



Destination South Africa

Your dream of Africa starts here

Dear Guest,

South Africa, the Rainbow Nation, is renowned for its diversity, something that is evident both in the South African people and the country's landscapes. If you're interested in the details of what a visit to our beautiful country entails, here's some information about SA to help you with your travel arrangements.

For any further questions you are most welcome to contact us at our office in Cape Town:
info@selectdestinations.co.za | telephonically: 0027 (0) 21 462 0939 or mobile: 0027 (0) 82 921 66 96

Visas

Visitors from most Commonwealth, Asian, European and American countries are issued a free entry permit on arrival that is valid for up to 90 days. Your passport must be valid for at least six months after your intended departure date and it must have at least two blank pages to accommodate the visa sticker and subsequent entry and exit stamps. Visitors who intend travelling to South Africa's neighbouring countries and back into South Africa are advised to apply for multiple entry visas. Tourists must satisfy immigration officers that they have the means to support themselves during their stay, and that they are in possession of return or onward air tickets. Legislation changes often so it's always a good idea to contact your nearest South African consulate or visit the website of The South African Department of Home Affairs at <http://www.home-affairs.gov.za/> for further details.



South African Standard Time

South African standard Time is two hours in advance of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT +2), one hour in advance of central European winter time and seven hours in advance of United States eastern standard time throughout the year. There are no time zone differences within the country.

Money

South Africa's currency is the Rand, denoted by an R in shops and ZAR in currency trading. One Rand (R) = 100 cents (c). Notes issued R200, R100, R50, R20, R10; coins R5, R2, R1, 50c, 20c, 10c, 5c. Currency exchange rates are available at banks and published daily in the press or see South Africa Current Exchange Rates which are updated daily. A favorable exchange rate with major currencies makes travelling in South Africa cheaper than visiting Europe or the United States. You can use your credit in many shops, restaurants and lodges; there are many ATMs throughout the country and you can exchange traveler's cheques at all banks. The best cash currencies to bring are US Dollars, Euros or British Pounds as these notes are accepted at the many Bureaux de Change in bigger cities.

Banking Hours: Monday to Friday from 09h00 to 15h30. Saturday from 09h00 to 11h00.

Auto banks (ATM's, automated teller machines) are found in most towns and operate on a 24-hour basis.

Travellers Cheques: Most international traveller's cheques are accepted provided they are in an acceptable currency and may be cashed at most banks. Many hotels and shops also provide this service.

When to visit South Africa

Although South Africa is renowned for its sunshine and warm weather, it is actually a year-round destination. Summers are generally warm to hot with average temperatures of around 27 °C during the day and drop to 15 °C at night. Winter is relatively warm compared to other parts of the world with average temperatures of around 19 °C during the day and 8 °C at night. Of course, the weather and temperatures vary depending on which part of the country you are in. The best time to visit South Africa depends on what you want to see and do, as each time of year offers different activities and attractions. Safaris are best in winter from May to October when the bush dries out and animals gather at waterholes and dams, while beach holidays are best in the summer months. In general, Southern Africa's winters feature warm, dry and clear days and cool to cold evenings. Cape Town is the only exception, as it has a Mediterranean climate, meaning the city experiences wet winters and dry summers.

Health

There are no mandatory vaccinations required to enter South Africa unless you have come from a Yellow Fever country, in which case you must present your certificate on arrival. Malaria is a risk in low-lying areas in the north of the country and appropriate precautions should be taken according to your health practitioner's advice.

Malaria is to the larger extent under control in South Africa. Regions that are affected are the Northern Province and Mpumalanga, northern KwaZulu Natal and Zululand. If you are travelling to the far north of South Africa, please consult a health-care professional for the latest advice on malaria prophylaxis as it changes regularly. City centres like Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town are free from malaria and safe for travellers of all ages. In the intermediate risk areas of Kosi Bay, Sodwana Bay, Mkuze Game Reserve and St Lucia Lake (not the town of St Lucia and the river mouth), the use of anti-malarial drugs is advisable only for high risk people from October to May. Check with your physician or travel clinic.

In low risk areas no anti-malaria drugs are necessary. In the North West Province and the Northern Cape along the Molopo and Orange Rivers, including the Augrabies Falls and the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park, malaria is only occasionally locally transmitted. It is not necessary to take anti-malaria drugs when visiting these areas, but precautionary measures to prevent mosquito bites should be taken.

The risk of contracting the disease is negligible provided that you take the standard precautions. Malaria tablets, a good insect repellent particularly in the evening, long-sleeved shirts and mosquito coils are advisable precautions. Please also see our Malaria risk area map which includes some information about precautions to take and people at high risk. Visitors to high risk Malaria areas should personally take precautions between dawn and dusk:

- apply insect repellent to exposed skin
- if possible, remain indoors
- close windows and doors at night unless they are screened
- sleep under a mosquito-proof bed-net
- wear long-sleeved clothing, trousers and socks if outdoors during this time
- in high-risk areas (Kruger Park, northern parts of Limpopo and northern parts of KwaZulu Natal) the use of anti-malaria drugs is recommended from October to May.

