

## 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](mailto: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



## Local Park Fee & Activity Payment

This amount needs to be paid in cash to our guide on day 1 of the tour. Please make sure you are aware of this payment. These amounts are kept low to avoid guides having to carry large amounts of cash with them on back-to-back tours. This cash will be used directly as trip funds and goes straight to the local providers.

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## Tour Dossier A-Z Guidelines

### (1) Accommodation & Camping Equipment

Depending on the style of tour booked, your accommodation arrangements will be as follows:

- **Accommodated Tours:** Although every effort will be made to provide the accommodation as detailed in the itinerary, the operator reserves the right to alter any accommodation listed for one of equal or better standard should the need arise. Accommodation is based on single or twin share / double rooms with private facilities. All establishments are rated 3-4 star.
- **Camping Tours (Fully Serviced):** The operator provides spacious, comfortable tents accommodating 2 people each. Each tent is insect-proof and equipped with a built-in groundsheet for insulation, as well as two large aerating windows with mosquito netting. Each passenger is provided with a camp bed, mattress, sleeping bag, small pillow, and a comfortable folding safari chair. A dining table is provided for meals, and a comprehensive set of cooking and camping equipment, water containers, and spare parts is carried in the vehicle. Participants need only bring along their personal effects.

### (2) Age Limit

There is no strict age policy. Groups are pleasantly informal, usually comprising a wide range of nationalities in the 40 to 70 year age group, and tours are aimed at healthy, active participants looking for an adventure holiday. This is purely a guideline; older and younger adventurers will be accepted on request. Clients should satisfy themselves prior to booking that they are fit and able to complete the itinerary of their choice.

### (3) Booking Conditions

Please ensure that you are aware of the Booking Conditions, which can be found with the Booking Form. If you do not have a copy, please request one, as your travelling on the safari implies acceptance of these conditions. Should your booking be handled by an Agent or Tour Operator, their Booking Conditions will be applicable.

### (4) Binoculars

When visiting wildlife areas, it is essential that participants have a pair of binoculars for their personal use in order to benefit fully from the safari.

### (5) Border Crossings

The following border posts are the expected points of entry/departure used for our cross-border itineraries:

- South Africa / Namibia: Rietfontein, Noordoewer
- South Africa / Botswana: Pontdrift, Platjan
- South Africa / Zimbabwe: Beit Bridge
- Botswana / Zimbabwe: Kazungula, Pandamatenga, and Plumtree
- Namibia / Botswana: Mohebo, Ngoma

## **(6) Border & Police Officials**

Always be courteous, polite, and patient at border posts or when dealing with police officers and official bureaucrats. An arrogant attitude will only create problems for yourself and for the rest of the group.

## **(7) Complaints**

Should clients have a complaint against the operator, please inform the Tour Leader while on tour so they may attempt to rectify the matter immediately. Should the matter not be resolved on tour, please write to us as soon as possible. The operator must receive the complaint within 30 days of completion of the tour so that the matter may be investigated; claims may not be considered outside that timeframe. The operator will not entertain complaints due to Loss of Enjoyment when the full land arrangements have been successfully provided.

## **(8) Concept (Camping Tours)**

Group size is kept relatively small with a maximum of 16 participants. Our camping tours are Fully Serviced, meaning no participation is required by the clients. The operator's staff (3 staff members when there are more than 6 clients, and 2 staff members when there are fewer than 6 clients) erect and dismantle tents and take care of all camp duties, including cooking, washing of eating and cooking utensils, and loading/packing the vehicle. The concept behind the operator's tour is for guests to sit back and relax while the crew takes care of you. Of course, if clients wish to help out, they are always welcome.

## **(9) Conservation**

Most countries visited are members of CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora), which restricts the import and export of numerous species and their products. Please do not purchase products made from ivory or skins, as these may be confiscated by customs.

- Please be aware that the purchase of large wooden carvings places a heavy strain on forest resources; we recommend purchasing smaller items instead.
- In the interest of Wildlife Conservation and Ecotourism, we ask you to completely refrain from purchasing any animal skins, ivory, or any wildlife products.
- In the interest of protecting the marine environment, please do not damage or touch coral with your hands or feet when snorkelling or diving (e.g., in Mozambique).

