

WHAT TO PACK FOR SAFARIS TO AFRICA

After months of planning for your African safari, there comes a time of deciding what to pack. Packing for your first African safari can be quite a challenge as it is somewhat different. First, traveling along dusty roads in a pop-up roof safari vehicle means that you'll get dirtier than you expected. Also, temperatures in Africa vary a lot throughout the day and finally, your itinerary involves different activities such as game drives, treks, boat rides and swims!

Therefore you will need to know what exactly to pack and the weight of your baggage. Below are the things to pack for your African Safari.

TRAVEL LIGHT

An African safari is one trip where you need only pack what is necessary. Extra luggage will just be a burden which will put a damper on your African experience. Carry a sweater, a jacket or a shawl to keep you warm when it gets cold. Trousers, shorts, t-shirts, long sleeved shirts, sleeping clothes and shoes are all that you will need. Recycling clothes when on safari is something to bear with especially for women who find it hard. Jewellery is not necessary, but you can buy some African jewelry to take home with you.

African weather is very unpredictable so baggy clothes are good since they can be used in cold and warm weather.

You can hand wash your clothes at night or use the washing service at your lodge. Bring a small bottle of detergent.

LUGGAGES

-Soft-sided bag is advised and the weight of 30 pounds is strongly recommended.

The heavy bulky bags or suitcases are a discomfort and will make your safari difficult especially with carrying the bags to the safari cars and to the lodges. Keep it simple and only bring the necessary!

-Waterproof foldable backpack to engage in day activities such as nature walks, chimpanzee treks and the gorilla treks.



This is what we have: 18-liter black foldable Naturehike backpack

https://www.naturehike.com/products/naturehike-foldable-waterproof-backpack-nh17a012-b?_pos=1&_sid=3613cc168&_ss=r



WHAT IS THE RIGHT COLOUR FOR YOUR SAFARI CLOTHES?

If you hope to get the most out of your safari experience, then all the attention should be focused on your surroundings rather than on you. The best way to achieve this is by going neutral with your clothing. **The best safari colour is khaki followed by olive, tans and browns.** These are good at handling dirt. Bright coloured safari clothing draw attention to you the tourist, rather the wildlife you intend to see, and may sometimes scare away the animals. So look for neutral coloured clothing. Colours that blend in with the African Wilderness.

Keep it casual and comfortable with t-shirts, long sleeved shirts, trousers, shorts, hiking boots, and athletic socks to keep the blisters away. For the cold season, a light fleece jacket and sweaters will suffice. These should all be in neutral colors such as greens, olives, browns, and khakis. However there some neutral colors and clothing you need to stay away from, such as:

- **No Dark blue** and/or **black** colours can attract tsetse flies which have a nasty bite. This is common in East and Central Africa. In southern Africa, Tsetse flies are not much of an issue.
- **No White** and/or **very pale**. White is adorable, but not on a safari. This is Africa and so you expect real dust!
- **No bright colours** as they tend to stand out and are not practical, that is why they are absolutely not advisable on a safari.
- **No Camouflage clothing** , it is important that you keep away from this type of clothing, since in most African countries, it identifies with the soldiers.

PACKING LIST

Since safaris are usually causal affairs, this means that the best clothes to pack are the lightweight and loose-fitting, just to keep you cool and be able to dry up quickly in case of showers of rain. Therefore you can choose to leave your evening dress at home.

CLOTHES

- The long sleeved tops and/or Shirts (2) We bought our shirts and long trousers at Mark's Warehouse as the clothing was treated with No Fly Zone® Tick and Mosquito Repellent technology (odourless - 97% polyester/ 3% spandex - UPF 50+)
- T-shirts (3-4)
- Trousers (2)
- Shorts (1) Recommended to be worn at the lodge
- Socks (3)
- Underwear (4-5)
- Hat A must carry and it should be a brimmed hat (protect the face/neck from the sun)
- Lightweight rain jacket
- Swimming suit
- Shawl To wear when it is cooler or to dress up an outfit
- Pyjamas Places like Bwindi, the weather can be cold at night)
- Light sweater (1) This will help mostly during morning hours and evening hours in the Jungle
- Cotton light scarf or Bandana
- Outing clothes (1) These clothes help when back in the city
- Sun glasses

Top tips

-It's worth considering shirts with ventilation, newer quick-drying fabrics and trousers that are easily

converted into shorts (this will lessen the number of trousers to carry).

