

February 2015

TRAVEL REGULATIONS – UPDATES & REMINDERS

Yellow Fever Requirements

HATAB (Hospitality & Tourism Association of Botswana) has confirmed that Botswana no longer requires proof of Yellow Fever vaccination for guests travelling directly from low-risk countries such as Zambia. However, they still require certification from those travellers who travel from Yellow Fever high-risk countries such as Congo or Kenya, whether travelling through Zambia or South Africa or direct.

The South African Department of Health recently announced that from 31 January 2015, Yellow Fever vaccinations are no longer required for travel between Zambia and South Africa. However, it has come to our attention – both from our own staff at the airport and via media reports – that Immigration officials are still demanding Yellow Fever certificates for travellers arriving in South Africa from Zambia. The Department of Health has launched an official investigation into the matter saying they “would ensure that the protocol stipulating that the Yellow Fever certificate was no longer required for travellers from Zambia would be circulated once again, with immediate effect.”

At this time our recommendation is to err on the side of caution and advise guests to have the vaccination/travel with the certificate to avoid inconvenience or being denied entry, exit or boarding.

ACSA Cracking Down on Hand Luggage Allowance

Airports Company South Africa plus airlines rolled out a campaign from 2 February 2015 at all South African airports to enforce hand luggage regulations as follows:

- Economy-class passengers = one bag (56cm x 36cm x 23cm in size and 7kg in weight) plus one slimline laptop bag.
- Business/First-class passengers = two bags (same dimensions as above) plus one slimline laptop bag.
- Slimline laptop bags must carry a laptop and charger only. They must be carried over the shoulder or in one’s hand. Bags with wheels and/or capable of carrying other items (documents, clothes, etc.) are not permitted.
- A woman’s hand bag and a man’s satchel / “man-bag” is considered part of the dress code and is exempt from these regulations.

If hand luggage does not comply, the passenger will be referred to the check-in counters to check it in as hold baggage, or may be denied boarding. Extra fees may apply as per each airline’s guidelines and delays may occur as every piece of baggage (checked and carry-on) has to be weighed and checked prior to boarding.

There is currently no specific provision for camera equipment although in some instances, exceptions may be granted. Travellers carrying valuable equipment that exceeds the 7kgs (15.4lbs) restriction, will need to go to the check-in counter and ask for an exception to be granted. If the airline grants this, an airline staff member will be required to accompany the passenger to the security gate. Note that these exceptions are totally at the discretion of the airline concerned – depending on the manager on duty and aircraft weight restrictions.

The Zim/Zam Univisa - Not Available at all Entry Points

The Zimbabwe and Zambia Univisa is currently not available at the Kariba, Chirundu and Beitbridge border posts. The Kaza univisa (single visa for entry into both Zambia and Zimbabwe) may be purchased at the following border posts only: Harry Mwaanga Airport (Livingstone), Victoria Falls land border, Kazungula land border (border with Botswana), Kenneth Kaunda Airport (Lusaka), Victoria Falls Airport, and Harare Airport.

Biometric Visa Requirement

With effect from October 2014, people travelling to South Africa who require a visa have to apply for the visa in person and submit biometric data. Despite President Jacob Zuma’s recent statement that government would prioritise the review of visa regulations, it would appear that the Department of Home Affairs is unlikely to make changes to the requirement that people make visa applications in person.

Birth Certificates for Children Under 18 Years

As of 1 June 2015, all passengers under 18 years of age will need to present an unabridged birth certificate stating the names of the child’s mother and father, as well as a valid passport when entering, departing or transiting South

Africa. Abbreviated versions or baptismal certificates are not accepted. This requirement applies to minors of ALL nationalities – whether travelling unaccompanied, with both parents, with one parent or with other adults. A sworn translation (certified/authenticated) in English should accompany all documentation that is in a language other than English.

WILDERNESS TOURING

The Wilderness Touring Brand

As a brand, Wilderness Touring encompasses our transfer and sightseeing operations in Cape Town, Victoria Falls and Livingstone. While the actual service provider may be different registered companies (Wilderness Touring Cape, Wilderness Safaris Zimbabwe, third party operators such as Shearwater or Robben Island, etc.), the offering falls under Wilderness Touring. Going forward, the name and logo will become more visible, appearing on press releases and other collateral – including brochures for both Wilderness Touring Cape and Wilderness Touring Zambezi, which highlight the activities and excursions on offer in these areas.

New | Suggested Excursions

Further to the above, I will be including a featured excursion or two from our Touring divisions in the product updates to raise awareness and help you create varied itineraries. This week we feature the following:

Helicopter Flight over the Victoria Falls

The "Legendary Flight of Angels" gives you spectacular views of the Victoria Falls from a unique and unrivalled perspective. Coined by David Livingstone when he first documented discovering the Falls; "scenes so lovely, it must have been gazed upon by Angels in their flight", this excursion allows one to enjoy what Dr Livingstone never did – seeing the Falls, the Zambezi river and the surrounds from the air. Set your imagination free and get in touch with all your senses as you take off in a helicopter. Nothing beats the freedom of flight. An experience not to be missed!

