

Zimbabwe Prelude

Entrance Requirements

Passports

- A valid passport is required for entry into Zimbabwe.
- The passport must be valid for **6 months** after your scheduled return date.
- You will need two blank pages per country for entry and exit stamps in the visa section of your passport. "Two blank pages" is defined as the front and back of a page.
- If you **need a new passport** to be issued **act now**: It can take up to 6 weeks to receive your new passport. It is no longer possible to purchase additional pages for an existing passport. If you travel frequently, please consider purchasing a 52-page passport. For more information contact the National Passport Information Center toll free at 877-487-2778 or visit <http://www.travel.state.gov>.

***Advisory:** When you travel, we recommend that you make two copies of your first passport page; keep one copy at home in the unlikely event that your passport is lost, and take one copy along to use as an ID, should you leave your passport behind in the hotel safe deposit box. Air Tickets must be in the same name that appears on your passport so make certain that you are registered on your Classic Escapes program in the same exact way.*

Visa

U.S. citizens are required to pay for a visa upon arrival in Zimbabwe. Currently the cost for a single entry visa is US \$30 for visits up to 30-days. Your visa should be paid with crisp, clean U.S. currency minted after 2009.

Health & Wellness

You will be visiting a country with a rich and diverse cultural history, but is on a different continent than we are accustomed to. As a result, you may be exposed to some pathogens that you would not ordinarily encounter in the U.S. There are some preventative steps that you can take to help ensure that you do not bring back to your home more than your luggage.

Inoculations

There are no compulsory vaccinations required for entry into Zimbabwe for those traveling from the United States. However, the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) suggest that you be up to date on routine vaccines such as:

- MMR (measles, mumps, rubella)
- DTP (diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis)
- Varicella (chicken pox)
- Polio
- Influenza

The CDC recommends these vaccines for MOST travelers. They are NOT mandatory:

- Hepatitis A & B
- Typhoid

In addition, consult your doctor for a prescription for a **Malaria** suppressant at least two weeks prior to departure as some tablets must be taken a week before you depart, as well as during and after trip.

Additional Information

The CDC issues regular travel health notices on their website:

- wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/southafrica

Yellow Fever

There is no risk of Yellow Fever in Zimbabwe.

Note: if you are traveling from a country with risk of yellow fever, the government of Zimbabwe requires proof of vaccination.

Please consult your physician, local health authority or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's hotline for international travelers at **877-FYI-TRIP (877-394-8747)** or via their web site at www.cdc.gov/travel for any additional health precautions. For outbreaks of infectious diseases abroad consult the World Health Organization's web site at <http://www.who.int/en/>. Further health information for travelers is available at <http://www.who.int/topics/en/>.

Water & Food

Food, even in remote tented camps, is carefully prepared, and the local produce is refreshing. Generally, water throughout Zimbabwe is safe to drink however we recommend you drink the bottled water that is provided. Do not allow yourself to become dehydrated. In remote areas water is usually boiled or bottled and is safe to drink but not from the tap. It is very important that you drink plenty of water especially during the warmer months. It is generally recommended that guests drink at least 2 to 3 litres (4 to 6 pints) of water per day to limit the effects of dehydration. This excludes tea, coffee and alcoholic beverages, which act as diuretics and actually contributes to dehydration.

Physical Conditioning

To enjoy your trip to the fullest, you should be in good physical and mental health. Your safari will include some strenuous activity, such as hikes in high temperatures over soft sand or rocky and uneven plains. Activities include game drives, walking safaris and rhino tracking on foot. Further, you need to be able to climb into the safari vehicles and bear in mind that rough terrain may bounce you around so you should be prepared.

Travel Insurance & Medical Evacuation

We recommend that you consider a Trip Cancellation policy that also includes medical coverage and evacuation against unforeseen circumstances.

Climatic Conditions

Altitude

Altitudes are generally low with the exception of Matobo Hills National Park and Victoria Falls. There are no specific factors such as age, gender, or physical condition that correlates with susceptibility to altitude sickness. Some people get it and some people don't, and some people may experience it one visit and not the next time. Symptoms include headache, fatigue, shortness of breath, lack of concentration, nausea, swelling of ankles, and in extreme cases, hallucination. Avoid alcohol, cigarettes, heavy food and strenuous physical activity. Citrus fruits and bananas may diminish the effects. If you do not feel well, take it easy. Put your feet up, drink plenty of clean (boiled or bottled) water, and take a siesta after lunch. People with respiratory problems may be affected by the air pollution of the larger cities, although the local government has taken recent steps to curb emissions.

Altitude Charts: (Feet)

Zimbabwe	
Matobo Hills National Park	4,465 – 5,082
Hwange National Park	2,530
Matusadona National Park	1,594 – 4,180
Victoria Falls	2,700 – 3,000

Temperature

Although located in the tropics, temperate conditions prevail all year, as the climate is moderated by altitude and the inland position of the country. The hot and dry season is from September to October, and the rainy season from November to March. The best months to visit are April to May and August to September. Night-time temperatures can fall below freezing.

