

KENYA TRAVEL GUIDE



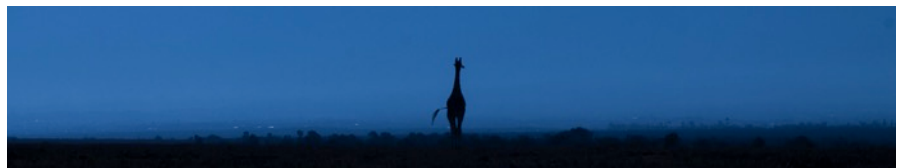
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FACTS

Capital: Nairobi
Language: Swahili & English
Timezone: GMT +3hrs
Electricity: 220/240volts
Plugs: 3 pin British sockets
Dialling code: +254



Climate

Kenya sits squarely on the Equator and so the country's climate is mostly tropical. For the most part you will enjoy toasty weather and sunshine all year round. Although Kenya seems hot and sunny and wonderful all the time there are significant regional variations. These can be divided into two main belts: the coastal areas is hot and humid year round, but going inland you will find temperatures drop significantly. When travelling to The Safari Cottages in Kenya's central highlands you will find temperatures ranging from 35 degrees during the day, to below 5 degrees at night.

1. YOUR HEALTH

Before travelling it is recommended you speak with your GP about the necessary vaccinations and anti malarials that you may need before embarking on your trip. Standard vaccinations include tetanus, polio, typhoid and hepatitis A. Also make sure to discuss with him the latest advice on carrying yellow fever certificates, which are essential when travelling between most of Southern and Eastern Africa. Some of these vaccinations are a course of injections so make sure you visit your doctor well in advance.

DRINKING WATER

In Kenya water from the taps is often untreated or tastes unpleasant so it is recommended that you only drink from sealed bottled water, which is available at almost all stores, airports and camps.

2. MONEY

The currency of Kenya is the Kenya Shilling, often written as KSH or with a /= symbol at the end of a figure.

When shopping in Kenya you will often hear “four hundred bob” or “one thousand bob.” Don’t be alarmed, you aren’t being asked for your husband, Bob, instead ‘bob’ is a term carried over from colonial times. It is a word that the English used to use for a shilling.

Most hotels and shops will accept US Dollars but **please note that only US\$ notes newer than 2003 will be accepted.**

Mosquitoes & Malaria

You will find mosquitoes in most parts of Kenya so we recommend you carry some form of repellent with you. Most modern mosquito repellents contain deet, which has proven highly effective against mosquitoes, so when purchasing your repellent be sure to check the ingredients and make sure the repellent contains at least 15% deet. When choosing your repellent, test it beforehand to make sure that you don’t have any negative reactions, common side effects include irritation in sensitive areas and skin reactions.

The Safari Cottages are located on Kenya’s Laikipia Plateau and at our high altitude malaria is very uncommon, however we highly recommend taking a course of anti malarials when travelling to other parts of Kenya. Various products are available. Discuss with your doctor which would be the best choice for you, bearing in mind most anti malarial drugs are known to have different side effects.



Kenya shillings will be needed for your personal expenses such as curio shopping, eating out in Nairobi, any excursion fees if you decide on an outing whilst in Nairobi and buying drinks and snacks at airports. We recommend you change a number of your dollars to shillings at the start of your trip so that you have both currencies in hand.

Useful Tips on Currency

- Traveller's cheques are not widely accepted in Kenya and cash is generally the best way to go.
- Major credit cards are accepted in most large hotels and shops in Nairobi but not widely accepted in more remote areas of the country. The most accepted cards are Visa and Mastercard. The Safari Cottages do not have facilities for credit card payments.
- A few restaurants and shops may accept payment in US\$ but most take Kenya Shillings.
- A 5-10% surcharge is usually added to any credit card payments you make at most major hotels.
- There are ATM's in most banks in Kenya so you can withdraw cash however we don't recommend this as international transfer fees can be high and PIN fraud has been known to occur.



HELP WITH TIPPING

Tipping is an entirely at your own discretion so if you don't feel you have received sufficient service feel free not to. As a general guideline we would recommend around \$10 - \$15 per day for your guide and \$5 - \$10 per day for camp staff communally. When eating out at restaurants 10% of the bill is the tipping standard, and it is handy to have a few \$1 notes ready to tip porters.

3. AIRPORTS & LUGGAGE

Luggage Restrictions



If you are flying around Kenya you will mostly be using light aircrafts that have a maximum luggage restriction of 15kg including hand luggage. If you are carrying large, heavy bags such as camera equipment it is recommended that you book a freight seat which is charged at 75% of the ticket cost and allows another 75kgs. If this is the case be sure to mention this to your agent so they can make the necessary adjustments. If you are

driving then your baggage restrictions are more lenient

Kenya Airports

Jomo Kenyatta International Airport lies on the edge of Nairobi and receives most international flights.

