
Highlights of South Africa

ESCORTED TOUR

Plus two optional extensions

**Big Five Bush Safari, South Africa;
Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe**

SAF/SAC 2012

Grand Circle Travel

Highlights of South Africa

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INTRODUCTION

ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

We've gathered some introductory information that may prove helpful for this Grand Circle itinerary. If you expect to embark on personal exploration, or wish to discover more about the countries you visit, we suggest that you consult your choice of the many in-depth travel guidebooks devoted to your destinations. For detailed and timely information, it's wise to visit appropriate websites and confirm luggage regulations, weather conditions and other variable elements of your trip. Refer to our recommended reading list (at the end of the handbook) for alternate sources of insight.

ABOUT GRAND CIRCLE TRAVEL

Grand Circle Travel, founded in 1958 to serve the American Association for Retired Persons (AARP), is the leader in international travel, adventure and discovery for Americans aged 50 and over. Grand Circle vacations have been recommended by *The New York Times*, *Condé Nast Traveler*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *Travel+Leisure*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Arthur Frommer's Budget Travel*, among other publications. But our most impressive reviews come from the more than one million people who have traveled with us and from readers of *Condé Nast Traveler* who placed Grand Circle Cruise Lines, the cruise branch of Grand Circle, in the Top 10 of the World's Best Cruise Lines for seven years. Grand Circle has earned a spot on the prestigious *Condé Nast Traveler* Gold List for seven consecutive years as well. For 2011 *Condé Nast Traveler* named seven Grand Circle river ships among the 20 best river ships in the world; for 2012 the Grand Circle Cruise Lines was named to their Platinum Circle of top cruise lines.

YOUR GCT PROGRAM DIRECTOR

During your Grand Circle Escorted Tour, you'll have reliable assistance available at all times from an on-site Grand Circle Travel Program Director. Your Program Director is a resident of the area, is fluent in English, and can give you an inside perspective on your destinations. Your Program Director is supported along the way by local tour guides, who guide you expertly through particular sites and cities.

Many Grand Circle Program Directors are graduates of professional education programs for travel guides. In addition, they receive specialized training directly from Grand Circle, training that is based on what we've learned from thousands of past travelers about how to make the trip most enjoyable. Your Program Director offers both a deep knowledge of the region and a commitment to make this a very pleasant, informative, and rewarding travel experience for you.

Your Program Director will provide sightseeing tips, handle all travel details, reserve optional tours you choose to take, oversee your Discovery Series events, and provide any other assistance you may need. You will be in the company of the Program Director throughout your Escorted Tour and during the optional trip extensions if you choose to take them.

1. PASSPORT, VISAS AND TRAVEL DOCUMENTS



Passport Required

U.S. citizens need a valid passport for this itinerary.

Note

Your passport should meet these requirements for this itinerary:

- It should be valid for at least 6 months after your scheduled return to the U.S.
- It should have the recommended number of blank pages (see below for details).
- The blank pages must be labeled “Visas” at the top. Pages labeled “Amendments and Endorsements” are not acceptable.

Recommended number of blank pages:

This recommendation is based on a “worst case” scenario. When you are on this adventure, you might use fewer pages, depending on the whims of the Immigration official on duty that day. Since the consequences of having too few pages can be severe—you could be denied entry into a country—we feel that it’s better to be safe than sorry, and we strongly recommend that you follow these guidelines.

Main trip only: If you are taking only the main trip, you will require a total of 6 blank passport pages for South Africa (4), Swaziland (1), and re-entry into the U.S. (1). For Swaziland and the U.S. return, these pages do not need to be consecutive. But for South Africa, you’ll need 2 consecutive pages—the front and back of one sheet—for each entry. (On the main trip, you will have 2 entries into South Africa; each entry can have its own individual set of 2 consecutive pages, so you don’t need 4 in a row.)*

Pre-trip extension Big 5 Bush Safari, South Africa: The pre-trip extension does not require any additional pages beyond the 6 needed for the main trip.

Post-trip to Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe: In addition to the 6 pages required for the main trip, you will need 1 more page for a total of 7 blank passport pages.

Both the pre- and post-trip extensions: You will need a total of 7 blank passport pages.

***Optional Chobe National Park tour:** If you plan to take this optional tour, offered during the post-trip extension, you will need additional blank passport pages, in addition to what is listed above. The tour requires 2 additional blank passport pages.

***FOR SOUTH AFRICA PLEASE NOTE:** Should you call the Embassy of South Africa, they may tell you that you only need 1 blank passport page for each entry. But according to the U.S. State Department, it is common for the local officials to ask for 2 consecutive blank pages per entry. In the past, South African authorities have turned away travelers because they didn’t have 2 pages or because they didn’t have consecutive pages. (“Consecutive” in this case meaning the front and back of one sheet.) **Therefore your failure to have enough passport pages, or to have consecutive pages, could result in your being denied entry into South Africa.** If this occurs, you would be forced to turn back at your own expense.

