

Botswana Lodge Explorer

11 days | Maun to Victoria Falls



Starting in Maun take in the best of Botswana from the fascinating salt pans to the incredible wildlife of Moremi and Chobe National Park, before crossing the border into Zimbabwe to going wild in Hwange National Park and end your adventure in Victoria Falls.

HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS

Trip Highlights

- Hwange National Park - go on safari in Zimbabwe's premier game reserve, home to all of the Big Five (lion, elephant, rhino, leopard, buffalo)
- Chobe National Park - cruise on the Chobe River in search of hippos and crocodiles, then enjoy a dazzling sunset in the wilderness
- Moremi Game Reserve - spend a full day searching for animals in one of Africa's most biodiverse national parks
- Makgadikgadi Pans - stroll through impressive baobab groves and learn about this incredible salt flat, one of the biggest in the world
- Victoria Falls - marvel at the incredible cascades, and opt for bungee jumping, helicopter rides, canoeing and more
- Khwai River - enjoy a game drive in search of a large variety of African

mammals, which inhabit this area near the Okavango Delta

What's Included

- 10 breakfasts, 6 lunches, 6 dinners
- 10 nights mid-range lodges, chalets and tented camps **Please Note:** Accommodation named, may be subject to change but will be of a similar standard
- Airport arrival and departure transfer on days 1 and 11
- Game drives in Khwai Region, Moremi NP, Chobe NP and Hwange NP
- Excursion to Nxai or Ntwetwe Pan
- Chobe River Cruise
- Visit to Hwange's Painted Dogs Conservation Centre
- Transportation in Toyota Land Cruisers, 12-seater 4x4 safari vehicles or other appropriate vehicles
- Services of an experienced local guide/driver
- All park entrance fees

What's Not Included

- International flights and visas.
- Tipping - an entirely personal gesture
- Optional activities
- Domestic flight from Khwai Airstrip to Kasane - additional cost of approx USD \$400 - 450. We can book this flight for you and will confirm the price at time of booking.

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1 : Maun

Welcome to Botswana. On arrival into Maun Airport, you will be met and transferred to your accommodation. The name Maun is derived from the San word "maung", which means "the place of short reeds". The afternoon is yours to spend at leisure, why not relax next to the pool at the lodge or book a sunset cruise on the Thamalakane River. This evening you will meet your guide and the rest of the group for your pre-departure meeting at 6pm.

Overnight - Maun

Day 2 : Makgadikgadi & Nxai Pan NP

Maun - Makgadikgadi Pans. This morning we depart Maun and continue onto the area of the Makgadikgadi Pans. After settling into our accommodation, we take a stroll with our guide through the surrounding baobab grove, as he explains the local ecology, geology and the unique biology of the baobabs, which are in fact not trees but the largest succulents in the world.

Distance: 210 km
Departure: 15h00

Overnight - Makgadikgadi & Nxai Pan NP (B, L, D)

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Day 3 : Makgadikgadi & Nxai Pan NP



After breakfast, we depart for either Nxai Pan or Ntwetwe Pan. These excursions are seasonal based on wildlife sightings and road conditions. Both pans form part of the greater Makgadikgadi system.

Nxai Pan Excursion: January – May & December

An early departure takes us west towards Nxai Pan National Park. Nxai Pan adjoins the Makgadikgadi Pans National Park on its northern border. The pan itself is a fossil lake-bed about 15 sq. miles (40sq. km) in size. Covered in nutritious short grasses and small islands of acacia trees, Nxai Pan attracts vast numbers of desert herbivores such as gemsbok, springbuck, and extraordinarily large herds of giraffe, upto 30 in a group! In the South of the park are Baines' Baobabs, a cluster of millennia-old baobab trees, named after the famous artist who discovered them in 1862, Thomas Baines. It is rare to see Baobab trees so close together and as one was growing on its side, Baines named his painting 'The Sleeping Five'. The famous explorers: The Green brothers passed this way too and to this day their inscription into the bark, 'Green's Expedition 1858 -1859, can clearly be seen. We return to the lodge in the late afternoon after exploring this unique area.