Average Temperature (°F)	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Matobo Hills NP	69/81	67/75	67/77	65/76	65/77	61/74	60/76	66/82	71/87	77/90	74/86	72/82
Hwange NP	73/89	68/77	69/82	66/83	64/83	60/80	60/81	65/86	72/92	79/94	76/90	75/88
Matusadona NP	78/94	74/86	75/89	73/89	71/86	67/84	67/87	71/92	76/96	84/99	81/94	80/94
Average Rainfall (inches):	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Matobo Hills NP	4.8	16.9	12.1	2.3	0.4	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.3	4.2	10.8
Hwange NP	3.0	20.3	7.7	1.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.7	2.5	4.4
Matusadona NP	9.2	13.1	9.5	1.2	0.8	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.3	4.2	5.2

Recommended Packing List

Clothing

- Long-sleeved shirts, slacks and socks to protect you from insect bites and sunburn
- Shorts/skirts
- Long trousers/slacks
- Good quality sunglasses (preferably polarized).
- Sun hat with a brim
- Good walking shoes (running/tennis shoes are fine)
- Sandals or rubber flip/flops for poolside
- Swimsuit with light cover-up garment
- Lightweight jersey for cooler mornings
- Light raingear for summer months (late November to April)
- A set of smart casual evening wear

Toiletries

- Personal toiletries (basic amenities supplied by many establishments)
- Moisturizing cream & suntan lotion

- Insect repellent e.g. Tabard, Rid, Jungle Juice, OFF, etc.
- Basic medical kit (aspirins, plasters, Imodium, antiseptic cream, and Anti-histamine cream, etc.)
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Packaged wet tissues ("Wash & Dry" "Wet Ones")
- If you wear contact lenses, we recommend that you bring along a pair of glasses in case you get irritation
- Small sewing kit

Other Things To Pack

- Visas, tickets, passports, money, etc.
- Backpack to use during the day as you tour
- A small flashlight with extra batteries
- Adapter plugs & converters for electrical appliances
- A tiny calculator for estimating cost while shopping
- Binoculars
- Reading material
- Reading glasses
- Journal with pen

Camera Equipment

- Camera, memory cards and chargers
- Lenses, cleaning fluid, lens tissue
- Waterproof/dustproof bags/cover for your camera

Tips on Clothing

Three changes of clothes at the minimum is recommended and should be lightweight, breathable, and versatile. Pack items that will layer well together as the mornings will be cooler and you will want to be able to shed them as the day heats up. Supplex pants and chinos travel better than jeans, which take forever to dry. Pale earth colors such as tan or olive are best for viewing wildlife and birds, but camouflage clothes are illegal in many African countries.

Your primary footwear should be closed toe and comfortable. Open toes can "open" you up to insect bites, stubbed toes, thorns, et cetera. Flip flops should be limited to poolside, the beach or a shower stall. Take care of your feet and they will take care of you, and that includes having socks which can prevent blisters and insect bites.

Power & Connectivity

Most lodges and camps are situated in remote areas and have to generate their own electricity. Each camp has a generator that runs for about six hours per day (three hours in the morning and three in the afternoon when guests are out on activities). These generators charge batteries located at each tented room or supply power to each guest lodge room. Typically, power will be available when you are in the lodge or camp, except for overnight. Therefore, it is imperative that you have your own flashlight handy. Electrical plug outlets will be available in guest rooms.

At a Glance

Voltage	220-240 Volts / 50Hz
Adapter Type C South Africa / Zambia	
Adapter Type D/M Zimbabwe	
Adapter Type G Zimbabwe	

Cell Phones

Many travelers bring along their cell phones, not only for connecting to the internet and making phone calls, but for the easy to use camera functions. If you plan on using it as a phone keep in mind North American phones may not in Zimbabwe, particularly in remote areas. Check with your service provider to determine if you can purchase a plan, or if your phone can be “unlocked”. If it can, you should be able to purchase inexpensive prepaid SIM cards.

Advisory: As most people travel to “get away from it all,” some limitations on the use of these phones when on tour need to be set. We suggest the following guidelines on the use of cell phones:

1. Keep the ring tone at a low volume to avoid disturbing other guests.
2. Use your phone in the privacy of your room and not any of the common areas: dining room, bar/lounge area, or on any of the vehicles.
3. Use your phone for outgoing calls and to check messages only. Incoming calls, and the loud ringing that ensues, should be curtailed.

Time

The United States observes Daylight Savings Time (DST) from the 2nd Sunday of March until the 1st Sunday of November. Zimbabwe is in the South African Standard Time (SAST) and does not observe Daylight Savings Time. When it is noon time in Zimbabwe it will be 7:00pm EST or 6:00pm DST in New York.

