

Travelling to Tanzania

PRE- DEPARTURE INFORMATION

Arusha Fortes Ltd will do its utmost to ensure that you have a wonderful holiday and see the best of Tanzania. To enable you to enjoy your stay to the fullest, please review the suggestions and comments below to assist you in preparing for your safari.

Things work at a different pace in Africa and the most important thing to do when you get here is to relax. Nothing can be hurried and it must be remembered that Tanzania is a less developed country. Airport control and border crossings all take time and cannot be rushed. When you get impatient or cross, it only aggravates the situation. Where possible, have all the documents you may need ready. Always smile, be polite, friendly and relaxed.

Many roads in Tanzania are still dirt roads which can be bumpy and dusty and can in some places be very slow going. As a result of badly graded roads, punctures can happen and guides will always appreciate understanding and help in these situations.

Visa & Immigration

Visitors to Tanzania are required to have a valid passport and visa. Visas are obtainable from your nearest Tanzanian Embassy, High Commission, or Consulate. You should allow plenty of time for processing your visa before your departure. For some countries visas are also obtainable upon arrival. However, it is usually best to check with the Tanzanian Embassy, High Commission, or Consulate before making definite plans.

Flight Information

Ethiopian Air, Qatar, RwandAir, Turkish Airlines and KLM (with its affiliated airlines) fly into Kilimanjaro International Airport. There are, however, many more that fly into Dar Es Salaam and Nairobi. From these other regional airports it is possible to arrange local flights to Kilimanjaro or Arusha Airport with local airlines.

- Kilimanjaro International Airport – JRO
- Julius Nyerere International Airport (Dar Es Salaam) – DAR
- Zanzibar International Airport – ZNZ
- Arusha Airport – ARK
- Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (Nairobi, Kenya) – NBO / JKIA

Health

Consult your doctor or Travel clinic before you plan to journey to any country in East Africa (Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and Zanzibar). Ask about vaccinations, which ones you will need, and which ones are advisable to take. All visitors to Tanzania need a valid international certificate for Yellow Fever.

Malaria prevention is advisable; use insect repellent, cover up at sundown, sleep under a mosquito net and take anti-malarial prophylaxis as advised by your doctor. You usually have to start these a sometime before departure, and continue a couple of weeks after your safari. Be informed about the possible side effects of the medicine. Based on our experiences in the field we advise against Lariam (mefloquine) as prophylaxis as we see many serious side effects to this drug, including various degrees of mood disorders.

It is also advisable to pack a small first aid kit, and all your prescription medicines, spare glasses, extra contact lenses and solution. There is a lot of dust and glare on safari that can affect sensitive eyes. Drink only bottled or boiled water.

If you are planning on climbing either Mt Kilimanjaro or Mt Meru, ensure that you are fully aware of the medical implications of climbing at higher altitudes.

What to Pack

Pack lightweight, washable clothes, plus a sweater for early morning game drives. It is advisable to bring a raincoat. The rainy seasons are unpredictable and it is best to come prepared. In the evening it is advisable to wear light-coloured, long-sleeved shirts and trousers to discourage mosquitoes. Also important are a sun hat, good sunglasses and sunscreen.

It is absolutely essential that every member of the safari have a pair of binoculars. A good pair of binoculars will be well worth the investment.

Tanzania is a religiously diverse country, and in respect to the people of this country we would advise on dressing accordingly. There are many Islamic people in Tanzania and very revealing clothing is offensive, it is advisable especially for women to carry a wrap that can be used to cover up if necessary. On the beach and within the confines of beach hotels normal swimwear (but not nudity) is acceptable.

If you are climbing Mt Kilimanjaro or Mt Meru, you should also contact the company who you are climbing with. If they are any good they will be able to advise you specific clothing required for a climb. It is important to climb with a recognized company; as your safety is important and you have a better chance of summiting. There are several companies we would recommend.

Security

Tanzania is a generally safe and friendly country, but don't invite temptation. Do not walk at night, order a taxi from your hotel or lodge. Do not carry valuables, cameras or large amounts of cash. Ask at the reception of hotels and lodges whether they have safety deposit boxes and ask for a receipt. Keep your eye on your belongings, and beware of pickpockets. Leave any valuable items at home.

Safari Safety

National parks and Conservation Areas are home to the beautiful wildlife of Tanzania. Please feel comfortable in these areas but respect the temperaments of the wildlife. Some of the wildlife is timid and some can be aggressive. Please read the TANAPA Rules and Regulations and follow the rules. The rules were written by people who understand the wildlife and wish only to protect them and you.

Do not get out of your vehicle when you are in any wilderness area except designated areas such as picnic areas, camp grounds or lodges. Read and follow signs posted in parks, campsites and lodges. Follow the suggestions of park and lodge employees who have experience in the areas where you are visiting. When in doubt ask questions and be sure to follow the instructions of rangers and guides.

Travel insurance

It is recommended that you purchase travel insurance to cover baggage or valuables in event of loss or theft. It is recommended to purchase emergency medical evacuation insurance in the event of an accident or medical emergency. There are many affordable and reputable companies available on the internet that can provide coverage. Trip cancellation insurance is essential in the event that you are unable to travel due to illness. Most policies also provide cancellation in the event of illness of a family member.