Please take moment to check if your passport meets all of these requirements. If not, you could be refused entry into a country. And if that happens, you might be required by that country to return to the U.S. immediately, **which would be at your own expense.**

If you need to renew your passport or get extra pages:

Contact the National Passport Information Center (NPIC) at **1-877-487-2778**, or visit their website at **www.travel.state.gov** for information on obtaining a new passport, renewing your existing passport, or for additional pages. You can renew your passport by mail if it is not damaged, you obtained it within the last fifteen years, and it's in the name you want on your new passport. Many local post offices carry forms for renewing by mail or obtaining extra pages. Allow several weeks for processing your passport. You may also contact our recommended visa service company, PVS International, at **1-800-556-9990** for help with your passport.

Note: When updating your passport, it is worthwhile to check the prices on all the different services that might apply to you. For example, it might be less expensive to renew your passport than to have pages added, depending on the number of pages you need.

Visas Not Required—Main Trip

Visas Required—Optional Extension

If you are taking the optional *Victoria Falls* trip extension, the visa requirements below apply to U.S. citizens holding a U.S. passport.

- **Zimbabwe (optional *Victoria Falls* extension)—visa required:** If you are taking the optional *Victoria Falls* post-trip extension, you will require an entry visa for entry into Zimbabwe. If you expect to take any of the available optional tours that take you outside Zimbabwe (i.e. to Chobe in Botswana or Livingstone in Zambia), you will need a **double** entry visa for re-entry into Zimbabwe. We will send you the necessary visa application forms, instructions explaining how to fill them out, and the amount of the visa processing fees approximately 100 days prior to your departure.
- **Visas are not required for U.S. citizens entering South Africa or Swaziland** on the main trip.

No U.S. Passport?

Non-U.S. citizens or non-U.S. passport holders: If you are **not** a U.S. citizen or if you possess a passport from a country other than the U.S., it is your responsibility to check with your local consulate or embassy about possible visa requirements. Or you can contact PVS International, who can also assist non-U.S. citizens:

PVS International
Passport & Visa Services
1700 N Moore Street
Rosslyn Center, suite 310
Arlington, VA 22209
Telephone: 1-800-556-9990

Backup Photocopies

The smartest and easiest security precaution you can take is to carry photocopies of the personal information pages of your passport, your air ticket, traveler's check serial numbers (if you're carrying these checks), and your credit cards. Store them separate from the originals. Bring along extra passport-sized photos. Add phone and fax numbers for reporting lost credit cards, for your travel protection plan company if you have purchased one, and for your medical emergency network. This can save you immeasurable time, money, and bother if your documents are lost or stolen during your trip. In addition, you can scan these photocopies and email them to your personal email address so that a replacement can be printed out if needed.

2. HEALTH



Keep Your Abilities In Mind

Journeys sometimes present the traveler with unaccustomed challenges – this escorted tour has a fair amount of walking and steps to climb at airports, onto motorcoaches, and at some of your accommodations. In some locations you'll be walking over uneven, rocky or precarious terrain; both included and optional tours can require extended walking to guarantee a truly rewarding experience. Some of the places you'll visit have not been improved with elevators, escalators, ramps, railings or other aids. If you have difficulty walking in terms of balance or stamina, or are generally inactive in your daily life consider an exercise program to tone up for your trip. If in doubt, consult your physician describing the length and type of rigors you'll encounter. For your comfort and safety, we recommend this program only to individuals in good physical condition. *Please note that this trip is not wheelchair, walker, or rollator accessible; nor can Grand Circle Travel accommodate motorized scooters of any kind.*



Health Check and Inoculations

If you have any ongoing medical conditions or concerns about your health, we highly recommend that you schedule a checkup with your personal physician at least six weeks in advance of your departure date. Discuss with your doctor any aspects of your international itinerary that may affect your health and be guided by his or her advice. A loose filling or developing cavity would be difficult to remedy while you are traveling. You may want to have a dental exam before your trip. Feeling healthy and confident of your mobility is essential if you want to fully enjoy your trip abroad. For your comfort and safety, we recommend this program only to individuals in good physical condition.

Prescription Medications: If you take medications regularly, be sure to pack an ample supply that will last your entire trip, as obtaining refills of your medication can be difficult during your trip. Pack these medications in your carry-on bag, and keep them in their original, labeled containers. To be prepared for any unforeseen loss of your medications, you should also bring copies of the prescriptions, written using the generic drug name rather than a brand name.

Vaccinations:

Check with the CDC: To ensure you receive any needed vaccinations we suggest that you check the current recommendations of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for the destination. You can contact them at:

Online — Visit the CDC's website at www.cdc.gov/travel, where you will find comprehensive information about preventing illness while traveling.