Ntwetwe Pan Excursion: June – November

The Ntwetwe Pan is one of the two major pans that make up the Makgadikgadi Pans, and is amongst the largest salt pans in the world. The pan was fed by the Boteti River until it was left permanently dry following the construction of the Mopipi Dam, which provides water for the diamond mines in Orapa. The waters may have returned to the river but Ntwetwe is now famous for its extraordinary lunar landscape,

particularly the rocky outcrops, dunes, islets, and channels found along the western shore. We explore the area, in search of uniquely adapted desert species such as bat eared foxes, springbuck, kori bustards, and some of the Kalahari's most fascinating inhabitants, the meerkats.

We return to the lodge in the afternoon with some time to relax by the pool.

Overnight - Makgadikgadi & Nxai Pan NP (B, L, D)

Day 4 : Khwai River



Makgadikgadi Pans - Maun - Greater Moremi. This morning we travel via Maun, the gateway to the Okavango Delta, to our camp, which is situated in a private concession in the Khwai River region. This large area is renowned for its concentration of mammals and it is not unusual to see many different types of wildlife during just one game drive. Game viewing is seasonal; depending on the time of the year you may see different species in different areas. The best time for game viewing is the end of the dry season or spring from August to November. During this season, in order for us to offer the best game viewing possible, extra driving may be required due to the animals migrating closer to the river. In the summer, birdlife can also be viewed in abundance with exceptional sightings of wildfowl and raptors. After dinner, we will explore the concession on a night game drive.

Distance: 330 km
Departure: 07h00

Overnight - Greater Moremi (B, L, D)

Day 5 : Moremi Game Reserve



Today we head into the famous Moremi Game Reserve known as one of the most beautiful and varied reserves in Africa with an unprecedented concentration of wildlife. The full day is spent in the unspoiled nature of the Moremi Game Reserve.

Distance: 150 km
Departure: 07h00

Overnight - Greater Moremi (B, L, D)

Day 6 : Chobe National Park



Moremi Game Reserve - Chobe. You will be transferred to Khwai or Maun Airstrip for your flight to Kasane (flight not included in the tour cost*). On arrival you will be met and transferred to your lodge. We enjoy a boat cruise on the Chobe River in the afternoon from where we can watch elephants, hippos, crocodiles and a variety of birds without having to reach for our binoculars – you'll be near enough for close-up photographs, as well as having the chance to witness a spectacular African sunset.

Please Note: The flight from Khwai or Maun Airstrip to Kasane is not included in the tour cost. We can book this for you, contact us for rates.

Departure: 09h00

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Overnight - Chobe National Park (B)

Days 7-8 : Hwange National Park



Chobe - Hwange. This morning we depart Chobe and make our way to our lodge in a private concession near to Hwange National Park. The next two days are spent exploring this wildlife rich area. This afternoon you can partake in an optional game drive if time allows.

On the following day, we will have plenty of time to explore this vast wilderness on a game drive. Hwange National Park is one of Africa's finest havens for wildlife and is home to vast herds of elephant, buffalo, and zebra and has a very large concentration of giraffe. It is also home to many predators and endangered species plus varied birdlife. We will also visit the Painted Dog Conservation Centre to witness the work that is done to protect these endangered species.

Distance: 270 km (day 7)

Departure: 08h00

Overnight - Hwange National Park (B:2, L:2, D:2)

Days 9-10 : Victoria Falls



Hwange - Victoria Falls. Today we travel to Victoria Falls, an essential African experience. In the afternoon we have a relaxing sunset cruise on the mighty Zambezi River, basking in the afterglow of the day. The rest of our

time in Victoria Falls is at your own leisure and with the freedom to partake in one of the many optional activities on offer.

Distance: 190 km

Departure: 08h00 **Overnight - Victoria Falls (B:2)**

Day 11 : Victoria Falls

Our safari ends after breakfast. You will be transferred to Victoria Falls Airport in time for your departure flight. We hope to welcome you again one day on another of our African adventures.(B)

HOTELS

Highlighted below are some of the hotels which we frequently use on this tour, though we reserve the right to substitute these hotels to ones of a similar standard.

Please refer to your Tour Voucher for your confirmed arrival hotel and further arrival information.

Thamalakane River Lodge

Situated on the banks of the Thamalakane River with magnificent views of the surrounding scenery, this lodge features African-inspired accommodation amidst the Botswana landscape. The spacious chalets have a unique 'skylight' wall to maximise the views. Its location on the river means that guests can watch water fowl and birds at their leisure from the public areas. The lodge's acclaimed restaurant is not too be missed with superb food and wine to match the superb surroundings.