## **(10) Spending Money & Currency Exchange**

We recommend travelling with your local currency (EUR, USD, AUD, NZD, GBP) in CASH, as this is the easiest way to exchange into the local currency of the country you are travelling in. Most lodges visited accept credit cards for meals; however, American Express and Diners Club are NOT readily accepted. We recommend exchanging foreign currency at the bank located at your airport of arrival, or your guide can assist in arranging this upon entry to each country. It is also possible to draw money from ATMs throughout most tours every few days.

- South Africa: South African Rands (ZAR) are used.

- Namibia: Namibian Dollars (NAD) or South African Rands (ZAR) are used.
- Botswana: Botswana Pula (BWP) are used.
- Zimbabwe: US Dollars (USD) are used at markets and by informal traders (bring small denominations). We recommend using a credit card for most major transactions.

### (11) Facilities on Safari (Camping)

Most campsites we stay at have full facilities (e.g., hot & cold running water, showers, sit-down flush toilets). However, variations apply in specific remote areas:

- Spitzkoppe: We bush camp here; no showers are available, and there are only long-drop toilets.
- Moremi Wildlife Reserve & Savute: We stay in private campsites where the operator provides our own mobile bush toilets and showers. Participants are usually very quick to adapt to these natural safari conditions.

### (12) Flight Check-In and Transit Times

Please check in early at airports (at least 1-2 hours for South African domestic flights, and 2-3 hours for regional and international flights) as flights are occasionally overbooked. Please be aware that during peak season, delays are often encountered on scheduled flights. A minimum of 3-4 hours must be allowed for airport transits/transfers, especially at large hubs such as London, Paris, and Johannesburg.

### (13) Food, Meals, and Drinks

Meal frameworks differ slightly based on your selected tour type:

- **Accommodated Tours:** These are run on a bed & breakfast basis, with most dinners included on specific itineraries. Lunches are NOT included, and the tour stops at small cafes, restaurants, or supermarkets to purchase light lunch items. We suggest budgeting approximately USD 5–10 for lunch and USD 20–30 for dinner per person when meals are not explicitly included. Soft drinks, mineral water, and alcoholic beverages are for the client's own expense.
- **Camping Tours:** A continental breakfast consisting of cereals, bread, toast, jams, tea, coffee, hot chocolate, and milk is served in the mornings. On the Botswana Adventure, a brunch with eggs and bacon is sometimes prepared when in camp after a morning game drive. Lunches are generally not included, prompting stops at local cafes or supermarkets. Dinner is a hot meal often prepared over an open campfire and enjoyed at a lantern-lit table. Note that the main meal is served in the evening. All our meat is pre-purchased in Cape Town, Swakopmund, and Kasane, vacuum-packed, and kept frozen in vehicle freezers.
- **General Beverage Info:** Teas and coffees are readily available while in camp. Mineral water, soft drinks, and alcoholic beverages are not included but can be purchased en route and kept cold in the onboard fridges. Please feel free to bring along a bottle of your favourite drink or liquor. Please also bear in mind that in remote areas, fresh fruit and vegetables can be difficult to obtain, and during summer (September to April), fresh produce may only keep for 2 to 3 days.

### (14) Game Drives

Please note that game drives are conducted early in the morning and in the late afternoon. Animals rest and take shelter under the shade of trees during the midday heat. The group will rest and take time off to absorb their surroundings during this period. We do not conduct a

continuous, full day of game drives.

### **(15) Group Size & Rooming**

Scheduled tours and safaris run with a group size of between 4 to 16 participants. All camping safaris are sold on a sharing basis. If you are a single traveller, we will pair you with another person of the same sex. If you wish to guarantee a private single room or tent, an additional single supplement charge will apply.

### **(16) Health & Hygiene**

All passengers must be in good health before undertaking a safari. We visit remote areas with limited or no medical facilities. If you are on medication of any sort, please ensure you bring a sufficient supply for the duration of your journey, as certain brands may not be available in Africa. Strict hygiene precautions are taken by the crew, but stomach upsets can occasionally arise from changes in water. Do not drink water unless you are sure it is safe. Tap water is safe to drink in major parts of Botswana, Namibia, and South Africa; if you are ever in doubt, please **verify with your guide.**

### **(17) Inoculations, Vaccinations & Malaria**

Inoculations and vaccinations, where required, must be obtained in advance prior to departure. It is not possible to obtain these while on safari. Taking malaria tablets is highly recommended but optional—please contact your local doctor or travel clinic for professional advice.