By phone—Call the CDC's Hotline toll-free at **1-800-232-4636** 24 hours a day. Please note that automated information may be arranged topically by disease, rather than by country or region.

Consult your doctor: After checking the CDC's recommendations we strongly suggest that you consult your family physician concerning any vaccinations or medications that you may need on this trip. At the time of print there were no specific vaccinations required for entry into any of the countries on your itinerary.

Yellow Fever Vaccination:

South Africa *generally* doesn't require a yellow fever vaccination, but the rules are not always clear, even to officials – and are sometimes misinterpreted. We strongly suggest that you bring documentation (a vaccination card or a doctor's waiver—i.e. a letter stating you should not have the vaccination) that indicates your status. This will save you from any inconvenience if you *are* asked for documents in South Africa, or if you have to transit through or deplane in an endemic country, such as Senegal.

Prevention of Malaria: Well in advance of your trip, discuss with your doctor the CDC's recommendation that travelers to parts of South Africa and Zimbabwe (on the optional extension) take an anti-malarial medication. Be guided by your health care professional as to which malaria medication regimen, if any, you will follow. For further information, you or your health care professional can obtain the CDC document "Prescription Drugs for Malaria" (available on the CDC website). The most important steps you can take to prevent malaria are to use insect repellent (preferably containing DEET at 30-35% strength) on exposed skin and on your clothing to prevent mosquito bites, and to wear clothing that keeps your arms and legs covered. Please note that Entabeni National Park (on the optional pre-trip extension) is currently considered a "malaria-free zone."

Traveler's Diarrhea Precautions: Perhaps the greatest health risk is traveler's diarrhea, caused by eating contaminated fruit or vegetables or drinking contaminated water. We've carefully chosen the restaurants for your group meals, and food at these establishments is generally as safe as in restaurants in the U.S. When dining out on your own, watch what you eat. Stay away from ice, uncooked food, and non-pasteurized milk and milk products. Drink only bottled water, which is readily available. Mild cases of diarrhea may respond to Imodium or Pepto-Bismol (not as strong as Imodium); both can be purchased over the counter before you go. For more stubborn cases, you might want to talk to your doctor about bringing along a prescription medication.

Basic Illness Prevention

It's common for people traveling in contained spaces to be more susceptible to easily transmitted viral and bacterial illnesses such as flu, stomach and respiratory bugs, and colds. The single most effective way to prevent this is frequent hand-washing. We ask all travelers to be extra diligent in their normal hand-washing hygiene, and to drink plenty of fluids for proper hydration. Simple steps like these will help ensure that everyone enjoys the comfortable, carefree vacation they looked forward to.



Drinking Water

South Africa:

Tap water is safe to drink in South Africa. Bottled water is also readily available.

Zimbabwe:

Tap water is safe to drink in hotels at Victoria Falls. Bottled water is also readily available. You should drink only bottled water when you are away from your hotel at Victoria Falls



Jet Lag Relief

You will feel better on the first days of your trip if, shortly before you leave home, you start to adjust to the different time zone of your destination. Since you will cross several time zones to reach your destination, you may lose many hours of regular sleep. On arrival, your body then will have to suddenly adjust to new sleeping and eating patterns. The result is jet lag. Its symptoms are fatigue—often compounded by insomnia and general restlessness—irritability, and vague disorientation. You cannot totally avoid jet lag, but you can minimize it. Here's how:

- Start your trip well rested. Begin a gradual transition to your new time zone before you leave.
- Switch to your destination time zone when you get on the plane. Attempt to sleep and eat according to the new schedule.
- Try to sleep on overnight flights.
- Avoid heavy eating and drinking caffeine or alcoholic beverages right before—and during—your flight.
- Drink plenty of water and/or fruit juice while flying.
- Stretch your legs, neck, and back periodically while seated on the plane, and make an effort to get up and walk about the cabin a few times to keep your blood circulation normal.
- After arrival, avoid the temptation to nap.
- Don't push yourself to see a lot on your first day.
- Try to stay awake your first day until after dinner.



3. LUGGAGE REGULATIONS

Size, Number and Weight Restrictions

It may seem early to discuss luggage and packing, but if you know current industry standards for international flights you can start to plan what type of luggage you'll use, how much clothing to bring, etc. The following information can help you in your trip preparations. We'll remind you to confirm your U.S./international luggage limits (and update regional limits, if applicable) in your final documents (arriving about two weeks before your departure).

