



## Botswana Travel Information

### Travel Documents

All visitors to Botswana must have a passport which is **valid for at least six months beyond their intended departure date from Botswana**. Visitors to southern Africa must ensure they have enough blank pages in their passports bearing in mind they may be visiting several different countries. Visitors must also be in possession of outward travel documents and have sufficient funds for the duration of their stay. Further visa information is available on the following website [www.botswanaturism.co.bw/getting\\_in/visas.html](http://www.botswanaturism.co.bw/getting_in/visas.html). Please note we have provided this website as a guideline for further information, Terra Nova is not responsible for the content thereof.

### Currency

The currency in Botswana is the Pula (P) which is made up of 100 Thebe. Botswana banks only accept US Dollars, Pound Sterling, Euro and South African Rand in cash. Any cash payments made to camps for curios, or gratuities to guides or staff, need to be in one of these currencies. Traveller's cheques in any of the above currencies are also acceptable.

### Credit Cards

International Visa and MasterCard are usually accepted throughout Botswana but American Express and Diners Club are often not accepted.

### Public Holidays

The dates of certain public holidays change from year to year – refer below. If a public holiday falls on a Sunday, then the Monday is also declared a public holiday

- 01 January New Year's Day
- Varies Good Friday
- Varies Easter Monday
- 01 May Labour Day
- 25 May Ascension Day
- 01 July Sir Seretse Khama Day
- 17 July President's Day (This date is subject to change)
- 30 September Botswana Day
- 25 December Christmas Day
- 26 December Boxing Day

### Value added tax (VAT)

VAT of 14% is levied on all goods and services.

On departing from Botswana, non residents may claim a VAT refund on goods exported as accompanied luggage. In order to claim, the **original** tax invoice, with passport details reflected thereon, must be presented to the designated Customs Officer together with the VAT 006.1 claim form and the BW500 export declaration form. The value of the goods must exceed P 5,000, all in one invoice, per export and the goods must be available for inspection. Refunds are made by way of a transfer into your account. Customs also ask for bank account details, and payment may be deposited directly into the account from Botswana. Guests must have these details on hand, as refund documents have to be submitted on the same day that the items leave the country. Bank details cannot be sent at a later stage.

### Duty Free

There is no duty free shopping available at Johannesburg International Airport on flights to Botswana. Please make sure any duty free purchases of camera film, alcohol, etc. are made before arriving in Southern Africa.

### Excess Luggage

The most common mode of transport in Botswana is light aircraft which is usually done on a seat-in-plane shared basis, which has certain luggage restrictions. If you need to bring luggage in excess of your allowance, you may have the option of buying an extra seat. **This "seat in plane" allows for a maximum of 70 kg (154 lbs) excess weight, on the proviso that the bag(s) conforms to the dimensions 40 x 40 x 80 cms (16 x 16 x 31 inches); soft bag i.e. no wheels/frame/rigid structures; able to physically fit onto a light aircraft seat; able to be physically secured with one seatbelt; will not impact on the comfort of other guests on the flight.** The additional cost of this varies depending on your flight schedule so please contact your agent for further details.

On arrival in either Maun or Kasane, you also have the option of sending your excess luggage ahead at an additional cost. If the safari begins in Maun, the excess luggage will be forwarded to Kasane and stored. If starting in Kasane, the excess luggage will be forwarded to Maun for storage. You can then collect this excess baggage at the end of your Botswana trip. We need to know in advance if this service is needed so that arrangements can be made and the transfer can be handled smoothly.

### Laundry

Laundry can be done at most camps.

At certain camps the camp staff will not wash underwear, due to prevailing local traditions in the country (in these cases washing powder is supplied for guests to rinse their own underwear).

### Communication in camps

Most of the Botswana camps have no communication services available for the guests; this includes phones/satellite phones/e-mail/internet.

Unfortunately it is not possible to rent satellite phones in Botswana – i.e. no one is providing this service. The satellite phones are available for hire at O.R. Tambo International Airport however they should be pre-booked.

### Language

The National language is Setswana however the official language is English.

### Time

Botswana is 2 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) all year round.

### Climate

Summer is from November to the end of March and usually brings very high temperatures. It is also the rainy season and cloud coverage and rain can cool things down, although only usually for a short period of time. The winter season begins in May and ends in August. This is also the dry season when virtually no rainfall occurs. Winter days are invariably sunny and cool to warm; however, evening and night temperatures can drop below freezing point in some areas. The in-between periods - April/early May and September/October - still tend to be dry, but the days are cooler than in summer and the nights are warmer than in winter.

#### **Temperature (°C) - These are the average lows and highs**

	<b>Jan</b>	<b>Feb</b>	<b>Mar</b>	<b>Apr</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>June</b>
<b>Maun</b>	19/32	19/31	18/31	14/31	9/28	6/25
	<b>July</b>	<b>Aug</b>	<b>Sep</b>	<b>Oct</b>	<b>Nov</b>	<b>Dec</b>
	6/25	9/28	13/33	18/35	19/34	19/32

#### **Average Rainfall (mm). This varies according to the year and location.**

	<b>Jan</b>	<b>Feb</b>	<b>Mar</b>	<b>Apr</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>June</b>
<b>Maun</b>	110	80	70	25	7	3
	<b>July</b>	<b>Aug</b>	<b>Sep</b>	<b>Oct</b>	<b>Nov</b>	<b>Dec</b>
	0	0	0	30	50	95

### **Recommended reading**

We recommend the following books specific to the Botswana region.

1. Okavango: Wetland Wilderness - Adrian Bailey
2. Okavango: An African Paradise - Daryl Balfour
3. Chobe: Africa's Untamed Wilderness - Daryl Balfour
4. The Lions and Elephants of the Chobe - Bruce Aitken
5. This is Botswana - Daryl Balfour
6. The Bushmen - A Changing Way of Life - Anthony Bannister.
7. Botswana: A Brush with the Wild - Paul Augustinus.
8. The Kalahari, Survival in a Thirstland Wilderness - Nigel Dennis, Dr Michael
9. Newman's Birds of Southern Africa and Common Birds of Botswana - Ken Newman.
10. Guide to the Trees & Shrubs of the Okavango Delta - Veronica Roodt
11. Guide to the Wildflowers of the Okavango Delta - Veronica Roodt
12. Botswana Tourist Map & Guide - Veronica Roodt
13. Running Wild: Dispelling the Myths of the African Wild Dog - John McNutt, Lesley Boggs, Dave Hamman & Helene Heldring.
14. Wild About the Okavango - Duncan Butchart
15. Botswana - The Bradt Travel Guide -Chris McIntyre

**Everyone should bring their own pair of BINOCULARS in order to get the most out of the safari.**

***Enjoy Botswana!***

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