The risk of contracting malaria in Southern Africa is statistically lower during the dry winter period from June to December. Consult your nearest vaccination centre or pharmacist for up-to-date brand recommendations. Several modern anti-malaria tablet brands have notable side effects that can impact your health, particularly if you take other medications or suffer from depression or irregular blood pressure. Most regimes require starting the medication days or weeks before entering a malarial zone. We recommend taking your tablets in the evening to avoid nauseous side effects during the day.

Mosquitoes usually bite between dusk and dawn. The best prevention is active avoidance:

- Cover up by wearing long sleeves and long pants in the evening.
- Keep your tent doors and mesh completely zipped closed.
- Apply an effective insect repellent regularly.

### **(18) Insurance**

#### ***COMPREHENSIVE TRAVEL INSURANCE IS COMPULSORY FOR ALL PASSENGERS TRAVELLING ON OUR SAFARIS!***

It is the client's sole responsibility to ensure that they carry correct and sufficient comprehensive travel and medical insurance for themselves and any dependants. This insurance must cover, but not be limited to: trip cancellation and curtailment, baggage loss or damage, medical expenses, emergency evacuation/travel, repatriation assistance, and personal accident. It should be taken out prior to leaving your country of residence.

Neither africanoverlandtours.com nor the operator group of companies, its agents, or staff can be held responsible or liable for loss, damage, or theft of personal luggage and belongings, nor for personal injury, accident, or illness. Please be aware that certain optional adventure activities undertaken on tour may not be covered by standard policies; check your policy exclusions carefully. If necessary, insure valuable single items (like high-end cameras)

separately. Always carry a hard copy of your insurance policy with you on safari.

### **(19) Itineraries & African Conditions**

Please note that the route followed is flexible and depends entirely on local conditions. We will do our best to keep to the published itinerary but cannot be held liable for changes beyond our control, or those made in the best interest or safety of our clients and crew. Travelling in Africa is unpredictable; by the very nature of remote travel, there are unforeseen challenges to overcome, and passengers should possess a spirit of adventure. Unforeseen circumstances due to road conditions, weather, mechanical breakdowns, or border delays can change the itinerary. Certain days involve long travel times to cover massive distances. PLEASE COME PREPARED.

### **(20) Language**

Our tours and safaris are conducted in English. Some specific departures may have Italian-speaking translators accompanying the groups.

### **(21) Local Laws & Customs**

We are guests in each country we visit, and it is only good manners that we comply with local customs. All participants are required to obey the laws and regulations of the countries visited. Any passengers contravening local laws may be required to leave the tour immediately with no right to a refund of the tour fare.

### **(22) Luggage Constraints**

Space in the vehicle is strictly limited. For safety and operational reasons, your luggage is restricted to:

- Main Bag: 1 soft-sided bag (such as an inexpensive canvas bag or soft duffel) not exceeding 20kgs. Wheels are acceptable, but the body must be soft. Rigid suitcases are entirely unsuitable for our safari vehicles. You may also use a frame-less, medium rucksack.
- Daypack: 1 small handbag or daypack containing money, travel documents, and camera equipment. This will be allowed inside the main cabin, placed by the passenger's feet.
- Money Belt: 1 waist pouch or money belt for personal safety.
- Excursion Note (Botswana Adventure): When travelling into Moremi for the 2-night / 3-day excursion, you must pack down into your small daypack with clothes for those days. Your large main bag will not be taken into the park and will be left securely in the operator's main vehicle.