Planet Baobab Lodge

The Planet Baobab Lodge is a unique oasis-like lodge in the heart of Botswana's baobab capital. Guests can choose between a traditional Bakalanga hut made from mud or a traditional grass hut made in the way bushmen once did. The use of natural

materials indigenous to the region mean that air-conditioning is unnecessary and only the mud huts are en suite. After a day on safari, relax with a cold drink besides the pool and feast on delicious dishes from all over Africa.



Bedouin Bush Camp

Chobe Safari Lodge

Situated on the banks of the Chobe River, Chobe Safari Lodge is an excellent gateway to Chobe, Victoria Falls and the Zambezi Region. Rooms are spacious, with excellent facilities and private balconies. The restaurant serves a fantastic array of African and International cuisine. The Cocktail and Sedudu Bar is a great place to relax with a cocktail as the sun sets. The lodge is in Kasane, just 5 kilometres from Chobe National Park.



Sable Sands Lodge

Situated in the Dete Vlei just outside Hwange National Park, Sable Sands is a lodge consisting of 11 rondavel chalets. These chalets are scattered around the lodge's central swimming pool. Rooms are en suite with private terraces. The lodge contains a waterhole which attracts large herds of elephant, buffalo, zebra and antelope. The lodge also boasts a library, lounge, bar and BBQ facilities. There are hammocks a plenty for you to relax in as well.

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Ilala Lodge

Set amongst pretty landscaped gardens, the elegant Ilala Lodge is the perfect place for exploring Victoria Falls. Spread out over two floors, the guest rooms are beautifully furnished in a classic style with teak wooden furniture. The falls are much more visible from the upper floors however the ground floor offers charming proximity to the friendly warthogs who frequent the hotel grounds to graze. The hotel also benefits from a gorgeous outdoor pool and award winning restaurant. The lodge is located within walking distance of the mighty Victoria Falls.



Please Note

This tour is operated in conjunction with our trusted partner and you will join travellers from different operators, not solely On The Go.

Botswana Lodge Explorer is a small group, non-participation lodge safari. Non participation meaning that you will not be required to assist with the preparation or cooking of food and general safari duties. These safaris run with a minimum of 4 and maximum of 12 passengers, accompanied by a guide who is also the driver.

Accommodation

We make use of mid-range typical African standard lodge accommodation. Accommodation is situated either in national parks, on the banks of a river, or in other places of interest. The accommodation will be a mix of lodges, chalets and tented camps with en-suite bathrooms. Some properties are

equipped with swimming pools, restaurants and/or bar areas.

Transport

This tour uses fully equipped Toyota Land Cruisers, 12-seater 4x4 safari vehicles or other appropriate vehicles with comfortable seating, large windows for game viewing, a music and PA system and air-conditioning. All luggage, besides hand luggage and photo equipment, is carried on the vehicle or trailer roof racks to ensure maximum comfort in the vehicle. Some game drives may be conducted in open-sided safari vehicles. For transfers between Kasane and Victoria Falls (or vice versa), 2x4 vehicles may be utilised.

Travelling Times & Distances

All travelling times are affected by road conditions, border crossings, detours and weather conditions, therefore on certain days travelling times may be longer than anticipated especially where there is a lot of distance to be covered. Please keep in mind that the time it takes to travel 100 km in your home country is not equivalent to the time it takes to travel 100 km on African roads, therefore we encourage you to sit back and enjoy the spectacular scenery Africa has to offer. Where possible additional stops will be made to ensure your travelling comfort at all times.

Spending money

Clients are advised to bring enough money to cover the purchase of curios, tips, alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks, water and additional entertainment. US Dollars, Pound Sterling and Botswana Pula are the most practical and convenient currencies.

Meals

Where included most breakfasts and dinners will be enjoyed in the restaurants of the various accommodation establishments, however on certain nights the guide will provide an authentic meal for the group, which will be enjoyed together in the evening, often around a camp fire. Please advise us of any special dietary requirements in advance.

First Aid

Our guides are trained in basic first aid and the vehicle is equipped with a comprehensive medical aid kit. Preventative Malaria medication should be taken before the trip and throughout its duration, although it is advisable to consult a doctor prior to departure.

