually simple: tea, coffee, breads, spreads, cereals, yoghurt, fruit.
- Hot breakfasts (scrambled eggs, porridge, bacon, beans) are served if time allows.

Lunch:

- Typically, a roadside picnic during travel (which may include a pack lunch).
- Quick, filling meals such as sandwiches or salads (rice, pasta, tuna, green salad).
- Prepared and served in about 45 minutes.

Dinner:

- Guides focus on a substantial meal with protein, vegetables, and carbohydrates.
- Typical dishes: braais (BBQ), stews, bobotie (minced meat), spaghetti, chicken, or fish.

- Mattresses (5cm thickness) are provided.
- Pillows - Bring your own (not supplied)
- Flashlight/ Torch or Headlamp
- Recommended to pack your own towel - Bring your own (not supplied)

Dietary Requirements:

If you have special dietary requirements, please inform us at the time of booking. It's difficult to advise suppliers once the tour has started.

Please confirm in writing if you have:

- Allergies (e.g., nuts, milk, fish)
- Vegetarian or other dietary needs

The guides will do their best to accommodate dietary intolerances such as gluten or lactose, but specialty foods are not guaranteed on tour. Guests are advised to bring or purchase their own specialty items if required.

What we can and cannot accommodate

- Celiac / Gluten-free: accepted
- Vegetarian: accepted
- Vegan / Pescatarian: accepted, but guests should bring specialty items (e.g., tofu, soya milk, quinoa)
- Lactose intolerance: accepted; lactose products will be excluded where possible, but guests should bring preferred items if required
- Halal & Kosher: Available only if requested at the time of booking. Vegetarian meals are normally offered as standard.



Food preferences (likes/dislikes) cannot be guaranteed; only allergies or life-threatening dietary requirements are prioritized.

Additional Notes

- Evening briefings often follow dinner; guests can discuss dietary or other tour matters with guides.
- Food in East Africa may be less varied and slightly lower in standard than in Southern Africa due to longer travel days, higher costs, and limited availability.
- Vegan or specialized diets may require guests to bring supplemental items from supermarkets for their own use. Guides can store these in the fridge.
- Due to the remote locations of some of our suppliers in Africa, food variety may occasionally be limited.

Overnight Accommodation

- Accommodation providers listed in this dossier (itineraries) are our preferred options, but changes may occur due to unforeseen or unplanned circumstances.
- If this happens, we will arrange alternative accommodation of a similar standard, though en-suite facilities are not always guaranteed.

Bed Configurations

Please note that most accommodation providers generally offer single beds, which are often pushed together for couples. Double beds can be requested; however, these are not guaranteed and are always subject to availability with each supplier.

A request remains a request and cannot be guaranteed in advance. In some cases, you may wish to reconfirm your preference directly at the property upon arrival, as availability may have changed (for example, a double bed may not have been available at the time of booking but could become available on the day).

Beverages

- Your guide will often make stops during the day where you can purchase cold beverages (Even snacks) along the route.
- Please note that most overnight properties do not allow consumption of personal beverages on their premises. All drinks (including alcoholic beverages) must be purchased from the property's bar or on-site outlets.

We kindly ask that any beverages bought elsewhere are not be consumed at the overnight properties and that you support the establishments.

Overland Trucks & Roads

Purpose-Built Trucks

Transport is a key part of our tours. These are true road trips with long drives, rough terrain, and the occasional mechanical challenge (digging out of mud can even be part of the adventure!). Remember, we travel in trucks, not buses, and the crew are therefore truck drivers, not bus drivers.

The trucks are custom-built to handle Africa's tough conditions. They are maintained carefully and rotated regularly, but breakdowns can still happen. If they do, please be patient, as the team will do everything possible to get you moving again.

The trucks use a heavy-duty spring pack suspension rather than coach-style air shocks. This makes for a firmer ride but is far more reliable in rough conditions. Even if a spring fails, the truck can still travel to a repair point, unlike with air shocks. Rest assured, any issue will be treated as a top priority by your guides and our operations team.



These trucks are the newest, most modern fleets in Africa. The trucks are built to the highest safety standards and approved by the South African NRCS.