-Also ladies should ensure that they wear descent sports bras, since that will make them more comfortable as the venture through the wilderness on Africa's bumpy roads.

FOOTWEAR

- Hiking boots (if tracking the gorillas) otherwise, choose a lighter pair of sneakers or trail runners
- Flip-flops or sandals: comfortable when you relax at your accommodation, go swimming or take a shower.

TOILETRIES

- Pack the usual things like soap, toothpaste, shampoo, and conditioner, etc.
- Sunscreen
- After-sun lotion
- Bug spray/insect repellent with the highest quality DEET. The most frequent repellent that works on both mosquitoes and tsetse flies is RID ®. This can also be bought online and can be applied on with clothes.
- Lip balm with SFP
- Wet wipes: if you have to go to the toilet or clean anything during your safari.
- Kleenex (small packs)

FIRST AID KIT + MEDICATION

Such as antidiarrheal medications, nose spray, eye-drops (it can be very dusty on the African plains), band-aid, anti-bacterial medicines, cold medicine, tweezers, hand sanitizer, painkillers like aspirin etc + medication

Don't forget the anti-malarial tablets.

GADGETS/ELECTRONICS

- Camera and accompanying equipment's + extra memory card
- Charger or/and Batteries
- Phone
- iPad or tablet
- Universal plug converters
- Binoculars
- Headlamp/Flashlight (small)
- Hairdryers are not allowed

Note: pack valuable electronics in a waterproof bag to protect it against dust and rains.

DOCUMENTS

- Passport (valid a min of 6 months prior to entry) — Travel Insurance documents — Itinerary — Flights info
- Yellow fever health card: they can ask for it upon arrival at the airport
- Visa: you can buy it upon arrival at the airport in all countries (Rwanda, Uganda and Tanzania)
- Cash USD: note that in Tanzania only US bills newer than 2006 are accepted + credit card

OTHER

- Money belt: it helps with safety for money and passport as it is carried on the body.
- Purse: Tourists are also advise to always put their valuables like the Binoculars, money, cameras, phones in their backpack and/or purse to avoid being displaced.
- Travel journal

ADVICE

- Most importantly ensure that you restrict your hand luggage to only one item because if you have more than one it makes travel much harder. Of course also a handbag qualifies as a second item! The hand luggage you carry should be just the size acceptable by the airlines you are using as a carry-on luggage.
- To the photographer to lessen carrying many things, make sure your camera bag has enough space where you could place your medicine prescription or glasses, travel documents, change of clothes and binoculars.
- Pack for a Purpose: Just in case you are interested in supporting local communities, pack any supplies to give to these communities (school supplies - clothing - medication). Dennis and I, both bring an extra suitcase filled with the above and give everything at our first stop.
- In order to secure your luggage, use a combination lock as it will secure your suitcase zips together. Most of the time, we only use a twist tie to deter tampering with our luggage at the airports or in our rooms.
- Don't stress too much about what to pack. Keep it simple & pack lightly. Try as much as possible to be a minimalist.
- The luggage you can bring on safari vehicles (**soft-sided bag max 30 pounds**), and a lot of lodges and camps offer laundry services, so there is no need to bring too many clothes.



This is what we used in 2020:
Soft-sided wheeled duffle bag

Exception: When we will arrive in Kigali, Rwanda, everyone can have an extra suitcases (as most airlines allow you to check-in 2 suitcases). That second suitcase doesn't have to be a soft sided suitcase and doesn't have to be limited to 30 pounds. However, this second suitcase will be left in Uganda if you decide to bring a second suitcase filled with clothing, school supplies...

We hope this document helps you to figure out all that you need to carry and/or to not carry for your African safari. You will not regret leaving anything behind and not carrying things you wouldn't have needed for your safari.

Now, go pack and join us for this unforgettable experience in Africa!