Luggage

Maximum baggage allowance: 15 kg. We stipulate this luggage allowance, as an overloaded vehicle is a danger to both the clients and the guide. This does not include photographic equipment and a small daypack. Please bring a backpack or soft barrel bag, not a suitcase. Don't bring too much clothing, as there are washing opportunities along the way. Please adhere to the allowance specified as space for luggage is limited.

Insurance

It is compulsory for all travellers to have insurance covering their personal requirements, medical expenses and personal possessions. This is to be arranged before leaving your home country. If you require a quote for travel insurance please contact On The Go.

Things to bring

- Walking shoes and sandals
- Light trousers/jeans
- Swimming costume
- T-shirts
- Shorts
- Sun hat
- Windbreaker
- Warm clothes (May – August)
- Long-sleeved shirts
- Torch & spare batteries
- Water bottle
- Camera
- UV protection
- Mosquito protection
- Towel

Optional activities in Victoria Falls

Below is a list of some of the most popular optional activities on offer in Victoria Falls. Pre-booking is recommended to avoid disappointment. The rates are per person

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and are quoted in US Dollars. All activities are subject to availability and may require a minimum amount of passengers to operate. Certain activities only operate at specific times of the year. Please contact our reservation office for further information. Should you wish to partake in an activity that is not listed below, we will gladly assist you with rates and reservations.

- 15 Minute Helicopter Flight - \$ 150 (excl. levies) \$15 to be paid locally
- 22 Minute Helicopter Flight - \$ 235.00 (excl. levies) \$15 to be paid locally
- Boma Dinner - \$ 56.00
- Dinner Cruise - \$ 78.00 - \$10 river usage fee to be paid locally
- Bungee Jump - \$ 168.00
- Horse Back Safaris (novice) - \$ 90.00
- Rafting (full day, low/high water depending on seasonality) \$ 120.00
- Flying Fox (Cable Slide) - \$ 47.00
- Gorge Swing - \$ 100.00
- Zip Line - \$ 74.00
- Canopy Tour - \$ 58.00

*Please note prices are subject to change

Botswana

The San were among the first human inhabitants of this region before the Setswana migrated southwards and slowly occupied the region from the 16th century onwards, until early in the 19th century. By mid-century missionaries arrived, including David Livingstone and Robert Moffat, and by 1885 the territory was a British protectorate. Botswana gained its independence in 1966 and has been the most stable democracy in Africa. The first president ruled from 1966 until his death in 1980, the second till 1994 (re-elected twice, then resigned) and the third from 1998.

The country has a strong currency with one of the highest per capita incomes in Africa, maintains a neutral international political stance. It is heavily reliant on mining (especially diamonds) & tourism and maintains close ties with its neighbor South Africa, an economic powerhouse for the region.

Wildlife is abundant in Botswana and includes lion, giraffe, leopard, antelope, elephant,

crocodile and ostriches. Botswana is semiarid and has an average annual (summer) rainfall of 640 mm (about 25 in) in the north to less than 230 mm (less than 9 in) in the Kalahari. Drought is therefore not uncommon and the vegetation is mostly savannah. Geographically Botswana is relatively flat (the average elevation of about 1000 m) and can be viewed (for all intents and purposes) as three major regions as follows:

Chobe National Park in the north, another outstanding wilderness area of enormous diversity – lion and elephant can be viewed from river cruises or 4x4 game drives. The Okavango Delta is a vast marshland and one of the largest inland river deltas in the world – 15 000 km² of wilderness and prime safari area. The Kalahari Desert in the central and southwestern regions occupies over half the land area of Botswana. It is a mystical, harsh and unspoiled landmass.

The salt pans of north-central Botswana and the Tuli block in the far eastern corner of Botswana are also areas of significance.

Chobe N.P.

Chobe is approx. 11 000 km² of wilderness area watered by the Chobe & Savuti Rivers and thus attracting huge concentrations of game. This includes lion and some of the highest concentration of elephant in Africa – an estimated population of around 25 000 in winter. Game viewing is renowned and in the Northern areas near Kasane, both the riverboat game viewing experience and the 4x4 vehicle option are popular.

In addition the spectacular annual summer migrations of plains game, especially Zebra, is a highlight, as well Giraffe, Warthog and numerous antelope including Sable, Roan, Oribi, Reedbuck, Lechwe and the colourful Chobe Bushbuck. Bird watching opportunities in Chobe are ample and include some 350 species including the awesome African Fish Eagle, the rare Pell's Fishing Owl, saddle-billed storks, long-toed Plovers, pink-backed Pelicans, African Skimmers, Bradfield's Hornbills and Carmine Beeeaters. In addition, the sunsets are spectacular.