Private Half Day Cape Malay Cultural Tour

Experience an intimate cultural journey guided by a member of the Bo-Kaap community, exploring the rich history and culture of the area and its Cape Malay people. Visit the Bo-Kaap museum for a unique insight and learn about the colourful architecture. At the spice wholesaler, find out about the origins of the spices and how they are used in traditional Cape Malay cuisine before experiencing first-hand how to fold samoosas during a demonstration. As a full day option, this tour may be combined with Table Mountain.

Zambezi Fleet Grows with New Vehicle Acquisitions

Wilderness Touring has increased its fleet in the Zambezi region (Victoria Falls & Livingstone) with the purchase of six new vehicles (three Toyota Quantum 16-seaters and three Toyota Coaster 26-seaters), bringing the total fleet to 30 vehicles. The acquisition forms part of Wilderness Touring's five-year replacement scheme, which ensures all vehicles offer high levels of comfort and reliability.

PACKAGES & SPECIALS

Zimbabwe VAT implication on Six Countries – Valid until 31 March 2015

There was no change to the accommodation rates as VAT was applied to these last year (half absorbed by Wilderness and half absorbed by the customer). Changes were made to the following services and an updated flyer is available on the Information Centre:

- Victoria Falls-Hwange flight
- Victoria Falls-Kasane road transfer
- Victoria Falls-Hwange road transfer
- Victoria Falls Airport-Victoria Falls town road transfer

A Railway Adventure – Rovos and Hwange or Livingstone

There was a slight adjustment to both packages as the road transfer and charter flights decreased in the respective packages. An updated flyer is available on the Information Centre.

REMINDERS

The Customer Care Team

The Wilderness Safaris Customer Care Department receive feedback from several sources – Operations, Reservations, Sales, directly from agents or guests, plus through digital platforms such as our internal Guest Feedback Portal and Social Media (TripAdvisor, Facebook, etc.). It is the responsibility of this team to action all positive and negative feedback – acknowledging, sharing, investigating and responding as appropriate.

Please send all compliments, suggestions/recommendations and/or complaints related to the Wilderness Product offering and/or our Associated Product partners, to this email address : customercare@wilderness.co.za. Their aim is to provide a centralised customer care service which adheres to high standards of professionalism, consistency and integrity.

Information Centre, Rates and Change Controls on the Wilderness Window

Following the launch of our new Information Centre on the Wilderness Window in the latter half of 2014, the Rates and Information Centre options/tabs have been removed from Agent WISH. Agent WISH remains a tool to access availability only and all product information, the General Information Manual, rates, details on specials, Pre-tour documents, copies of product updates, etc. is now accessed via the Information Centre on the Wilderness Window.

In addition, please refer to the Change Control Sheets under the Rates tabs for details on any changes made to the published Nett Rate Sheets as these details will no longer be included in the product updates. I would however, encourage you to refer to the online Rates Sheets only for the most up to date versions.

WILDERNESS AIR

Reminder | Excess Luggage

Should guests need to bring luggage in excess of the stipulated allowance, they have the option of purchasing additional weight allowance on the applicable air transfer. This allows for a maximum of 70 kg (154 lb) excess weight on the proviso that the bag/s conform/s to our standard dimensions: soft bags (no frames or rigid structures), wheels only if they are not part of a solid frame or rigid structure, 25 cm (10 inches) wide x 30 cm (12 inches) high and 62 cm (24 inches) long for each bag/s. At the discretion of the pilot, bag/s may be placed on the light aircraft seat – as long as they can be physically secured with one seatbelt and do not impact on the comfort of other guests on the air transfer. The additional cost of this will vary depending on the flight schedule and routing.

Wilderness Air Zimbabwe Schedule 2015

The updated circuit flyer for 2015 has been added to the Information Centre.

EXPLORATIONS

Explorations Offering in 2015

Botswana: The Migration (Adventurer) Route has been discontinued. On offer are two fully-serviced and guided (Discoverer) journeys – the Great Wilderness Journey and the Botswana Summer Encounter.

Namibia: The Diverse Namibia is still available for those guests who prefer an Adventurer-style Exploration. The Great Namibian Journey has been replaced by the new 9 night Desert Dune Safari. This intrepid journey begins at the iconic red dunes of Sossusvlei, ends at Desert Rhino Camp to track black rhino and includes Swakopmund, Terrace Bay and the "new kid on the block" – Hoanib Skeleton Coast.

BOTSWANA

Water Activities Affected at Xigera

We are currently experiencing unusually low water levels at Xigera which is having an impact on water activities. Boating is currently not on offer and only limited mekoro activities are available. As part of the seasonal cycle in the Delta, this should be remedied by the end of March when the floodwaters are expected to arrive in the area (all indications are that we should have a good flood this year). The lower water levels have meant the game drive area is more extensive, resulting in some productive drives with good general game.