MAIN TRIP LIMITS	
Pieces per person	One checked bag and one carry-on bag per person
Weight restrictions	Varies by airline. The current standard is 44lbs for checked bags and 11lbs for carry-on bags .
Size restrictions	Varies by airline. Measured in linear inches (<i>length+width+depth</i>). Generally, 62 linear inches is the checked bag limit; carry-on limit is 45 linear inches .
Luggage Type	A sturdy, fabric-sided suitcase with built-in wheels and lockable zippers is recommended.
TRIP EXTENSION(S) LIMITS	
Both extensions have the same luggage restrictions as the main trip.	
REMARKS / SUGGESTIONS	
<p>Due to limits within Africa, your luggage cannot exceed the weight and size restrictions below: Weight limit: 55 pounds total—checked suitcase (44 lbs max) and carry-on (11 lbs max) Size restrictions: As noted above.</p> <p>One suitcase and one carry-on bag per person: Due to the space limitations on bus transfers, you'll be restricted to one suitcase and one carry-on bag per person. This is to ensure that we have room for everyone's luggage. We ask that you abide by this limit to avoid inconveniencing your fellow travelers and prevent additional airlines luggage fees (which are your responsibility). Most airlines now charge to check more than one suitcase per person for flights to Europe and other international flights.</p> <p>Note: Enforcement of published restrictions by countries and airlines is a matter of governmental and corporate policy. Enforcement may include spot checks and may be inconsistently applied. Expect penalties and fines to be imposed immediately, however, when and if enforced. Before you choose to ignore the published restrictions you should ask: <i>Do I feel lucky?</i> And, even if you answer yes, you should make sure that you have the ability to pay the fine.</p>	

Should I confirm luggage restrictions with my U.S./international airline(s) before departure?

Absolutely, confirm current restrictions about a week or so before your departure. You should take this step no matter if your vacation has a lower limit than the average international flight or not, because there may be recent changes, such as new security regulations, or an update to the standard weight/size allowances. For your convenience, we maintain a list of the toll-free numbers for the most common airlines on our webpage in the *FAQ* section.

You should also check with the airlines on luggage fees—many airlines charge to check luggage, sometimes even on international flights. Others will charge a fee if you bring a second carry-on item, like a purse or a laptop. **These fees are not included in your trip price;** they are payable directly to the airlines. If you are making a connecting flight, you should also confirm if your luggage can be checked through to your final destination. For more information about air travel, see the “Air Travel” section of your *Important Information* booklet.

Luggage Suggestions

Consider using a daypack or small backpack as your carry-on bag for flights. It can do double duty during excursions and walking trips. A daypack leaves your hands free and distributes the weight of whatever you carry onto your back or hips. Packed with your daily travel needs (sweater, camera, rain/wind jacket, water bottle, etc.), it can compress to fit the snug storage space of foreign motorcoaches, and yet still have space for that impulse buy at a local street market.

Consider a duffel bag or soft-sided suitcase for your main luggage. Porterage at airports and hotels is provided for one bag per person. All bags should have luggage tags. Packing is easier if you use inner bags to help organize your gear. Plastic shopping bags, nylon stuff sacks, small zipper duffels, or special mesh bags can separate clothing, gear and dirty laundry inside your suitcase. Isolate liquid toiletries in heavy-duty Ziploc style bags – which are generally quite handy to have when traveling.

Optional: a second, empty lockable bag folded into your main suitcase, with a luggage tag and small lock. Use this to carry souvenirs home (but remember that this may result in an extra luggage fee).

TSA locks

For flights that originate in the U.S.: To reduce the risk of damage to your luggage, please do not lock your bags when checking in for flights that originate in the U.S. The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) has the responsibility for screening every piece of checked luggage at commercial airports throughout the U.S. According to the TSA, baggage-handling agents may require access to the contents of your luggage and will break locks as required. There are some locks available from retailers that are “accepted and recognized” by TSA. TSA screeners have tools for opening and re-locking bags using those locks, thus avoiding damage to the lock or bag if a physical inspection is required. For a list of TSA-accepted locks, visit their website at www.tsa.gov/public.

For flights outside the U.S.: On all flights outside of the U.S., we strongly recommend you lock your luggage.

For more suggestions from the TSA, visit www.tsa.gov/public.

4. BEFORE YOU LEAVE

Optional Excursions—*most need early purchase*

Your Escorted Tour offers both included and optional tours. Below are descriptions of some of the optional tours featured on your itinerary. Most of these excursions require an early decision. Note that prices are subject to change.

Pretoria Optional Tour

To pre-book this optional tour you must do so by 45 days prior to departure. This tour may also be booked onsite, but space is limited.

On this optional afternoon tour of Pretoria, you'll visit the Voortrekker Monument, an architectural homage to the early pioneers who left the coastal colony and colonized what is now the interior of South Africa. You'll also see Church Square, Kruger House (or Melrose House, depending on availability), and the embassy area, as well as the Union Buildings, home of the president's office and government offices. Perched on a hill overlooking Pretoria proper, the Union Buildings offer a panoramic view of the "Jacaranda City"—as the locals call Pretoria, for the profusion of purple-blossomed jacaranda trees lining its streets.

