



WILDERNESS

Discover Earth's Ultimate,
Untamed Places

DESTINATION GUIDE

REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

We're pleased to be hosting you at our camps in Botswana. We've compiled travelling tips and guidelines, and some facts about the destination. Check out www.wildernessdestinations.com for more information, and Botswana Tourism Organisation at www.botswanatourism.co.bw

At the heart of Southern Africa is Botswana. The Kalahari Desert forms the majority of the land. Mostly dry, this is why the Okavango Delta is such a phenomenon — it's a wondrous wetland in a desert. Water trickles into the Delta from thousands of miles away. Fauna and flora are abundant. Chobe and the Linyanti Wildlife Reserve in the north-east are predator territory, and where large volumes of game are prominent.

Once unexplored, Botswana was visited only by adventurers. Over time, this destination pioneered conservation tourism as the second-largest industry after diamond mining. Its leaders adopted the high-quality low-volume tourism model still in place today. This model created a sustainable industry to employ local staff and conserve the environment.

Slightly larger than France, and almost the size of Texas, it's home to around 2 million Botswana. The capital city is Gaborone, but Maun and Kasane are where you will start your safari with us.



BOTSWANA

GREAT-TO-KNOW FACTS



The colours on the flag mirror the national coat of arms.
Blue – rain and water, and Botswana’s precious resource in an arid climate.
Black band with white frame – harmony and diversity of the people.
Stripes for the national animal – zebra.
Botswana’s national bird – kori bustard.

*Pula means rain in the local language Setswana, and is also the name of the currency.
It means good luck, so feel free to say ‘Pula’ when you raise a glass.*

Government

Independent since 1966, Botswana is a stable, multi-party democracy. Elections are held every five years, and the House of Chiefs advises on all matters tribal. The Botswana Democratic Party is the ruling party.

Economy

Diamonds were discovered more than 50 years ago. Diamond mining makes Botswana one of Africa’s great economic successes, contributing to a third of its GDP. Rich in minerals such as copper, nickel, semi-precious stones and coal, tourism, financial services and farming are also key sectors. Tourism is the second-largest industry impacting employment, infrastructure and rural development.

Currency

Botswana’s currency is the Pula (BWP).

Language

The official language is English, with Setswana being the most widely spoken African language.

Climate

Sub-tropical with light rainfall. Frequent droughts. Hot summers with warm evenings. Winter evening temperatures drop dramatically.

Southern Africa’s weather is pleasant all year. Warm to hot days lead to cool to warm nights, with cold nights and early mornings in the winter months. Pack warm clothing for those early morning and early evening game drives. Also see the packing suggestion list.

Seasonal concentrations of wildlife ensure all-year game viewing excellence. Large herds of elephants cross the lagoons of the Linyanti in the drier winter months. Migrating zebra and apex predators make their presence known in summer. The southern hemisphere enjoys summer from October to end March, and dramatic afternoon thundershowers make for excellent photo-ops. Winter runs from May to August – also known as the dry season. See the average weather patterns below.

