



SOUTH AFRICA TRAVEL INFORMATION



SOUTH AFRICA VISA REQUIREMENTS

Visitors' visas are for international travellers (citizens of other countries) who have permanent residence outside South Africa and who wish to visit the country on a temporary basis for tourism or business purposes for a period of 90 days or less.

Requirements for visitor's visas differ from country to country, and the requirements are subject to change. Most North American, UK and EU citizens as well as a few other countries do not require a visa, however it is important to make sure well before you travel.

The following link provides information as to whether you are exempt from requiring a visa for South Africa or not:

<http://www.dha.gov.za/index.php/countries-exempt-from-sa-visas>

New requirements for visiting South Africa – particularly for children – came into effect on 1 June 2015. All children under the age of 18 years who travel into or out of South Africa need the consent of both their parents, and must produce an original birth certificate to get a visa or at a port of entry.

As each application is treated as an individual case and you should make enquiries with your nearest South African mission or consulate abroad or any office of the Department of Home Affairs to see whether or not you are required to apply for a visa

Visas are not issued at South African ports of entry, and airline officials are obliged to insist on visas before allowing passengers to board. If you arrive without a visa, immigration officials are obliged to put you onto a flight back to your home country.

SAFETY TIPS FOR TRAVELLERS

Like many other places in today's world, crime can be a problem, but all you need to do is take the usual sensible precautions and follow some basic safety rules.

Know where you're going before you set off, particularly at night, watch your possessions, don't walk alone in dimly lit areas and lock your doors at night. Like many major cities across the world, there are always areas that are known to be more risky than others. It is easy to avoid these and still have a good time. As a general rule, try not to wear too much visible jewellery or carry cameras and bags over your shoulder. Limit the amount of money you carry on you and keep mobile phones and wallets tucked away where no one can see them. Always check beforehand that the areas you plan to visit are safe by asking hotel staff, your local tour manager or police.

VAT

All South Africans pay Value Added Tax (VAT) as it is included in the price of most goods and services. It is currently set at 14%. Visitors are not exempt from paying it, but if you are a foreign passport holder you can claim it back on the items you are taking out the country if their value is more than R250. Be sure to request a tax invoice when buying goods.

LANGUAGES

South Africa is a multi-lingual country and there are 11 official languages including English, Afrikaans, isiNdebele, isiXhosa and isiZulu. English is the official language of business, politics and media.

BANKS AND FOREIGN EXCHANGE

It's important to remember that you can only pay in rands in restaurants and retail in our province. Your currency can be exchanged at airports, commercial banks (Standard Bank, Absa, FNB, Nedbank), RENNIES Travel or American Express. These can be found in most shopping centres, as well as in most suburbs of the Western Cape. You'll also find exchange facilities in many hotels. The exchange rate and commission vary, so check the daily newspaper for an updated standard rate.

South Africa's currency is the rand, which offers visitors great value for money.

The Rand (ZAR): R1 = 100 cents
Coin denominations: 5c, 10c, 20c, 50c, R1, R2 and R5
Banknote denominations: R10, R20, R50, R100 and R200.

All major credit cards can be used in South Africa, with American Express and Diners Club enjoying less universal acceptance than MasterCard and Visa. If you have a so-called "chip card", you will be required to enter a pin code. Pin-based debit cards are often accepted too. Remember to notify your bank in advance that you will be travelling abroad.

You'll find branches and ATMs of all major national banks in most towns, suburbs and shopping malls in our province. Most ATM machines accept:

- International bank cards.
- Mainly VISA Electron and Maestro debit cards, and Visa, MasterCard, Diners Club and American Express credit cards.
- You will be charged a service fee - to find out more please go to one of the banking branches

PHONE

South Africa has extremely well-developed communications infrastructure, with extensive fixed-line phone networks and six mobile phone service providers – two of them virtual mobile providers – with widespread coverage.

If you're dialing a number in South Africa from outside the country, it must be preceded by **+27**, South Africa's international country code (the + sign represents the international access code for the country you're calling from).

HOTEL CHECK IN TIMES

Times may vary depending on the establishment but generally speaking for hotels, check-in is after 14h00 and check-out is either at 10h00 or 11h00.

At most safari lodges and camps, the rooms need to be vacated by noon but this will be re-confirmed once in camp. Use of your room until such time as you are scheduled to depart for the airstrip/airport for onward transfers will be arranged where possible, bearing in mind this is subject to availability and therefore cannot be guaranteed.