Makgadikgadi Pans

The lesser-known Makgadikgadi Pans National Park is situated between Maun and Nata in Botswana. The shimmering salt pans of Makgadikgadi are the size of Switzerland and most of the time appear as a glaring, white, endless plain. When the rain comes a dramatic change takes place as the pans come to life with frantically feeding water birds and great herds of game. The best time to visit this area to coincide with the migration is from December to March or in the dry season from April to October when the pans are dry.

The park contains four main vegetation types: riverine woodland, scrubland, pure grassland and salt pans. The pans support palm groves and peculiar looking Baobab trees whose branches look more like roots, giving rise to the name 'upside down tree'. These are interspersed with short spiky yellow grass found on rises between the pans, known as 'prickly salt grass'. This grass is extremely saline resistant to the extent that salt crystals can sometimes be seen on the leaves. The interior of the reserve comprises scrub and grassland with a few 'islands' of Real Fan Palms and Camel-thorn Acacia. From April to November game such as Springbok, Gemsbok, Wildebeest and Zebra move slowly from the pans area in the south east of the park, to the Boteti River in the west. During this migration animals accumulate in their thousands. The heavily wooded areas beside the river also contain shy antelopes like Duiker and Bushbuck.

Maun

Maun is the gateway to the Okavango Delta and one of the best safari experiences you will have. Countless safari and air-charter operators have offices here, thus it is busy with people coming and going especially around the airport. The best time to go is during the winter months from May to October when there is little or no rainfall and the days are warm and cloudless. Nights can be cold though so take a jacket. November to April can be very hot, with most of the rainfall between December and February.

Maun has developed rapidly from a rural frontier town and has spread along the

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wide Thamalakane River. It now boasts good shopping centers, hotels and lodges as well as car and 4x4 vehicle hire. However, it still retains a rural atmosphere and local tribesmen still bring their cattle here to sell and you could see antelopes grazing the riverbanks.

Moremi

In the centre of the Okavango Delta is the Moremi Wildlife Reserve, a 3,000 km² paradise.

Proclaimed a wildlife reserve by the Tswana people in 1963, Moremi is undoubtedly one of the world's most pristine wilderness areas. The foresight of the local community has ensured that nature has flourished undisturbed, offering a glimpse of the divine, a veritable Garden of Eden. Moremi is a place of lily-covered wetlands, grass plains and forests, where even at the busiest time of year you're likely to be the only spectators at a most dramatic animal sighting.

Moremi consists of a network of waterways surrounding two large islands, Chiefs Island in the west and Mopane Tongue in the east. The area's diverse ecosystems, riverine woodland, flood plains, wetlands and reed beds, mopane forest and dry savannah woodland are all flourishing, broken only by the occasional jeep track. This diversity of habitats provides rich pickings for an impressive variety of animals and around 550 bird species. As Moremi is a fenced reserve, game viewing is impressive throughout the year. However, the cool dry winter months from March to September are an ideal time to visit, as the chances of seeing lion, elephant, leopard, hyena, eland, kudu, roan antelope, giraffe, zebra, impala and buffalo are excellent. On the sandy riverbanks and wetlands, sightings of hippo and crocodile are commonplace.

Okavango Delta

The Okavango Delta in northern Botswana (near Maun) incorporates the Moremi Game Reserve and is a unique wildlife paradise - one of the finest in the world. It is also one of the largest inland river deltas in the world. This unsurpassed natural environment is a maze of waterways, islands and reed banks creating a perfect habitat for lion,

elephant, leopard, buffalo, giraffe, hyena, wild dog, kudu, impala, roan, zebra, lechwe, hippo and crocodile, amongst others. There are approx 440 bird species in the delta and fish species are also abundant, including tiger fish, sharp-toothed catfish, barbell and bream. Travel through the swamps and surrounding areas is generally done by open 4x4 game viewing vehicle or a peaceful meander in a 'Mokoro', a flat-bottomed dugout canoe. The Delta is hot throughout the year with temperatures ranging from approx 14°C in January to 24°C in July. Rainfall averages 525 mm annually, but varies greatly from year to year. Water levels and flooding reach a maximum between March and July, after rains at the source and the usual 15 000 km² can expand to approximately 22 000 km² in high-rainfall years.