Update | Spa Therapy in Botswana

As of 1 March 2015, we will no longer offer any therapy treatments at DumaTau Camp. The offering will be reserved for Premier and Collection Camps only with same in-room massage treatments available across Kings Pool, Little Mombo, Mombo and Vumbura Plains. In addition to massage treatments, Abu alone has manicures and pedicures on offer.

Refurbishment of Bathrooms at DumaTau Camp

The bathrooms at DumaTau are currently under refurbishment to enhance the layout. The toilet cubicle will be made smaller, and the position of the shower and vanity changed.

NAMIBIA

Update | Damaraland Camp Airstrip Update

The current closure of the Damaraland Camp Airstrip for maintenance work is expected to last until the end of March 2015. In the interim, all guests travelling to Damaraland Camp are routed via the Doro Nawas Airstrip, where they are met by the Damaraland Camp guides and vehicles for their transfer by road to Damaraland – approximately 60 minutes one way.

SEYCHELLES

Revision of Child Rates for North Island

At North Island, children of all ages are accepted and private activities are not applicable. With immediate effect and

applicable to all new bookings, guests under 17 years sharing the second bedroom in the Presidential Villas (1 to 10) are accommodated free of charge. The rate for young adults aged 17 to 19 sharing the second bedroom is Euro 600.00 per person, per night RSP. All guests 19 years and under (maximum two guests per second bedroom), must be accompanied by two full paying adults staying in the same Presidential Villa.

SOUTH AFRICA

Turtle Drives at Rocktail Beach Camp

We only have permission for 1 vehicle (8 seats) to access the beach for turtle drives so a maximum of one (1) turtle drive may be booked per guest in advance. Should there be availability once in camp, guests are most welcome to take part in a second or even third drive and settle direct. Note that there are strictly NO refunds should any guest who has pre-booked the activity decide not to go on the drive for whatever reason.

Reminder | Access to Rocktail Beach Camp

- Transfers between the camp and the Manzengwenya Airstrip are complimentary, approximately 10 minutes one way.
- The drive between Coastal Cashews and the camp is approximately 40 minutes.
- Guests travelling in 2x4 vehicles, must make use of our scheduled transfers to/from camp, utilising Coastal Cashews as the pick-up and drop-off point (parking at Coastal Cashews is at guests' own risk). There is no extra charge if scheduled transfers are booked in advance. If not, then private transfer charges will apply.
- The scheduled transfer times are as follows:
 - From Coastal Cashews to the camp: 10:30, 13:00 and 15:00 daily.
 - From the camp to Coastal Cashews: 09:30, 13:00 and 15:00 daily.
- The Manzengwenya access gate into the reserve is open between 06:00 and 18:00. It is not possible to gain access to the reserve outside of these hours. Please note that the transfer vehicle will wait for approximately 15 minutes and if the camp has not been contacted regarding a late arrival, the camp vehicle will depart. Another vehicle will be sent when available at an extra cost.

AIRLINES

Additional Flights between Windhoek & Johannesburg

Air Namibia will introduce a third flight between Windhoek and Johannesburg, on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays, effective March 29, This will bring the total number of flights to 21 per week.

Reduction in Fuel Levy – Airlink & SAA

Both Airlink & SAA have announced revisions to the fuel surcharge on air tickets, following the recent fall in oil prices. A reduced fuel levy will amount to a saving in the overall fare.

SAA & Proflight Zambia Join Forces

An interline agreement between SAA and Proflight Zambia will enable passengers to make joint SAA - Proflight Zambia bookings and be issued a single combined ticket. This will enable seamless connections to and from Proflight's domestic destinations: Lusaka, Ndola, Livingstone, Mfuwe, Solwezi, Kasama, Lower Zambezi, as well as its two international routes, Lilongwe in Malawi and Lubumbashi in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Civil Aviation Aircraft Passenger Safety Charge Increase

For travel on/after 1 April 2015, an increase from ZAR 16.39 to ZAR 18.72 will be levied on all passengers departing on international and/or domestic flights from South African airports.

Airlink Increases Flights on Two Routes

Airlink will increase flights on its Johannesburg-Nelspruit and Johannesburg-Pietermaritzburg routes, and make schedule changes to its Durban-Maputo route, effective 16 February.

Air Zimbabwe Plans New Routes

Air Zimbabwe is preparing to launch domestic operations to Masvingo and Buffalo Range. The airline plans to launch regional routes to Lusaka, Zambia, and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Warm regards,
Tina

Wilderness Product Services Manager

For further information on Wilderness product or rates, please refer to the Information Centre on the Wilderness Window or contact either myself tinak@wilderness.co.za or your reservations cluster/Journey Specialist directly.

www.wilderness-safaris.com

© Wilderness-Safaris 2015

Disclaimer: Wilderness Safaris is not liable for any errors or omissions.