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Thank you for deciding to travel to Botswana with Letaka Safari, this journey will change your life, and this document will help you get the most out of it.

Here is some information you might find helpful when preparing for your trip. We know how boring it can be to read these things so we will start off with the essential stuff, the rest is detail.

Pack this stuff in your hand luggage so it can't get lost.

- Flashlight & headlamp
- Binoculars – don't leave home without them!!!
- A digital camera with spare batteries, battery charger and plenty of memory cards.
- Your personal medication/prescriptions – replacing these in Botswana is not always possible.

There we go – that's the important stuff, now read on for the rest.

Health

We carry a comprehensive First Aid kit on board our vehicles; we cannot however cover everything, if you have any medical problems or existing medical conditions please bring enough medication and inform us of these problems as soon as possible. For inoculations, please consult your local GP or health provider.

Malaria

The areas you will be travelling in are malaria areas. We suggest you speak to your local GP or healthcare provider and take the action he/she recommends as there are various differing ideas about what prophylactics to take, if at all. Some of the prophylactics can cause side effects such as nausea, headaches and a lowering of your resistance to the sun and it is important to bear in mind that malaria can be contracted despite taking tablets. We provide insect repellent on safari but you are welcome to bring your own and please use them liberally, especially in the warmer months.

Weather and Temperatures in Celsius

Summer (October – April) is hot in the middle of the day, sometimes as high 40 degrees Celsius in October, our hottest month, but this is uncommon, becoming cooler but still warm at night. The average day time temperatures are in the mid 30's dropping to the low 20's during the night. Botswana is a summer rainfall region and late afternoon showers can be common from December to April.

Winter (May – September) can go below 0 degrees C at night but during the day it warms up substantially to about 25 degrees Celsius. Early morning game drives on an open vehicle can be quite chilly (particularly in July and August when scarves and warm hats are recommended). Dressing in layers is the best way to deal with the varying temperatures during the winter months, and a windproof jacket is a good idea.

Sun

You will spend a lot of time outdoors and may have a sunny seat so bring a high factor sun cream, all year round, as the sun here is harsh. A cool, light long-sleeved shirt will also come in handy to protect you from the sun. A wide brimmed hat is a must as are a good pair of sunglasses.

Clothing

Bring along a good jacket, scarf, gloves and woolen or fleece headwear if you are travelling in winter as early morning and late evenings are cold on game drives. It can get quite hot during the day so light summer clothing is also a must. The best way to deal with winter is to dress in layers.

If you are travelling in summer, a good sweater (jumper) is recommended, as it can get rather cool, especially if you are doing any boat trips as well as a light raincoat. Light trousers and a cool long-sleeved shirt in the evenings in summer will help protect you from the mosquitoes. For the remainder bring light cotton clothing.

For walks it is recommended that you bring neutral coloured clothing (beige, khaki, olive, stone etc.) but when travelling in the vehicle, most colours are fine – light colours generally being cooler. Dark blue and black clothing are not recommended. Bring clothing that can be hand washed easily and dried quickly.

Bring some good walking shoes and sandals (with sturdy soles to protect you from the large thorns) or thongs as you may need to get your feet wet on boating excursions. You may get opportunities to swim, so bring along a swimming outfit. Don't forget your sun hat!

Water

Although Botswana's water is generally safe to drink, we supply filtered water on all our safaris. It is important to remember to drink enough water while on safari. If you are travelling in the summer months you should bring re-hydration salts to add to your water. One sachet per person per day will be sufficient and will prevent any dehydration problems. Rehydration salts are available in most pharmacies in powder form which is the most suitable for travel.

Food and Drinks

All meals and drinks are provided; please inform us if you have any special requirements or if you are allergic to any food. Wine, local beer and soft drinks are provided. Water, tea and coffee are available all day. Spirits are also available on request and included in the price. The spirits that are available are Gin, Vodka, Whiskey and Brandy. If you have any requests not mentioned above please make the request and we will do our best to order it for you. Please fill in your online safari dossier to let us know your preferences.

Luggage limitations

On a safari where bush flights are included, the maximum luggage weight is 20kg inclusive of hand luggage. Duffel/soft bags (max 30 x 35 x 70cm in dimensions) are essential as these pack easier into aircraft and vehicles, hard cases are not recommended as they might not fit into the pod of the aircraft and you may be asked to repack into an alternative bag. If you feel you are not able to pack to these weight requirements an additional seat on the charter flight can be purchased ahead of time – please contact our offices for a quotation or for further information on luggage limitations.

Equipment:

Binoculars, even if you are not a regular birder, are a **must** for safari. One pair per person will greatly enhance your safari experience, this may seem like an unnecessary cost if this is the only time you think you are going to use them but if you don't want to buy, then take our advice – beg, borrow or steal! 10x42 is an ideal magnification but any binoculars will enhance your experience.

If you are going to bring an expensive camera along, we recommend you bring a good camera case as the roads are bumpy and there is a lot of dust. Beanbags for the car windows can be provided for you on request. If you are a keen photographer please download our **Information for Photographers** document from our website. Bring extra camera batteries. If you are using digital photographic equipment or other battery intensive equipment that utilizes rechargeable batteries you would be well advised to visit your local electronics store and purchase a 12V charger for your battery. This must be able to plug into a standard car cigarette lighter port. We do have 220V A/C inverters in the vehicles so please bring your standard AC charger for your electronic rechargeable items as well as an adapter that conforms to South African (plug type M) standards.

Although lighting around the campsites is provided, a good torch is essential at night. We recommend a handheld flashlight for use around camp and head torches with 3+ LED units to use in your tents and for reading at night.

Books

Your guide will have books on the fauna and flora of Botswana. Bring along a novel or other reading material as there is often time in the middle of the day to relax. You may also want to bring a pack of cards or some other game for siesta time between morning and afternoon activities.

Money

Since your safari is prepaid, you will not need to travel with much cash. Botswana currency is in Pula (P) and Thebe (t). The best denominations to bring to Botswana are Euro, GBP and US Dollars. If you wish you will be able to exchange money in both Maun and Kasane.

Tipping

We provide guidelines on tipping strictly for your information, tipping is optional and the amount is entirely up to you but these are the 'industry standards'.

Guides x1: USD15.00 per person per day

Safari Chef x1: USD10.00 per person per day

General Staff x2: USD10.00 per person per day

If you have any questions which are not answered by this document, please **e-mail** us with your queries to: info@letakasafaris.com