Zimbabwe

This is a country blessed with great natural beauty, game reserves and mineral wealth. The diverse landscape changes from mountainous to wilderness to typical Bushveld. The country is also home to large animals and a large bird population. Zimbabwe is a country located in the southern part of the continent of Africa, between the Victoria Falls, Zambezi River, Kariba Dam and the Limpopo River. Zimbabwe is bordered by South Africa to the south, Botswana to the west, Zambia to the north and Mozambique to the east.

Victoria Falls

'So lovely it must have been gazed upon by angels in their flight' said David Livingstone of the supreme Mosi-oa-Tunya ('The smoke that thunders'). This legendary traveler first saw the falls from the Zambian side and his memory is enshrined in the nearby town of Livingstone. The views from the Zimbabwean & Zambian side are quite different, varying dramatically depending on the season and water flow.

The Falls are over a mile in length and boast the largest curtain of water in the world - over 500 million litres of water per minute cascade over the falls and drop 100 m at Rainbow Falls on the Zambian side. Not surprisingly is it the seventh natural wonder of the world

and fast becoming one of the top adventure destinations in the world. The river is divided into a series of braided channels that descend in many separate falls. Below the falls the river enters a narrow series of gorges, which represent locations successively occupied by the falls earlier in their history. Since the uplifting of the Makgadikgadi Pan area some two million years ago, the Zambezi River has been cutting through the basalt base rock, exploiting weak fissures, and forming a series of retreating gorges. Seven previous waterfalls occupied the seven gorges below the present falls, and Devil's Cataract in Zimbabwe is where the next cut back will form a new waterfall that will eventually leave the present falls lip high above the river in the gorge below.

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Passports & visas

Please ensure that you have at least two blank pages in your passport, plus an additional blank page for each visa/African country you are visiting. If travelling on one of our longer overland safaris we recommend that you have at least 12 blank pages in your passport.

Please also note that your passport must be valid for a minimum of six months from the end date of your trip.

Any visa information provided in this document is for general guidance purposes only, visa requirements and fees are subject to change. It is essential that you check current entry requirements with each relevant embassy/consulate prior to departure. Visa procurement is the responsibility of the traveller and not of On The Go.

Booking your flights

When booking your departure flight you should allow time at the end of your African safari for any unexpected delays. We recommend that you book your onward flight no earlier than 24 hours after the end of your safari. In the case of our longer overland camping safaris (22 days or more) we advise against making any firm arrangements for at least 48 hours after the scheduled departure date. Your tour leader

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can help to arrange post tour accommodation locally upon request.

Allergies/likes/dislikes

Whilst all will be done to accommodate everyone, sometimes the choice available is limited as your cook may be making the best of very limited availability, so some flexibility may be required when encountering something you're not particularly fond of or have chosen not to eat as a lifestyle choice. Should you possess allergies which will result in a medical emergency or a life threatening situation then please ensure you speak to your cook on arrival so you can discuss the options available whilst en-route. This will ensure also that they are fully aware of what you can or cannot eat and make adjustments.

Botswana Country Guide

Visa

Please be advised that visa requirements are subject to change and that visa procurement is the responsibility of the traveller and not On The Go Tours, therefore it is essential that you check current visa requirements with the embassy before travel. Please also ensure that your passport is valid for at least 6 months from your planned date of departure from Africa.

UK, Ireland, Australian, New Zealand, USA, Canadian and South African citizens do not require a visa for entrance into Botswana.

The few countries that do require visas; mostly Eastern European and Asian Nationals, need to obtain them prior to arrival at the border. Visas are not issued at Botswana ports of entry, if you arrive without a visa, immigration officials will refuse you entry to Botswana.

The border crossings we use in Botswana include:

Muhembo (Botswana/Namibia border)
Kazangula (Botswana/Zimbabwe or Zambia border)
Groblerberg/Martin's Drift (South Africa/Botswana)

Botswana Tourism Levy from 1st June 2017 - postponed until further notice

From the 1st June 2017 a tourism levy of \$30USD is payable when entering Botswana. Payment is taken at the border in US dollars cash, debit or credit card. The Levy is valid for a 30 day period and can be used for multiple entry.