*Excess luggage will be stored at the passenger's own responsibility and expense.*

### **(23) Maps & Field Guides**

To fully appreciate the environment, we highly recommend bringing along the following reference books:

- *Roberts Birds of Southern Africa* - G L Maclean
- *Newman's Birds of Southern Africa* - Kenneth Newman
- *Field Guide to Mammals of Southern Africa* - Chris & Tilde Stuart
- *Southern Africa Mammals* - Robin Frandsen

### **(24) Medical Kit**

All of our guides have received professional Wilderness First Aid training and carry a comprehensive medical kit on the vehicle. For personal comfort, we suggest bringing a small kit of your own containing:

- Plasters, aspirins, or paracetamol
- Throat lozenges and antiseptic cream
- Insect bite cream and eye drops
- Anti-malaria tablets and rehydration powders/sachets
- Anti-diarrhoea pills and laxatives
- Any personal prescription medicines and daily toiletries

### **(25) Mobile Phones & Wi-Fi Connectivity**

As a courtesy to other participants on the tour, we request that mobile phones be switched off or silenced during game drives, excursions, meal times, and while moving inside the vehicle. Please restrict phone usage to rest stops. For charging, there are USB points located next to each seat, or a standard South African 3-point plug available inside the safari trucks.

Wi-Fi: Wireless internet is available at most established lodges, but coverage is not continuous throughout the tour. Some areas visited are highly remote and have no cellular connectivity. Where Wi-Fi is available, please expect it to be slow, and it may carry an additional usage charge.

### **(26) Optional Excursions**

During your tour, there will be various optional excursions available. Please note that these optional activities are operated by independent third-party suppliers, NOT by the operator. Some of these activities involve outdoor adventure and contain an inherent element of risk. You should only participate in activities you feel physically and mentally comfortable handling. Remember to check if your travel insurance covers these specific adventure sports. Optional activities can be pre-booked and pre-paid through your agent, OR booked and paid in cash directly to your guide on Day 1. In Peak Season (July to October), we highly recommend pre-booking these to avoid disappointment.

### **(27) Passports & Travel Documents**

All travellers require a valid passport. It is the participant's sole responsibility to ensure that their passport is valid for at least 6 months after the official end date of the safari and contains a minimum of 2 consecutive blank pages for visas and entry/departure stamps. If you hold dual citizenship and carry more than one passport, you must use the exact same passport for the entirety of the safari route.

**IMPORTANT:** Participants must physically carry a return air ticket to their country of origin or prove possession of sufficient personal funds to purchase one, in order to comply with regional immigration entry regulations.

### **(28) Personal Safety**

The central urban areas of larger towns and cities (e.g., Johannesburg, Cape Town, Swakopmund, Victoria Falls) have a criminal element that preys on unwary tourists. Do not walk alone in apparently deserted places; wherever possible, walk with your group. Be alert for pickpockets and bag snatchers, and do not carry more cash than is required. Keep a digital copy or physical photocopy of the first few pages of your passport, visas, and air tickets separate from the original documents.

When visiting wildlife areas, listen closely to your guide. Safety precautions must be taken seriously. Do not walk out into the bush without your guide or approach wild animals

closely—it is extremely dangerous. Do not swim in any rivers due to the presence of crocodiles and hippos. Never feed any animals, regardless of how tame or inquisitive they appear. Walking, unless on a pre-arranged guided wilderness walk, is strictly forbidden inside National Parks or Reserves.

### **(29) Photography**

For wildlife and bird photography, a 300mm telephoto lens is highly recommended. Camera batteries are only available in larger cities and tend to be expensive; we advise bringing sufficient spare batteries or external power banks. Participants must NOT take photographs of border posts, government infrastructure, or military/police points, as this can lead to equipment confiscation or arrest. In most parts of Africa, it is considered respectful to ask permission before taking a photograph of local people, and in many cases, a small payment is expected. Some traditional cultures believe that a camera captures their soul; please respect their beliefs and privacy.

### **(30) Smoking Policy**

For the comfort, health, and safety of our travellers, we enforce a strict NO SMOKING policy inside all of our safari vehicles. On long travel days, regular comfort stops are made en route. As a courtesy to fellow travellers, we also request participants to observe a no-smoking policy during group meal times, and we thank you for your cooperation.

We sincerely hope this Pre-Departure Document has provided all the information you need for a smooth start to your journey. The African Overland Tours team wishes you safe travels and an adventure of a lifetime. We can't wait to hear about your incredible experiences!