Camping and accommodated trucks seat 20 (max 20 guests) and have extra storage for equipment.

Trucks are serviced every 8,000–10,000 km, and tyres are replaced well before legal limits. Each vehicle is designed for durability, comfort, and safety in tough African conditions.

Route

- Cape Town to Victoria Falls Tour (North & South)
- Livingstone to Nairobi Tour (North & South)
- Masai Mara and Gorilla Tour
- Namibia Explorer Tour

20 - Seater Truck Features

- Fold-out awning for cooking
- Tinted windows and additional shading
- Individual USB ports
- Large drop-down windows
- Camping equipment onboard for camping clients



Distances & Road Conditions

Traveling through Africa's vast landscapes means spending plenty of time on the road. The routes cover long distances and diverse terrain (part of what makes the journey so unique).

What to Expect

- Average driving distance: around 350 km per day
- Occasionally, longer stretches of up to 650 km
- Speed: Our trucks generally travel at a maximum speed of around 100 km/h, but may drop to as low as 30 kph on rough or unsafe sections.
- Roads range from tarred to gravel and unpaved tracks
- Road conditions can change daily due to weather, limited maintenance, or unexpected obstacles
- Roads may be washed away, requiring alternative routes
- Your truck may rattle more than usual due to road conditions
- Driving can be dusty, especially on dry dirt roads

Subcontracted & Safari Vehicles

During peak season (July–October), some tours may use subcontracted trucks of a similar standard.

Serengeti, Masai Mara, or Khwai Conservation

Safari drives in parks such as Serengeti, Masai Mara, or Khwai Conservation are done in 4x4 vehicles suited to the terrain.

Etosha National Park

Game viewing drives in Etosha National Park are conducted in the truck.

Optional 4x4 game drives are available at an extra cost, but the truck follows similar routes in the park and often provides an equally, if not more, enjoyable experience. Many clients have shared that the truck offers a better overall game viewing experience and feel that the extra cost of the 4x4 is generally not worthwhile.

- Some sections may be bumpy, sandy, or slippery
- Wildlife, livestock, or local traffic may occasionally slow progress
- Remote areas may have limited facilities and services along the route
- Keep in mind that roads are maintained by governments, so standards can vary greatly.
- Namibia's roads, in particular are really bad.
- Seasonal floods or rains may temporarily block certain roads

Electricity Supply

- Reliable electricity is not always guaranteed while travelling in Africa.
- Remote areas may have no access to electricity.
- Some locations rely on generators or solar, which may switch off at certain hours and provide intermittent power.

Load Shedding in South Africa

In countries like South Africa, planned power outages ("load shedding") can occur, sometimes lasting 2 hours or more per day.

- Load shedding (planned power outages) may occur to manage electricity demand.
- Outages can happen with little notice: typically, 2.5 hours in the Western Cape, up to 4.5 hours elsewhere.
- Some activities or facilities may be temporarily unavailable during these times.
- While we do our best to minimize disruptions, load shedding is beyond our control.

Laundry & Handwashing

- Some camps offer basic hand-washing facilities.
- Laundry services may be available in Swakopmund, Victoria Falls, and select East African camps, but availability is not guaranteed.
- Short layovers may mean laundry cannot be completed in time.
- Bring a small amount of eco-friendly hand-washing powder for basic washing and drying.
- Follow camp rules for where to hang laundry; avoid rails, windows, or balconies



Safari Drives

- Stay quiet and avoid sudden movements to maximize wildlife viewing.
- Binoculars are highly recommended.
- Wildlife sightings cannot be guaranteed; nature is unpredictable.
- Guides and local partners are experienced and knowledgeable about the best times and locations for spotting animals.

Responsible Safari Driving and Game Viewing:

We aim to provide a memorable safari while always prioritising safety, wildlife welfare, and a responsible approach over chasing crowds. Our guides follow responsible practices and will not pursue wildlife in a way that disrupts the environment or other guests. Our partnered suppliers are also instructed to step back if situations become crowded or chaotic, ensuring a more enjoyable and ethical safari for everyone.