This optional excursion costs U.S. \$75 per person.

Private Game Drive in Kruger National Park

*To pre-book this optional tour you must do so by 45 days prior to departure. This tour may also be booked onsite, but space is limited.
A minimum of 6 participants is required to operate this tour.*

During your stay in Kruger National Park, come with us on this optional excursion to enjoy an all-day game-viewing drive in an open safari vehicle with a maximum of ten passengers per vehicle. Depart the Lodge between 5:30 and 6:00 am with a packed breakfast and spend the day exploring the Kruger National Park with a qualified guide. You can enjoy lunch on your own at one of the local camps in the Park. This full day tour will be about 8 hours long.

This optional excursion costs U.S. \$115 per person.

Addo Elephant National Park

To pre-book this optional tour you must do so by 45 days prior to departure. This tour may also be booked onsite, but space is limited.

On this tour of Addo Elephant National Park, you'll get another chance to see South Africa's most celebrated safari animals. The park houses more than 450 elephants, 400 Cape buffalo, over 48 endangered black rhino, as well as a variety of antelope. You may even see lion and spotted hyena, which have been re-introduced to the area in recent years.

This optional excursion costs U.S. \$50 per person.

Township Tour in Cape Town

To pre-book this optional tour you must do so by 45 days prior to departure. This tour can also be booked onsite, but space is limited.

During our stay in Cape Town, join us for this exciting half-day optional tour to discover the local townships of Langa, Guguletu, and Bonteheuwel. Although the Townships were originally created during the apartheid period as residential areas for non-whites, today they are vital and energetic urban communities that house a large percent of Cape Town's population. In a tour that will add to our in-depth knowledge of South Africa's people, we'll focus on the traditions, culture, customs, and daily way of life of the residents of these townships through a guided tour by a township resident and a home visit.

This tour costs approximately \$55 per person.

5. WHEN YOU ARRIVE



GCT Air Travelers

U.S. Departure: If you are among a group of ten or more GCT travelers who depart the U.S. from your international gateway city, it is our goal to have a GCT Representative assist you at the U.S. airport with the check-in of your flight. Unless there are extenuating circumstances beyond our control, the Representative will be at the check-in counter three hours before your departure time and at the gate one hour before your departure time (security permitting).

Please note that if you are arriving at your international gateway city via a connecting domestic flight, the Grand Circle Representative will be stationed at the check-in counter for your departing international flight, not at the domestic arrival gate.

Important note on porters: Airport porters are *NOT* allowed in the customs hall area. On arrival, you must take your luggage off the baggage carousel and load it onto a cart, which you will then move through customs. When you exit customs, your Program Director will arrange porters for your luggage.

Johannesburg Arrival: At the beginning of your base trip or your optional pre-trip extension, either a Grand Circle Representative or your Program Director will meet you at the airport after you exit Customs and assist you with your transfer to the hotel.

U.S. Return: At the end of your base trip you'll transfer to the Cape Town airport for your return. If you take the optional post-trip extension, you'll be transferred by motorcoach to the Victoria Falls airport where you'll board a flight to Johannesburg to connect to your return flight to the U.S. If you are among a group of ten or more GCT travelers who return to the same U.S. gateway city, a GCT Representative will meet you as you exit Customs and help you find taxis, buses, hotel accommodations, or connecting flights. Again, it is our goal to have our GCT Representative waiting to assist your group. In rare instances, unforeseen circumstances may prevent this service.

Please Note: If you are providing your own air transportation, where you'll need to book your return flight from is dependent on the options you have selected. To return from the main trip, book your return flight from Cape Town—the connecting flight from Cape Town to Johannesburg is part of the GCT flight package, and is **not** part of the land tour. If you are taking the optional post-trip extension to Victoria Falls, book your return flight from Johannesburg—the flight from Victoria Falls to Johannesburg is included in the post-trip package.

Name Tags: Please remember to wear your Grand Circle Travel name tag when you exit Customs, upon arrival and when you return to the U.S., so that you are readily identifiable as a GCT traveler.



6. MONEY MATTERS

How to Carry Your Money

Traveler's checks—not recommended

We urge you not to rely on traveler's checks for your personal expenses. They can be difficult to exchange and the commission fee for cashing them is quite high (traveler's checks are not accepted in Zimbabwe, on the optional *Victoria Falls* extension). Most banks or exchange offices will want to see your passport at the time of exchange. It's most practical to view any traveler's checks you might bring as a last "cash" resort in the event of a special situation.

Currency

It is a good idea to change some currency into South African rand before you leave the U.S., as you may not be able to do so for a few days after arrival. You can change money at banks or in your hotel. Please note that torn, dirty, or taped bills will not be accepted—a bill with even the slightest tear will be refused.