In addition, Flying Doctor membership (AMREF) is included in every quotation for a safari and self drive; this is non-negotiable, even if the client has adequate coverage. In our experience this is the most efficient and quickest way to get to a reliable medical facility in the unforeseen event of emergency.

Liability

Arusha Fortes Ltd, acts only as an agent of the passenger in all matters relating to tours and it accepts no responsibility for any personal illness, injury, accident, death, delay, any kind of loss, damage or irregularity of any kind, which may one occasioned by reason of any act or omission beyond its control, including without limitation, any act of negligence or breach of contract of any third party such as a hotel or airline, who is to or does supply, any good or services.

Please also see our Liability Waiver.

Money

Local currency is Tanzanian Shillings. You will be able to exchange all major currencies (US Dollars, Euros and GB Pounds) at banks and exchange bureaus. You will also be able to take out Shillings from ATM's in larger towns. However, the ATM's are not always reliable. Credit cards are now more widely accepted in Tanzania. Credit cards do still carry poor exchange rates or additional charges to cover processing fees. For any credit card transaction, surcharges vary between 5 and 7 percent. Payments using traveller's cheques are accepted but there are also often surcharges.

For cash US Dollars, many places including banks and exchange bureaus do not accept notes before the year 2000. This is due to a suspicion that notes before this time are counterfeit. Denominations smaller than \$50 or \$100 also have lower exchange rates.

Please change money only in banks and known exchange bureaus, do not change money on the streets.

Depending on the type of safari you are booking, most costs are included in your trip. Below are some of the things that you may need to pay for:

- Drinks and Laundry services while staying at lodges
- Souvenirs and curios
- Books and postcards
- Gratuities

Tipping

Although tipping is optional and totally up to your personal discretion, it is a safari tradition. Many lodges have a staff tip box; staff members who receive tips left in the tip box vary from lodge to lodge; you can check with the lodge reception as to their policy.

Contributions and Begging

In cities, towns and rural areas you will witness areas of extreme poverty. There are many government, church and non-government programmes addressing the needs of people in need. Please do not hand out gifts to children on the streets this encourages them to leave school and beg in areas common for tourists to pass. Beware of official looking papers to sponsor people for school fees or medical expenses. If you would like a list of area projects that are in need of donations please contact us. As anywhere, gifts should be given as a true expression of friendship, appreciation of thanks.

Photography

Protect your camera from dust and keep the film equipment cool. It is courteous to ask people for permission before you take their photo. We discourage you from paying to take pictures of people.

Language

Even though English is widely spoken in Tanzania, Kiswahili is the national language and a few words are always highly appreciated. Kiswahili phrase books are readily available in book stores in many countries and in Tanzania.

Climate

Tanzania is just south of the equator, which means that the climate is relatively stable throughout the year. Global warming and the changing climate have of course also affected the climate in Tanzania, making the seasons less predictable. Generally, we have two rainy seasons and two dry seasons. The ‘short rains’ are usually from November to December and the ‘long rains’ are usually from March to May.

Tanzania is a large country and the weather does vary from region to region. In the coastal areas, Dar Es Salaam, and Zanzibar, the weather is hot and humid all year round. Temperatures on Mt Kilimanjaro and Mt Meru drop to below freezing.

Please find below the average temperature in Arusha.

| | <i>Jan</i> | <i>Feb</i> | <i>March</i> | <i>April</i> | <i>May</i> | <i>June</i> | <i>July</i> | <i>Aug</i> | <i>Sept</i> | <i>Oct</i> | <i>Nov</i> | <i>Dec</i> |
|-------------------|------------|------------|--------------|--------------|------------|-------------|-------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|
| <i>Celsius</i> | 32 | 32 | 28 | 22 | 20 | 20 | 26 | 28 | 30 | 27 | 22 | 28 |
| <i>Fahrenheit</i> | 89.6 | 89.6 | 82.4 | 71.6 | 68 | 68 | 78.8 | 82.4 | 86 | 80.6 | 71.6 | 82.4 |

Electricity

Tanzania’s power voltage is 240 with British style plugs (square 3 pin). Power failures, surges, and troughs are still very common in Tanzania. It is recommended to bring a universal adapter, and a torch (flashlight) or headlamp.

Power for charging batteries and other electronic equipment is available in most lodges.

Time Zone

Tanzania is + 3 GMT

This means the local time is three hours ahead of GMT, six hours ahead of New York and eleven hours ahead of Los Angeles. Tanzania does not observe daylight saving time, so the difference changes by one hour in the European and North American Summer.

Shopping

The tourist areas and hotels will sell a large variety of souvenirs and jewellery. Do not be afraid to haggle at roadside stalls (if you have one - your driver/ guide will be able to advise you where to shop and reasonable prices).

Be careful when buying gemstones such as Tanzanite. They are widely available at souvenir shops, but be sure to buy gemstones with a recognized dealer. There are several shops we would recommend.