People at particular risk who should take extra precautions are:

- children under 5
- adults over 65
- pregnant women
- people on long term steroids
- people receiving chemotherapy
- people with Aids / HIV, porphyria or epilepsy
- people who have had their spleens removed
- chronically ill patients.

Safety

As South Africa is a developing country, crime does exist, so we would advise you to take a few basic precautions. All valuables, passports, cameras, should be locked in the safe of your hotel. As with most countries, some areas are safer than others, but this doesn't necessarily mean that you should give more questionable places a wide berth. For example, there is much to be learned and discovered in some of South Africa's townships. If you simply avoid these areas, you could miss out on some incredible experiences. We encourage you to visit these historical sights, but we advise that you do so with a registered tour operator who is familiar with the area. At night it's best to take a taxi in the urban centres and to exercise caution when walking the streets to avoid being pick-pocketed. The police can be reached in the cities under the emergency number 10111 of landline phones. By mobile: 112 and 082-911. Ambulance: 082-911-10177.

Languages

South Africa is the Rainbow Nation, a title that captures the country's cultural and ethnic diversity. The population of South Africa is one of the most complex and diverse in the world. Of the 51.7 million South Africans, over 41 million are black, 4.5 million are white, 4.6 million are coloured and about 1.3 million Indian or Asian.

There are 11 official languages including English, Afrikaans, Xhosa, Ndebele, Northern Sotho, Southern Sotho, Swati, Tsonga, Tswana, Venda and Zulu. English is spoken everywhere you go. English is the language of the cities, of commerce and banking, of government and official documents. All our road signs and official forms are in English and at any hotel, Bed and Breakfast or Guest House, the service staff will speak to you in English.

The black population of South Africa is divided into four major ethnic groups; namely Nguni (Zulu, Xhosa, Ndebele and Swazi), Sotho, Shangaan-Tsonga and Venda. There are numerous subgroups within these, of which the Zulu and Xhosa (two subgroups of the Nguni group) are the largest.

The majority of the white population (about 60%) is of Afrikaans descent, with many of the remaining 40% being of British or European descent. The coloured population have a mixed lineage, which often comprises the indigenous Khoisan genes combined with African slaves that were brought here from all over the continent, and white settlers.

Most of the coloured population lives in the Northern and Western Cape provinces, whilst the majority of the Indian population lives in KwaZulu-Natal. The Afrikaner population is especially concentrated in the Gauteng and Free State provinces and the English population in the Western Cape, Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal.

Phoning overseas from South Africa

If you wish to make a call overseas, you must first dial 00, which is South Africa's international access code. You then dial the country code, area code of the city or region and the number of the person you wish to call.

Electricity

220/230 volts AC at 50 cycles per second. Three pronged plugs are universal, so take an adapter. Most hotel rooms have 110-volt outlets for electric shavers and small appliances.

Tipping / Gratuities

Tipping is customary in South Africa. A guideline for visitors is the following: Porters R5 per item, taxis 10%, waiters and waitresses in restaurants 10-15%. On safari the guideline for the lodge staff is R 200 - R 250 per guest per night and for the ranger and tracker also R 200 - R 250 per guest per night.

Tax Refunds

As a visitor to South Africa, you can spend as little as R250.00 on goods intended for export and claim a VAT. Non-residents on a temporary visit to South Africa are eligible to claim a VAT refund in respect of movable goods exported through a designated point of departure within 90 days from the date of purchase. Maximum payment by cheque will be for an amount of R3000.00. Claims exceeding this limit or claims requiring further audit, will be posted.

Goods consumed in South Africa or services rendered in the country do not qualify for VAT refunds.

Only original Tax Invoices will be considered for refunds.

The goods must be presented for inspection on departure.

Goods must be exported within 90 days of the date of purchase and the claim lodged within 3 months from the date of export.

An administration fee of 1.5% of the inclusive value of the claim will be deducted, subject to a minimum of R 10.00 and a maximum of R 250.00.

Special provisions apply to antiques, 2nd hand goods and registerable goods.

How to Claim your Tax Refund: simply identify yourself as a tourist to shop assistants and request a Tax Invoice for the goods you have purchased. A valid Tax Invoice must contain all the following information:

The words "Tax Invoice"

A Tax Invoice number

The seller's VAT Registration number

Date of Issue of the Tax Invoice

The seller's name and address

The buyer's name and address

A full description of the goods purchased

The cost of the goods in Rands

The amount of VAT charged or a statement that VAT is included in the total cost

We wish you most memorable and enjoyable stay in South Africa!