Currency exchange rates fluctuate daily. Your Program Director can advise you of the exchange rate upon your arrival. For current exchange rates, please refer to our website, your bank, or the financial section of your newspaper. On our website select the region and then click on the country you'll be visiting. A link to the currency converter is included in the menu on the page of each individual country.

ATMs and Debit Cards

Debit cards give you a reliable payment method and ready access to local currency. We recommend you use a debit card for withdrawals at ATM machines when you need cash, as it will allow you the flexibility of accessing money at your convenience without relying on bank hours for money exchanges. When traveling, typically PLUS, Cirrus, and other bank networks are available throughout large cities and small towns.

Always notify your bank before you leave home that you are going abroad so that they may remove any blocks on your account and also ask them about the number of withdrawals you may make abroad. For cash withdrawals, don't forget to memorize the actual digits of your card's 4-digit PIN (Personal Identification Number), as many keypads at foreign ATMs do not include letters on their numeric keys, they only display digits.

***Note on ATM use:** Many banks have begun imposing a fee ranging from \$1 to \$5 every time you use an ATM in a foreign city. You may want to limit the number of withdrawals that you make. Your Program Director/Hospitality Desk Representative can advise you on locations, but when to exchange money is left to your discretion.*

Credit Cards

Though major American credit cards (Visa and MasterCard) are accepted abroad, always inquire if your type of credit card is accepted before deciding on your purchase. It is also wise to notify the credit card company that you will be using your cards abroad so that they may remove any security block. When using a major credit card you may receive a different exchange rate than if you pay with cash; inquire about the rate first.

Please be aware that credit cards might not be accepted for small purchases or in the markets. Discover credit card does not operate outside the U.S. Keep your receipts in case you have questions about the conversion or exchange rate. Also, keep your receipts as proof of purchase for items to be shipped home.

Credit Cards are rarely accepted in Zimbabwe (optional Victoria Falls extension). Expect to pay for most Zimbabwean goods and services in cash, in either U.S. dollars or South African rand.

Payment of Optional Tour Costs

During your trip you will be able to book optional tours directly with your Program Director. He or she will ask you to confirm the payment for these tours by filling out a payment form. Optional tours can only be purchased with a credit or debit card — including those taken in Zimbabwe (this is an exception to the general cash-only rule for Zimbabwe). We accept Visa, MasterCard, or American Express credit cards only. We also accept debit cards with the logo of one of these credit card companies, but it must be a card that allows you to sign for purchases. In order to correctly process these charges, there can be a delay of 2-3 months from the date of your return for the charges to be posted to your account. Therefore we ask that you use a card that will not expire in the 2-3 months following your return. Because our headquarters are in Boston, charges may appear to be from Boston or might be labeled as "**OPT Boston**" (depending on your credit card company).

Security

Use the same precautions as you would in any major city in the world. When you're out sightseeing in cities, please put everything of value in one of the safe deposit boxes at your hotel; and guard against pickpockets on the streets. Men should carry their wallets in their front pants pocket. Women should not carry hand-held purses or ones that dangle off the shoulder. Purses with long straps that can reach over the head so the bag may be worn like a shoulder sash are the safest.

Keep your camera straps around your neck or wrist and make sure your watch is securely fastened (better yet, leave it in the safe deposit box). Don't be tempted by the black market money exchange. What you stand to gain is no compensation for the possibly embarrassing, if not harrowing, consequences should you get caught.

For your own protection, please do not walk anywhere by yourself at night. It's best to stay with your tour group in the evening. If you insist on exploring on your own, always go and return by taxi, and let your Program Director know your whereabouts

Currency

South Africa

U.S. dollars are *not* accepted by shops in South Africa.

The official currency of South Africa is the rand (abbreviated R), which is divided into 100 cents (c). Banknote and coin denominations are as follows:

- Banknotes: R10, R20, R50, R100, and R200
- Coins: 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50c; R1, R2, and R5

If possible, arrive with some local currency—South African rand—as you may not have the opportunity to change money for the first few days.

Only certain credit cards are accepted. Visa and MasterCard are widely accepted at many hotels, restaurants, and shops—even some smaller roadside “curio” places. American Express and Diners Club are only accepted at some establishments; they are not as commonly used as Visa or MasterCard. Some hotels will give you a cash advance on your credit card, and charge a 4%-10% transaction fee.

ATMs are available everywhere and with credit cards widely accepted it isn't necessary to carry large amounts of cash.

Banking hours are usually weekdays from 8 or 9 am to 3 pm. Weekend hours vary. Saturday the banks are open in the morning, but Sundays and public holidays they are closed.