EQUIPMENT

Cameras

From smartphones to SLR cameras, digital photography has now made it simpler than ever to preserve the memories experienced during once-in-a-lifetime adventures. Most digital cameras use either an SD (secure digital) card or a CF (compact flash) card that comes in a variety of storage capacities ranging from 2-128 GB (gigabytes). Depending on the megapixel size of your particular camera and the format in

which you choose to shoot your images, an 8GB card can hold as few as 200 images shot in RAW format (normally shot by pros and serious amateurs) to just over 2000 images shot as JPEGs (most common format shot by enthusiasts). For those cameras with megapixels higher than 12, it is recommended that at least 4-8GB cards are used and that you should always bring more than one card in case of card failure or corruption (rare but possible). If you are bringing a laptop, external USB hard drives of 1-2 TB (terabytes) are compact, relatively inexpensive, and an excellent way to store tens of thousands of images. In addition to ensuring that you bring the charger and adaptor/converter for the location to where you are traveling, it is highly recommended that you bring at least one spare, fully charged battery for your camera. There may be locations where dependable power is not available for charging and spare batteries may prove to be invaluable and help ensure that you don't miss any photo opportunities.

Video

Charging facilities for video AND digital cameras should be available in every camp or lodge on the safari, as long as you have a standard charger that will plug into 220 volts. Please bring along enough batteries to last you at least three days of filming.

Binoculars

There will be an opportunity to observe some of the natural treasures of Namibia. Binoculars will add immeasurably to your viewing enjoyment. Preferably, binoculars should be at least 8 power (8x) and have a wide field of view to allow you to quickly find whatever it is you want to see. Some binoculars have the added advantage of "gathering light," making objects brighter in dim morning and evening conditions. This light-gathering capability is determined by a measurement called the "exit pupil", which is calculated by dividing the diameter of the front (objective) lens in millimeters by the power (8x, for example). These two measurements are commonly designated on binoculars as a measurement such as 8x42, which translates to 8 power with a 42 mm objective lens. The exit pupil in this instance is $42/8$, or 5.25. Since the human eye can process light delivered by an exit pupil of about 4.0, these binoculars will appear bright even in dim light.

Some very small binoculars are relatively inexpensive, such as 8x21. With a very narrow field of view (usually about 400 feet at 1,000 yards) and an exit pupil of only $21/8 = 2.6$, these binoculars are designed for viewing stationary objects in bright light, such as at the opera, and are poorly designed for looking at wildlife. You will be far happier with binoculars designated in the range of 8x40 to 10x50.

Flashlights

As the grounds of many lodges and camps are unfenced, it is essential that you bring a small flashlight as you may encounter wild animals at night. You should also bring a spare globe as well as batteries as they may be unobtainable en route.

MONEY MATTERS

Currency

At one time the Zimbabwe Dollar was the lowest valued currency in the World. As of January 2009, the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe permitted the use of foreign currency including the US Dollar, South African Rand and the Botswana Pula. In April 2009, due to astronomical inflation, the Zimbabwe Dollar was suspended indefinitely.

Credit Cards/ATMs

Some major credit cards are accepted such as MasterCard and Visa, but American Express and Diners Club are often **not** accepted. Please note that Discover Card is basically unknown in Southern Africa.

Be sure to notify your bank and credit card company when and where you will be traveling and ask what fees, if any will apply.

Note: As there is a potential for fraud anywhere in the world, we highly recommend that you do not use your debit cards overseas and exercise caution when using your credit cards. Do not let the card out of your sight and if a vendor tries to take the card into a back room, ask for your card back immediately and refrain from using it. Keep your valuables on you, including passports and credit cards, or locked in the safety deposit boxes when provided.

Shopping:

Good buys are articles made from local copper and jewelry made from semiprecious gemstones. Also baskets and wood carvings are popular as well as textiles and other jewelry items.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Etiquette

When men greet each other they use a firm handshake with their right hand. Women should be greeted with a handshake as well, and hugs are more common for them to greet each other with; address people with their titles; Mr., Mrs., Dr., etc. Personal questions should not be asked and you should always be polite and respectful.

Respecting Wildlife

- The wild animals are not like those found in theme parks – they are **not** tame.
- Many safari camps are unfenced and dangerous animals can (and do!) wander through the camps. Many of the animals and reptiles you will see are potentially dangerous. Attacks by wild animals are rare. However, there are no guarantees that such incidents will not occur.
- Please listen to the lodge and camp staff and guides. The safety precautions need to be taken seriously, and strictly adhered to.
- Don't go wandering off on your own without a guide – even to your rooms. After retiring to your rooms at night, don't leave them.
- Observe animals silently and with a minimum of disturbance to their natural activities. Loud talking on game drives can frighten the animals away.
- Never attempt to attract an animal's attention. Don't imitate animal sounds, clap your hands, pound the vehicle or throw objects.
- Please respect your driver-guide's judgment about proximity to lions, cheetahs and leopards. Don't insist that he take the vehicle closer so you can get a better photograph. A vehicle driven too close can hinder a hunt or cause animals to abandon a hard-earned meal.
- At Classic Escapes, we respect wildlife and are committed to the preservation of the national parks. Off-road driving is strictly prohibited. Please do not encourage your driver to drive off-road where it is not allowed simply to get a good photo, as the damage to the environment might be irreparable.
- Litter tossed on the ground can choke or poison animals and birds and is unsightly.
- Never attempt to feed or approach any wild animal on foot. This is especially important near lodges or in campsites where animals may have become accustomed to human visitors.
- Refrain from smoking on game drives. The dry African bush ignites very easily, and a flash fire can kill animals.