Essentials to Pack



SAFARI
SUN HAT



BINOCULARS



GOOD
CLOSED SHOES



SAFARI
DUFFLE BAG



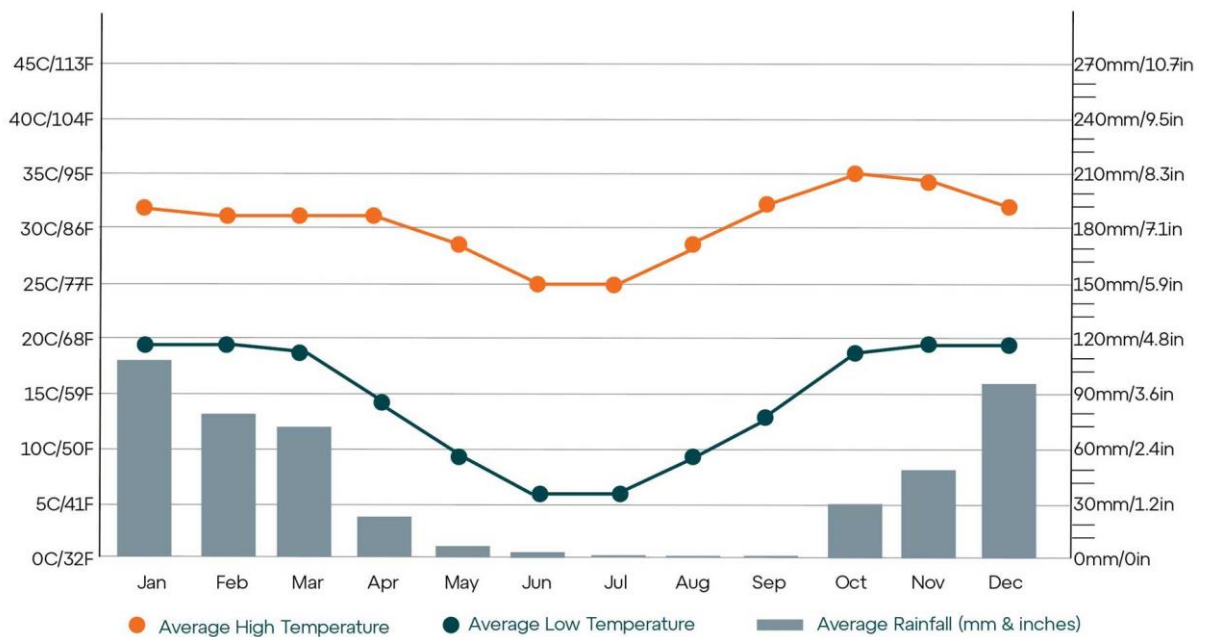
CAMERA



JACKET

MAUN

Temperature Average (°C) (°F). These are the average lows and highs.
Average Rainfall (mm) & (inches). This varies according to the year and location.



Public Holidays

Botswana's public holidays for 2023/4 are listed in the table below. Mondays are declared a holiday if the public holiday falls on a Sunday.

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

USEFUL TRAVEL INFORMATION

Regulations

A valid passport is necessary for all international travellers. No Emergency Travel Documents are accepted as a form of entry.

Visas

Botswana currently offers visa-free travel to certain Commonwealth countries and to foreign nationals whose countries have signed a Visa Abolition Agreement with Botswana.

Your passport must be valid for at least six months beyond the date you expect to leave Botswana. Please refer to the government website www.botswanatourism.co.bw/index.php/travel-info/countries-requiring-visas regarding exceptions. The online visa application process website www.botswana-evisa.gov.bw

Revised Child Travel Regulations: The department of South African Home Affairs has confirmed that Unabridged Birth Certificates for most foreign minors, entering into South Africa, are no longer required.

Passengers under 18 years to present an Unabridged Birth Certificate, and a valid passport when entering, departing or transiting Botswana (as advised by The Ministry Of Nationality, Immigration & Gender Affairs Tourism). UN: Convention On The Rights Of The Child, states that every member country that has acceded to. or signed it, should introduce some measures of control.

Abbreviated versions or baptismal certificates are not accepted. Applies to minors of all nationalities – whether travelling unaccompanied, with both parents, with one parent, an adoptive parent/s or with a legal guardian/s or any another adult/s (e.g. family member or friend, etc.). A sworn translation (certified/authenticated) in English should accompany all documentation that is in a language other than English.

Departure taxes

Taxes apply on all light aircraft transfers in Botswana. Currently, and subject to change, these costs are: USD25 pp for domestic departure tax and USD32 pp for international departure tax. These are included in the air transfer on the Wilderness Air Botswana flying circuit and sole-use charters.

Driving in Botswana

Motorists drive on the left side of the road, with speed limits of 60km/h in urban areas, 70km/h on gravel roads and 120km/h on major tar roads. Use of safety belts is compulsory at all times, and children under 5 require a child safety seat. The driver's license needs to be in English with a photograph; alternatively, an international driver's license is required. Minimum driver ages can apply.

Excess luggage

Luggage in excess of 20kg soft bags will be at an additional cost. Luggage dimensions are: 30cm wide x 35cm high x 70cm long / 11.8in wide x 13.8in high x 27.5in long – soft bags with a rigid structure at base with wheels and collapsible handle.

In-camp communications

Each room has two-way emergency closed-circuit radios. Inter-tent communication is not available.

Power supply

Wilderness destinations in Botswana are solar powered or have generators. Hot water is supplied through solar geysers. Camps have 220V plug points in tents. Battery charging is available in the main areas. Power outages may occur so pack spare batteries. Digital photographers should bring a mobile device for downloading images. All equipment needs to be compatible with 220V power.

Payments

Botswana banks only accept US Dollars, GBP Sterling, Euros 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.

Shopping

Due to the negative impact of plastic carrier bags on the environment, we recommend mindfulness regarding their use, and responsible recycling.

Value Added Tax (VAT)

All goods and services in Botswana include value added tax (VAT) of 14%. Non-residents may claim a VAT refund on goods exported as accompanied luggage, with the original tax invoice, and passport details presented to the Customs Officer, together with the VAT 006.1 claim form and the BW500 export declaration form.

Credit cards

MasterCard and Visa are usually accepted throughout Botswana, including Wilderness camps. American Express is accepted in some instances. Diners Club is not accepted by the banks in Botswana and, therefore, not at our destinations. Debit cards are not accepted as a form of payment at our camps.

Map of Botswana