Zimbabwe

Currently **credit cards are not accepted anywhere in Zimbabwe.** The only acceptable form of payment in Zimbabwe is cash, in either U.S. dollars or South African rand. It is essential that you carry cash (U.S. dollars or SA rand) in small denominations (ones and/or fives), as most locations will not be able to break down larger bills.

For shopping purposes, we encourage you to bring as much U.S. cash as possible for your stay in Victoria Falls. Please note that anything bought from registered dealers in Zimbabwean cash is now subject to 15% VAT, which is not refundable upon departure.

Traveler's checks are not accepted in Zimbabwe. Optional tours in Zimbabwe must be paid for by credit card – cash is not accepted.

For payment of your hotel bill, travelers are obliged by law to settle their “extras” account in foreign currency (either U.S. dollars or South African rand). The hotels may quote all “extras” in Zimbabwe dollars, but when you divide this by the exchange rate, you'll see that most items are a very good value for the money!

Banking hours are generally Monday to Friday, from 8 or 9 am to some time between 3:30 and 5 pm; on Saturday, hours range from 8 am to 1 pm. Small-town banks close for lunch from 12:45 to 2 pm (except on Wednesdays and Saturdays).



Shopping

It is Grand Circle Travel's goal to identify and provide you with shopping opportunities that highlight unique, locally produced products with good value from reliable vendors. For this reason there may be scheduled visits to local shops during your adventure. There is **no** requirement to make a purchase during these stops, and any purchase made is a direct transaction with the shop in question, subject to the vendor's terms of purchase. **Grand Circle Travel cannot be responsible for purchases you make on your trip or for the shipment of your purchases.**

Your purchase decisions are very personal. You must use your best judgment when deciding whether an item is worth the price being asked. If you plan a major purchase, we strongly recommend that you research the prices and quality available at home before your trip. Just one visit to an import shop or gold dealer will put you way ahead when you go shopping. This is the only way to know if you are getting a good price.

South Africa

South Africa offers great shopping opportunities at colorful outdoor markets, known for their lively atmosphere and tiny merchant shops. If you're interested in trying your hand at bargaining, this is not a common practice at shops and quality stores. However, at some craft markets and curio shops, it's a long-standing tradition.

Traditional items for sale include artifacts, hand-woven rugs, pottery, beadwork, wood carvings, batiks, tie-dyed textiles, kangas, meerschaum pipes, fine basketry, and quality coffee and tea. In sophisticated Cape Town, there are fashionable boutiques and big-city shopping malls. South Africa is a major source of the world's diamonds and other precious stones, so the shopping is good for these items either as jewelry or at gem shops.

Zimbabwe

In Zimbabwe, you can sometimes trade items (like pieces of good clothing, T-shirts, caps, or sunglasses) for souvenirs, though now it's become common to toss some cash into the deal as well.

Illegal Products

Ivory in any form is absolutely forbidden! Please do not purchase items made from the elephant, rhino, tortoise, large cats, and most reptiles. Animal products like zebra or antelope skins are sold in countries where hunting is still legal. However, all products from endangered species are banned in the U.S. and will be confiscated at Customs and a hefty fine will be levied. It is illegal to import most furs, coral, tortoise shell, reptile skins, feathers, plants, and items made from animal skins. For more information on what you may or may not bring back into the United States, you can obtain the publication "Know Before You Go" from the following agency or from their website:

U.S. Bureau of Customs & Border Protection
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20229
Tel. **1-877-272-5511**
www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/

U.S. Customs Regulations and Shipping Charges

Exemption Amounts

Articles totaling \$800, at fair retail value where they were acquired, may be imported free of charge if you bring them with you. A flat rate of duty—usually a percentage—will be applied to the next \$1,000 worth (fair retail value) of merchandise. The U.S. Customs Inspector determines the value of your items when you enter, and is not bound by your bill of sale. In almost every case, however, a genuine bill of sale will be honored.

Fees on Items Shipped Home

Items shipped home are *always* subject to duty when received in the U.S. There will also be charges for shipping. Although some shops abroad may offer to include shipping and duties in the price, this typically means shipping to the customs facility closest to you and payment of the *export* duties (the fee to remove an item from its country of origin) not door-to-door shipping or *import* duties (the fee the U.S. government charges to bring an item into the U.S.). All additional duties or shipping charges would be the responsibility of the purchaser—you.

Therefore unless the item is small enough to mail or to be sent by a global parcel service (like FedEx) you should be prepared to pay customs duties and for shipping or pick-up from the nearest customs facility. This is why the U.S. Customs & Border Protection service states: “The most cost-effective thing to do is to take your purchases with you if at all possible.”

Problem with a Purchase?

The best way to address a problem with a purchase is to not have one in the first place! So don't forget to examine merchandise before paying for it, check contracts or agreements before signing, and review your receipt before leaving the shop. For major purchases, don't hesitate to ask in advance about the return policy—local practice may vary from U.S. standards, so don't assume that you have a certain number of days after the purchase to speak up.