CLIMATE

In iconic Cape Town where the Congress will take place the weather is usually warm, though can be temperamental. The seasons are opposite to the northern hemisphere, so when it's winter over here, it's summer over there!

ELECTRICITY

The South African electricity supply is 220/230 volts AC 50 HZ. Most plugs are 15 amp 3-prong or 5 amp 2-prong, with round pins so remember to bring an adaptor. Most hotels and lodges also have adaptors for hire, if they do not have International plugs. Most hotel rooms have 110 volt outlets for electric shavers and appliances.

CLOTHING

South Africans are generally laid back when it comes to clothing so no need to haul out your best silks and diamonds. During the Summer months of November and December bring clothes that are cool and comfortable because summer temperatures can get well into the 30 degree range. For game viewing, a couple of neutral-toned items will be useful, but there's no need to go overboard. Remember a warm top for early morning safaris when it can be cold. Lodges do provide blankets on vehicles for extra warmth. Bring sunglasses and sunscreen and leave the raincoat at home. Don't forget binoculars, insect repellent, chargers for your camera and mobile phone.

TIME

South Africa does not change its clocks during the year and there are no regional variations within the country. South African Standard Time is two hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time and one hour ahead of Central European Winter Time.

SMOKING

South Africa became one of the first countries in the world to ban smoking in public places in 2000. Smoking is prohibited in restaurants, pubs, shopping centres and offices unless there is a separate, enclosed and designated smoking room provided.

HEALTH

South Africa has a well-developed infrastructure, high standards of water treatment and medical facilities equal to the best in the world. When visiting South Africa, there are a number of health issues you should be aware of;

Inoculations

- No compulsory inoculations are required unless you're travelling from a yellow-fever endemic area (the yellow fever belt of Africa or South America), in which case you will need certification to prove your inoculation status.

Medical facilities

- Medical facilities in cities and larger towns are world-class, offering specialist services by highly skilled professionals. Doctors are well trained and must be registered with the Health Professions Council of South Africa.

Malaria

- Many of the main tourist areas are malaria-free. However, **Kruger National Park (Kapama River Lodge)**, the Lowveld of Mpumalanga and Limpopo, the northern part of KwaZulu-Natal and **Zimbabwe (Victoria Falls)** do **pose a mild malaria risk** in the summer months. (Transmission is seasonal, with peak rates of infection occurring in April and declining by June.) **Please consult your doctor or a specialist travel clinic** for the latest advice concerning malaria prophylaxis.
- Whether you take oral prophylaxis or not, avoid being outside at night as far as possible as the anopheles mosquito, which carries malaria, operates almost exclusively after dark. Always use mosquito repellent, wear light-coloured long trousers, long-sleeved shirts and closed shoes at night, and sleep under a mosquito net in endemic areas.

TIPPING

Tipping in South Africa is widely practised. In restaurants and bars, 10% to 15% is the accepted tipping standard. Tour guides, drivers and safari guides also rely on their tips as part of their income so please reward, as you feel appropriate, for good service.

BAGGAGE

For all internal flights in South Africa, the following Baggage allowances apply.

Checked in Baggage: Economy Class: Baggage not exceeding 20kg

Hand Baggage: Economy: One piece not exceeding 7kg / Dimensions : 56cm (L) 36cm (W) 23cm (H)

INSURANCE

It is a condition of booking and your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct comprehensive travel and medical insurance to cover yourself, as well as any dependants/travelling companions for the duration of your holiday. This insurance should include cover in respect of, but not limited to, the following eventualities:

- Emergency evacuation expenses
- Medical expenses
- Repatriation expenses
- Cancellation or curtailment of trip,
- Damage/theft/loss of personal luggage, money and goods.

The local agents including their representatives, employees and agents will take no responsibility for any costs, losses incurred or suffered by guests, or guest's dependants or travelling companions, with regards to, but not limited to, any of the above mentioned eventualities.

EXCESS BAGGAGE

If you have upgraded your flights to Premium Economy or Business Class, and so have a greater baggage allowance on your international flights, please take note of the following charges that will apply to all domestic flights within South Africa:

Current charges for excess luggage are approx. 30 Rand per kg and excess baggage charges need to be settled with the airline desk at check-in. Please be advised that excess luggage charges are subject to change by airlines without advance notification.

No single piece of luggage can exceed 32 kg.