Please note this Levy has been postponed until further notice.

Vaccinations

You should seek medical advice before travelling to Botswana from your local health practitioner and ensure that you receive all of the appropriate vaccinations. As a guide Polio, Diphtheria, Hepatitis A and Tetanus is strongly recommended. Rabies may also be recommended.

There is the risk of malaria in certain areas of Botswana so it is very important to check with your doctor before you go, to see whether malarial medication is required for the areas you are visiting. A valid Yellow Fever vaccination certificate is also required if travelling into Botswana and you have previously been in an infected country.

Currency & Banking

The currency of Botswana is the Botswana Pulas (BWP) 1 Pula = 100 Thebe. Notes are in denominations of BWP10, 20, 50 and 100. Coins are in denominations of BWP1, 50, 25, 10, 5, 1.

There are no restrictions on the import of local or foreign currencies, provided they are declared on arrival. Export of local currency is limited to BWP50 and foreign currencies up to the amount declared on arrival. It is easy to change most forms of currency including US\$, GB£, Euros and South African Rand. The best place to change money in Botswana is the bureau de changes as banks charge commission to change either cash or travellers cheques. ATMs are available in all main towns, cities, shopping centres and most petrol stations. MasterCard, Visa, American Express and Diners Club are all widely accepted.

Travellers cheques should be in US Dollars or Pound Sterling to avoid additional exchange rate charges. Proof of identity may be requested in some instances, so it's useful

to carry a passport or some form of photo identification. In large cities travellers cheques can incur a high surcharge.

Banking hours: Mon-Fri 0900-1530, Sat 0830-1100.

Time & Voltage

Time Zone - Botswana is 2 hours ahead of GMT. Daylight saving time is not observed.

The standard voltage is 220 - 240V. Primary sockets require a 'Type M' - South African, electrical plug which has three thick circular pins. You will need a voltage converter, and plug adapter in order to use U.S. appliances.

Climate

Botswana's climate is mainly temperate. During the summer months (October-April) the weather can be very hot with daytime temperatures of around 30 Celsius and higher. The rainy season (typically lasting from January to March) can be hot with temperatures still in the mid 30's and only dropping to around the mid 20's overnight. Winter (May-September) brings a cool change yet is still reasonably warm and mostly pleasant with an average temperature of around 25°C. Early mornings and evenings may be cold and frosty especially in the Kalahari region. The amount of rainfall decreases the further you travel west or southwards during the winter and rainy season months.

Travelling with children in Botswana

The Ministry of Nationality, Immigration and Gender Affairs informs the general public that it has imposed requirements for minors (children under 18) travelling through the country's ports of entry.

Effective from the 1st October 2016 minors travelling through the country's borders will be required to produce certified copies of unabridged birth certificates in addition to their valid passports. In the event that one parent is not travelling with the child, the other parent's affidavit consenting to such travel should be available. However, an affidavit will not be required if the father's name does not appear on the child's birth certificate."

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Botswana Lodge Explorer

To summarise the above, should families be travelling with children below the age of 18 they will require the following:

- Valid Passports
- Certified unabridged birth certificates for all minors below the age of 18
- An Affidavit signed by the non-travelling parent should the minor be travelling with one parent

Unfortunately these regulations are very strict therefore we urge all parents travelling to Africa with their children to contact all relevant embassies well prior to departure to ensure they have the correct documentation as if you do not, there is a high chance you will be denied entry.

Zimbabwe Country Guide

Visas

Please be advised that visa requirements are subject to change and that visa procurement is the responsibility of the traveller and not On The Go Tours, therefore it is essential that you check current visa requirements with the embassy before travel. Please also ensure that your passport is valid for at least 6 months from your planned date of departure from Africa.

UK, Ireland, Australian, New Zealand, USA and Canadian passport holders require a visa to enter Zimbabwe, these visas are available at the border for the following costs: Australian, New Zealand and US citizens: US \$30 single/\$45 double entry visa. British and Irish is US\$55 single/\$70 double. Canadians can only obtain a single entry visa at the border for US \$75. South African passport holders can obtain a visa for free. Visas can be brought using post 2003 US\$ notes, GB£ or South African Rand.

KAZA Visa

Zimbabwe and Zambia have re-introduced the popular, and much-awaited KAZA (Kavango-Zambezi) "Uni-Visa", which allows visitors to stay in either (or both) countries for up to 30 days for a single payment of US\$50.