Water

- **Stay hydrated:** Drink at least 2 litres of water per day, more in hot conditions. Dehydration is one of the most common issues on tour.
- **Tap water:** Local tap water is not always safe to drink, follow your guides' advice.
- **Filtered water:** All trucks are equipped with water filtration systems, providing safe drinking water while travelling with the truck. On "off days" when you are not travelling with the truck, such as in Khwai Conservation, the Okavango Delta, Masai Mara, Zanzibar, or Serengeti, the truck filtration systems will not be available.
- **Bottled water:** Available at most campsites and local shops, but it can be more expensive. Guides will advise where to purchase if preferred.

- unless allowed.
- If using laundry services, check with reception for costs and timing to ensure items are returned before departure.

Local SIM Cards

- Instead of hunting for local SIMs, we recommend using [Airalo eSIMs](#). You can download your data plan before you arrive to stay connected instantly.
- Please note that signal coverage may be limited in remote regions.

Money

Good money management helps you get the most out of your tour. Plan your budget to suit your interests and enjoy the experiences that excite you most. Optional activities add extra adventure and are listed in your tour dossier so you can choose what's right for you.

Cash

- Bring US Dollars printed after 2008 as older, or damaged notes may not be accepted.
- Request a mix of small and large denominations (small bills for tips, large for payments).
- Carry cash in a flat money belt, with a small amount easily accessible for daily use.
- USD is mostly accepted in Botswana, Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Tanzania

Credit Cards

- Widely accepted in major cities.
- Visa and MasterCard work best; Diners and Amex are less reliable.
- Cards should have a chip and PIN for ATM use.
- Inform your bank before travelling to avoid card blocks.

ATM / Debit Cards

- ATMs are available in most towns and cities for withdrawing local currency.
- Ensure your card has a chip and PIN.
- Withdraw enough cash for your stay, factoring in activity and meal costs.

Street Vendors

Avoid changing money with street traders, even if they offer better rates. It's risky, illegal, and unsafe to display foreign currency in public.

WATER BOTTLE

Please pack a reusable water bottle. Filtered water will be available for refills as per above, and several overnight properties also offer refill stations. Having your bottle with you on game drives is highly recommended



Wi-Fi

- Vehicles do not have onboard Wi-Fi.
- Some stops may offer Wi-Fi (free or paid), but signal strength and reliability vary and cannot be guaranteed.
- Where Wi-Fi is available, it may only be accessible in communal areas such as reception, not in rooms.

Okavango Delta / Khwai Conservation Area

- No mobile signal or Wi-Fi while in the Delta.
- You will be offline for 2-3 days.
- Inform family and friends beforehand so they know you'll be out of contact.
- Being unreachable in the Delta is normal and not a cause for concern.

Tipping Guidelines

Restaurants:

- Tipping is generally expected.
- ~10% for good service.
- More for exceptional service.
- No tip is necessary for poor service.

Taxis & Similar Services:

- Tipping is discretionary and not always expected.
- If unsure, ask your guides.

Porters & Car Guards:

- Tipping is expected.
- Ask your guides for appropriate amounts

Note:

For the 2 days in the Okavango Delta / Khwai Conservation area, only cash is accepted. Commonly accepted currencies are USD, GBP, or EUR.

Health / Medical

- Inform us of any medical conditions or prescription medications (e.g., diabetes, asthma), especially if medication needs temperature control.

Carrying Medication on Tour

- Each truck has an insulated cooler box for drinks, which guests are welcome to use.
- If you need to refrigerate medication, this is the best place to store it.
- Store medication in a hard, watertight container to protect it from ice, water, and drinks.
- Trucks are also equipped with a freezer for medication that requires cooler temperatures.
- Please note that there are times when you won't be with the truck (e.g., 2-night stays in Khwai Conservation area, Serengeti, Masai Mara, and Zanzibar). During these periods, cool storage may be limited.
- Guests are responsible for keeping the cooler clean and providing ice if needed.

Medical Treatment on Tour

Extended treatment may require signing off on the tour.

You may rejoin later if fit to continue.

All costs for missed days are your responsibility, but your operator can provide a letter of support for insurance claims.