International departure taxes are US\$30 and domestic departure taxes are US\$5. These are normally included in your flight ticket, but it is best to carry the extra with you just incase.

CHECKING IN

You need to be at international airports at least three hours before departure.

4. SAFETY & SAFARI ETIQUETTE

For the majority of your safari you will be enjoying the country's rich wildlife. Although you may come close to them, remember that these animals are all in fact very wild, and although you have no reason to fear you do need to show them, their families and their personal space some respect.

The Safari Cottages are fenced off, in order to dissuade large game from entering, especially during the day. Safety precautions will be outlined for you on arrival and it is essential that you comply with these.

Whilst on your game drives and walks observe animals quietly with as little disturbance as possible and never try to attract their attention your way. Also be sure to respect your guide's judgement with regards to proximity and don't insist he move the vehicle closer.

Litter

Disposal methods in Kenya are very limited and waste/recycling production is mostly inadequate. Do your best to reduce your litter and do not through it overboard – not only is it very unsightly but animals can also choke on it.

Water & Power

Water is often scarce and highly appreciated so please take care to use only what you need to. Here are some guidelines to help minimize the amount of water you use:

- Do not leave taps running unnecessarily
- Do not ask for your towels and bedding to be washed everyday, instead only ask when it is necessary.
- Take showers instead of baths when you can and try not to linger too long in the shower.
- Do **not** drink water from the taps



What to wear around town

When wandering through markets and shops in Nairobi or elsewhere try to avoid top to toe safari gear, which makes you stand out as a tourist and advertise that you may be carrying valuable items. Try to leave your passport and credit card locked away in your hotel safe and avoid large cameras and money belts hanging on display outside your clothes, opt instead for a small, old bag which will not look like it filled with expensive goods.

If you wish to explore the city by foot ask your guide or your hotel host or hostess about security and safety in the surrounding area. If you wish to explore by taxi the hotel will be able to advise you on the best local attractions and organize your taxi for you.

5. FOOD & DRINK

Food

Kenya abounds in fresh produce from local farms which is sweet and plentiful. Our food is cooked from fresh and with an international appeal. The local staple food is Ugali which is made from maize meal, like a thick porridge and served with a selection of meat and vegetables mainly sukuma wiki, githeri and nyama choma (roasted meat – often goat).



Drinks

Kenya is world renowned for their delicious tea and coffee so be sure to try some on your trip. Fresh fruit juices are wonderful as the fruits are sweet and large – the best are mango, orange and pineapple.



Tusker is the local beer, which is great served cold after a long hot day on safari. If you are wine drinker you will find a variety of international wines, Kenya currently produces one local wine called Leleshwa which is available in most hotels and some camps.

You will find a wide range of international spirits, the locals drink changaa,(this is a lethal spirit we wouldn't recommend trying as it has some horrible side effects), soft drinks and boxed fruit juices.

6. KIT LIST

Despite common assumption you don't actually need to spend thousands on safari gear, we have put together a guideline list of essentials to add to your checklist:

THE ESSENTIALS

Flight Tickets

Passports – **make sure these are valid for atleast 6months from the date you are due to leave Kenya and have at least two blank pages.**

Visas – **standard US\$50 holidays visas to Kenya are available for purchase through the government online portal**

Cash (USD and KSH) and credit cards

Insurance details

Medical cards and/or evidence of vaccinations if necessary

TALK THE TALK

English is widely spoken in Kenya but a little bit of knowledge goes a long way! Here are a few basics to get you started:

Jambo >> hello

Habari? >> how are you?

Nzuri Sana >> very good

Tafadali >> please

Asante Sana >> thank you very much

Kwaheri >> goodbye

Karibu >> welcome

CLOTHING

Lightweight t-shirts and long sleeve cotton shirts
Lightweight trousers and shorts
Trousers, jeans and tops for evenings
Pajamas
Underwear –**sports bras for the ladies**
Cotton scarf or bandana to keep the sun off
Walking shoes or trainers
Sandals or flip flops
Jersey/fleece
Sunglasses
Sunhat/cap

TOILETRIES & FIRST AID

Personal toiletries
Sun lotion SPF30 or above
Chapstick/lipcare SPF15 or above
Antihistamine tablets or cream for insect bites
Malaria tablets
Mosquito/insect repellent
If you wear contact lenses be sure take glasses with you
Basic medical kit
Tissues/wet wipes
Eye drops – useful as the dust can irritate your eyes

EXTRAS

Animal & bird identification books
Camera with memory cards – **we recommend two 8GB cards for a week long safari**
Extra batteries and/or a charger
Binoculars
A small backpack or bag for use during the day

COLOR

Especially if you plan on doing a bush walk, make sure to pack neutral color clothing that will help you blend in. Bright colors, white and black are not recommended.

MOST IMPORTANT

A good sense of humor
– this is Africa where everything happens In Time not On Time.