The UniVisa is available at Harare, Victoria Falls, Lusaka and Livingstone International

airports, the Victoria Falls land border (Zimbabwe/Zambia) and the Kazungula land border (Zimbabwe/Zambia/Botswana).

The border crossings we use in Zimbabwe include:

Kazungula (Botswana/Zimbabwe)

Vaccinations

Seek advice from your doctor or travel clinic at least six weeks prior to departure about what vaccinations you require. Typically the list includes typhoid, tetanus, diphtheria, polio, hepatitis A and B (for stays over 4 weeks).

In Zimbabwe a malarial risk exists from November to June in all areas below 1200m and throughout the year in the Zambezi Valley. We strongly recommend that you take your anti-malaria medication. Other precautionary measures to prevent contact with mosquitoes include: insect repellent, cover up at sundown, sleep under a mosquito net and wear long sleeve clothing and long trousers in the evenings.

Yellow fever: A yellow fever vaccination certificate is required from travellers over one year of age coming from infected areas.

Currency

The Zimbabwean Dollar was abandoned in April 2009. The country has adopted a multi-currency scheme; the US Dollar and South African Rand can be used for domestic transactions.

Zimbabwe is essentially a cash-only society now with ATMs pretty useless for the foreigner. Credit cards only used in a handful of places, however all major hotels will now accept this payment. We recommend bringing enough cash to cover your stay in Zimbabwe (in either USD or ZAR) especially in the smaller denominations (US\$1-20 and ZAR10 - 200) as there is always a shortage of change and shopkeepers will often refuse larger bills. Please also be aware it is illegal to leave Zimbabwe with over \$1000 (or equivalent) in cash.

Zimbabwe introduced Bond Notes into circulation on 28 November 2017 which will be used alongside the US dollar and other currencies. These Bond Notes will be at a 1:1 parity with the US dollar. However, they are only legal tender within Zimbabwe and as such can only be used there. These Bond notes will be in \$2 and \$5 denominations and there will also be a new \$1 Bond coin.

Banking hours: Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri - 0800-1500, Wed 0800-1300 and Sat - 0800-1130. In major towns/cities most banks have an ATM. American Express, Diners Club and Visa cards are widely accepted. Major foreign currencies can be exchanged at bureaux de change and banks at the official exchange rate. Please also be aware it is illegal to leave Zimbabwe with over \$1000 (or equivalent). As of June 2016 it is becoming increasingly difficult to withdraw money from ATMs in Zimbabwe. There is a cash limit of \$500 per day - however a lot of banks are not replenishing the ATMs. It is strongly advised that you bring enough money with you before you enter Zimbabwe and don't rely on getting any whilst there.

Travellers cheques are accepted at banks, these should be in US Dollars or Pound Sterling to avoid additional exchange rate charges. Most banks will want to see your passport and proof of purchase receipt before cashing your travellers cheques. Please Note: Travellers cheques can be difficult to cash so do not rely upon them as your sole source of funds.

Time & Voltage

Standard voltage is 220-240V. Primary sockets require a 'Type G' - British plug, or 'Type D' - old English plug or Indian plug. You will need a voltage converter and plug adapter in order to use U.S. appliances.

Zimbabwe is 2 hours ahead of GMT. Daylight saving time is not observed.

Climate

Although located in the tropics, temperate conditions prevail all year round in Zimbabwe as the climate is moderated by altitude and the inland position of the country.

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Zimbabwe has a rainy season from November/December to March, during this time days are hot and sunny with possible afternoon thunderstorms. By April and May most of the rain is gone, skies are clear and days are sunny and warm. Night time temperatures drop dramatically between June and August although daytime temperatures remain pleasantly warm. Late August sees the start of the hot and dry season which continues until October.

Zambian Airport Departure Tax

NOTES FOR THOSE FLYING OUT OF LIVINGSTONE AIRPORT IN ZAMBIA

An airport departure tax is in place for all flights departing from Zambian airports. It will no longer be included on the ticket and will now be collected in Zambian Kwacha cash direct from the passenger. The amount payable is currently K28,000 for Domestic Flights and K56,000 for International Flights and is payable on departure from all Zambian airports. Passengers need to have ZMK cash available for this tax. Please note, departure taxes are subject to change.

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