Personal Hygiene

- Keep hands clean, wash and sanitize frequently, especially before eating and after using the restroom. Bring your own sanitizer.
- Practice good dishwashing hygiene: use antibacterial soap and wash thoroughly, as this helps prevent group illness.
- Metal plates are provided as the most hygienic option.
- Traveller's diarrhoea is common, usually mild, and often caused by new foods, water, or anti-malarial medication, rather than food poisoning. Please inform your

in local currency.

[Read our Detailed Tipping Guide](#)

Tipping the Crew / On Tour



Tipping or gratuities for the crew are not compulsory. They are entirely at your discretion and should only be given if you feel the crew has delivered excellent service. You should never feel pressured to tip. Your comfort and judgement are what matter most.

- You may tip the crew if you feel they have done a good job or gone above and beyond.
- The easiest method is to elect one person in the group to collect and distribute the tips.
- Recommended tip: USD 2-5 per person, per day, per guide.
- If there are 3 crew members, prepare three envelopes, each labelled with the crew member's name.
- Place whatever you feel is fair into each envelope, and the elected person can hand them over at the end of the tour.
- If you do not feel the crew deserves a tip, you are under no obligation to give one.
- Remember: tipping is a gesture of appreciation, not an expectation.

(CPAP) Machines - Continuous Positive Airway Pressure

- Reliable electricity is not always guaranteed while travelling in Africa.
- Remote areas, such as Khwai Conservation Area (Botswana), may have no access to electricity.
- Some locations rely on generators, which may switch off at certain hours and provide intermittent power.
- In countries like South Africa, planned power outages ("load shedding") can occur, sometimes lasting 2 hours or more per day.
- Guests who rely on CPAP machines should plan accordingly and bring any necessary battery backups or alternatives.

Vaccinations



Important: This is for guidance only. Always consult your doctor or a travel clinic for the latest info and requirements.

guide immediately if you experience any symptoms.

- Maintaining hygiene in hot climates is vital for your health and the enjoyment of the whole group.

Safety & Security

Your safety and peace of mind are our top priorities.

Please read the following carefully

- Our experienced drivers always prioritise your safety
- Regular breaks are taken to rest and stretch legs
- Please be patient on long or bumpy sections as this is all part of the adventure!
- Please use your safety belt while the truck is in motion, as unexpected bumps can occur at any time.
- For your safety, kindly keep movement inside the truck to a minimum while we are driving.
- Remember: the journey is as much a part of the experience as the destination

On the Vehicle and Camps / Overnight Property

- Vehicles have safes for passports, cash, and credit cards. Please use them.
- Safes are not suitable for cameras, phones, or electronics. Always keep your day pack with you.
- Lock your bags with a padlock and use safes at camps when available.
- Camps are generally safe, but stay alert and use common sense. Tourists can be targets anywhere.
- Your belongings are your responsibility; Your Guide/s are not liable for lost, stolen, or damaged items. Travel insurance is strongly recommended, especially for valuables.

General Safety on Tour

- Report even minor illness to your guide promptly. Many travellers feel unwell in the first weeks due to unfamiliar germs.
- HIV/AIDS awareness: Please be careful, practical, and act responsibly and take necessary precautions to protect yourself.

**Foreign Language Tours - Translators
 Translators Guided Tours - (German and Italian)**

Recommended vaccinations for Africa include:

- Hepatitis A (Havrix) | Yellow Fever | Rabies
- Cholera | Tetanus booster

Yellow Fever

- Mandatory if you are coming from, or travelling through, a Yellow Fever-infected area.
- Proof of vaccination may be required to enter certain countries, especially if travelling north of Victoria Falls.

Malaria

Malaria is a serious health risk in Africa, but you can stay safe by being vigilant with prevention and medication.

Key points:

- Avoid mosquito bites: Wear long sleeves, long pants, socks, and shoes after dark, as most bites occur below the knee.
- Use nets: Keep mosquito nets closed, especially at sunset when mosquitoes are most active.
- Take prophylactics: Consult your doctor about effective antimalarial tablets.
- Use insect repellent: Bring plenty of DEET-based repellent (stick or lotion) and apply frequently.

First Aid

A First Aid Kit is available on the truck for emergencies. Guides are qualified in First Aid, but the kit is not a dispensary; bring your own personal medical kit.

Local Laws & Customs

- Obey all laws of the countries you visit, particularly regarding drugs, firearms, and contraband. Violations may result in immediate removal from the tour with no refund.
- Respect local customs and cultural norms as we are guests in each country.
- Petty theft is common in some areas:
 - Avoid bringing unnecessary valuables (jewellery, expensive electronics, watches).
 - Never leave personal possessions unattended.
 - Walk in groups, especially at night.

- Available on some Explorer and Classic tours for guests less confident in English.
- Translators are often foreign students or volunteers, not professional guides or certified interpreters.
- Their role is to assist with communication between the English-speaking guide and guests, not to provide full line-by-line translation unless specifically requested.
- Tours are conducted in English by the guide; translators provide general clarification and support.
- Translators may not know all the details about locations, logistics, or wildlife. The guide remains the primary source of information.
- They enhance the experience but are not a substitute for the guide. Guests should manage expectations accordingly.

Lost Luggage:

- Airlines may occasionally misplace luggage. While AOT can assist by advising on suitable joining points and the nearest airports, it remains the traveller's responsibility to follow the correct procedures.
- If your luggage does not arrive, you must obtain a lost luggage report from the airline before leaving the airport and contact your travel insurance provider as soon as possible.
- All costs associated with reuniting your luggage with the tour are the responsibility of the traveller. Please keep in mind that your bag will need to catch up with the group, which can take time. We strongly recommend arranging with the airline to send the bag ahead by a few days to ensure it reaches the tour successfully.

Climate and Weather Conditions

Africa's weather can be extreme and unpredictable, so it's important to check expected conditions for your specific tour and pack accordingly. Expect heat in the dry season and rain in the wet season. It's all part of the adventure!

General Climate Tips

- The African sun is intense – use SPF 50+ sunscreen and wear a hat.
- October–April: very hot, occasional rain.

Criminal Matters

- Your Operator reserves the right to request a police report if a criminal matter is brought to our attention while on tour. A thorough investigation will be conducted to ensure due diligence and that unbiased facts are presented.

Summary

- Use safes, lock bags, and stay vigilant.
- Keep guides informed about your health.
- Respect local laws and customs.
- Insure valuables and luggage.

Alcohol & Drugs

- We encourage you to relax and enjoy a drink around the campfire, but excessive drinking from morning to night can lead to dehydration and unpleasant experiences.
- Most camps have bars; please drink responsibly for your own enjoyment and safety.

Drugs

- All tours have a zero-tolerance policy for illegal drugs.
- Police regularly inspect trucks and camps, and multiple border crossings mean possession can lead to serious legal consequences.

Photography & Drone Usage

You're welcome to ask your guide to stop for photos. Everyone's photography needs are different. Be sure to bring enough memory cards, spare batteries, and charging cables before departure, as these can be hard to find en route and charging facilities may be limited.

If you're visiting National Park, you'll likely take many photos, so please protect your camera gear from dust. Some camps offer power points to recharge batteries, but you'll need to bring your own adaptors and connections

Drone Usage

Each country has its own strict drone regulations, managed by the local Civil Aviation Authority, and drones are banned in all National Parks and game reserves. Permits are often required, and failure to comply can result in fines, confiscation, or travel delays at borders and park entrances.

We strongly discourage bringing drones on tour, as they can:

- May–September: dry, with cold nights (sometimes below 0°C).
- Weather patterns vary by region and year, so pack for all seasons and expect the unexpected!

Regional Overview

Kenya & Tanzania:

Best wildlife viewing from Dec–Mar (calving season) and Jul–Oct (river crossings). Expect warm, dry days and cooler evenings.

Uganda:

Travel is good year-round. Best months: Jun–Oct and Dec–Mar. Rainy seasons (Mar–Apr) make gorilla trekking muddy but rewarding. Average daytime temperature: 25°C.

South Africa Kruger & KwaZulu-Natal:

Best safaris Jun–Oct (dry season). Cape Town: Best weather Sep–Nov and Jan–Mar. Cooler, rainy winter from Apr–Sep.

Mozambique & Malawi:

Best travel months May–Nov (dry season). Expect hot, humid, and wet conditions Dec–Feb.

Botswana:

Rainy season Nov–Apr (great for birding); best game viewing May–Oct when the Delta floods and animals gather at water sources.

Namibia:

Hot days, cool nights year-round. Coastal areas are mild; inland areas can reach high temperatures with cold nights.

Eswatini (Swaziland):

Best weather May–Oct (dry winter). Don't miss the Reed Dance (Aug–Sep) or First Fruits Festival (Jan).

Zimbabwe Victoria Falls:

Is at its fullest in Apr–May; lower water levels Sep–Dec allows swimming in the Devil's Pool. Best safari time May–Sep (dry season).

Sustainable Travel

AOT is committed to the principles of responsible environmental tourism. We kindly ask that you respect the customs, laws, and environment of the countries and areas we visit. Please be 'green-minded' and dispose of rubbish responsibly. A dustbin is available on board, and

- Cause delays at border crossings or park gates
- Violate Park policies and conservation rules
- Disturb wildlife and fellow travellers
- Please be respectful and considerate of others and the environment by leaving drones at home.

Respectful Photography

- Do not take photos at border posts, government buildings, or of military or police personnel.
- Always ask your guide first before photographing local people or cultural groups as in some areas, photography is restricted or may require a small fee (e.g., the Masai or Himba).
- Remember, we are guests in the countries we visit, and respecting local customs ensures a positive experience for everyone.
- Reminder, there may be fellow travellers that do not consent that their pictures are taken, therefore please ensure you prior permission to take a photo of some-one

Optional Activities

Optional activities can be booked during your tour. Availability may be limited by season, daylight, timing, or camp arrival, and rates are subject to change. Some activities may overlap with included itinerary items; in these cases, the included activity will be forfeited. Your guide will help you select safe, professional options, and some activities may require group decisions.

Pre-bookable options

For information on pre-bookable experiences, please contact our Sales team or refer to the tour dossier/itinerary for the options available on your specific tour.

Do What You Can Afford

We keep our tour prices low so you can choose the optional activities that best suit your interests and budget. These experiences add variety and excitement to your journey and are selected for their value, fun, and guest feedback. Participation is entirely your choice, as they are not operated or endorsed by your operator.

we ensure that all areas are thoroughly cleaned before leaving our campsites.

Why Optional Activities Aren't Included

Not everyone can or wants to do them all. Availability depends on time, season, and weather. Activities are run by specialist operators for your safety and enjoyment. African Overland Tours handles the travel logistics, while the professional operators run the activities themselves.



Important Note:

For gorilla or chimp trekking, an additional non-refundable conservation permit (priced in USD) must be pre-booked in advance.

These permits are **not included** in your tour price and must be secured prior to travel, as only a limited number are issued per day. Passport details are required to confirm your permit, and all bookings are strictly subject to availability.

Travel with Purpose:

We are proud to partner with operators who share our commitment to protecting the people, places, and wildlife of Africa. When you travel with us, you are supporting the communities in which we operate.

How You Can Help: The SUITCASE Initiative

Many of our guests ask how they can give back to the local communities they encounter. You can make a tangible difference simply by utilizing the extra space in your luggage.

If you have room to spare, consider packing:

- Stationery & School Supplies: Pens, pencils, notebooks, and crayons.
- Reading Material: Children's books or educational magazines.
- Clothing: Clean, gently used clothes and shoes.
- Non-perishable Food: Canned goods or dry staples.

Where do your donations go?

You can hand these items to your crew or drop them off at the major tour starting locations. They are gathered and distributed directly to the schools, clinics, and community projects most in need along your route.

Our Environmental Footprint

Beyond physical donations, your journey supports long-term sustainability through:

- **Green Seats:** Contributions toward initiatives that drive lasting environmental change.
- **Pledge a Tree:** In partnership with the Greenpop Foundation, we work to restore degraded forests and protect vital water catchment areas across Sub-Saharan Africa.
- **Jars of Hope:** Supporting food security for impoverished communities through the distribution of nutritious meal jars.



Note: Participation is entirely voluntary. Whether you bring a suitcase full of supplies or simply travel with an open heart, you are helping us ensure that tourism remains a force for good in Africa.