But what if you do discover an issue with an item later on? In that case, your best recourse is to contact the vendor directly. For this reason we recommend that you keep a copy of all your receipts, invoices, or contracts, along with the shop's contact information. Expect that any resolution will take longer than it would in the U.S. due to delays in communication, the complexities of international shipping/customs duties, and even cultural differences in how business is conducted.



To Tip or Not to Tip

Sometimes *that* is the question. The good news is twofold: we're fresh out of Shakespearean soliloquies, so no thesauri will get injured in this production; and the answer to the question "to tip or not to tip (and how much to tip if you so choose)" is *always* a personal decision. Tipping is a common practice both at home and abroad and we offer these guidelines to answer requests for appropriate tipping amounts. It can be useful to have this information on site – when the question *must* be answered – and ahead of time for travel budgeting purposes. Tips below are quoted in U.S. dollars; tips can be converted and paid in local currency (usually preferred) or in U.S. dollars (personal/traveler's checks should *never* be used for tips).

GCT Program Director: It is customary at the end of your trip to express a personal "Thank You" to the Grand Circle Program Director, especially if he or she has provided you with individual assistance. We recommend \$4-\$6 per person, per day. Please note that tips for our Program Directors can only be in the form of cash, and local currency is appreciated.

Airport/Hotel/Pier Porterage & Transfers: When using GCT transfer services, tips to hotel, airport, and pier porters are included in the cost of your trip. Tips to the motorcoach driver for your airport/hotel/pier transfers are also paid by GCT.

•**Motorcoach driver:** \$2 per person for each half-day tour/\$3 per person for each full-day tour.

•**Local tour guide:** \$2 per person for each half-day tour/\$3 per person for each full-day tour.

•**Housekeeping staff:** \$1 per person per day

(Note: If you are low on local currency, you can use U.S. dollars for tips)

Your Program Director will tip hotel porters and waiters in restaurants for included meals.

7. PACKING FOR YOUR TRIP



In General

A good rule of thumb is to gather together everything you want to bring; then take half of that. Eliminate all but the essentials and start packing a few days before you leave.

That way, you'll have time to think—not fret—about what you might be forgetting. To have a varied travel wardrobe, yet keep your luggage light, we recommend you select a color scheme and pack color-coordinated clothing items that can be mixed to create different outfits.

Pack casual clothes: In this age of informality comfortable, low-key apparel is perfectly acceptable at each of your destinations. Basic pants, shirts, walking shorts, sportswear, everyday dresses/skirts, supportive shoes, and functional outdoor clothes that are relatively easy to care for are recommended. Men do not need a tie or jacket, and women do not need a fancy dress. You may want one “smart casual” outfit for the Welcome Reception or Farewell Dinner, but it’s completely up to you.

Cold-weather layers (for June, July, and August): For the high altitudes, where evenings and early mornings are often very chilly, we recommend you take a fleece top, warm pants and socks, and, if you want to be really warm, gloves and hat. For early morning game drives (April through to September) it is very chilly. We suggest a warm jacket that will also keep out the wind. Windy “in-between” weather occurs, too, which calls for a light windproof, breathable shell. Your rain jacket can double as a windbreaker. Make sure it’s roomy enough to comfortably fit over your fleece jacket.

Light rain gear: Africa’s rainfall inland is notoriously unreliable and much of it is very sporadic in both time and place. A waterproof jacket and rain hat will prepare you for whatever the day brings. If you are traveling during the rainy season, you may want to include a foldable umbrella.

Good walking shoes are essential: Supportive sneakers are ideal for daytime touring. If you prefer more ankle support, take light hiking boots. Bring a few pairs of socks, including a warm pair. A pair of cushioned sandals is handy for town visits, and rubber thongs are very useful for poolside use and bathroom floors, which can be slippery.

Dress etiquette in local communities: Summery attire is appropriate, but please do not offend local customs by wearing skimpy shorts. Knee-length shorts, pants, and casual shirts are in order.

Victoria Falls (optional extension): For exploring Victoria Falls, bring a bathing suit, shorts, and rubber-soled shoes. At certain times of the year, the mist at Victoria Falls is very heavy and you will get wet! A waterproof jacket and rain hat will prepare you for whatever the day brings.



Packing Your Carry-On

Using a daypack as a carry-on bag for your flights is a smart solution. We **strongly urge** you to pack your carry-on with at least one full change of clothes, your camera gear, medications, changes of socks and underwear, your important travel documents, and other irreplaceable items, in case your checked bags go astray. Store camera gear and important papers in plastic bags to protect them from dirt and moisture. With a daypack you can then remove these items on arrival and load your bag with the gear you’ll need on walking tours and excursions. Note that carry-on luggage weight is restricted (see the section entitled LUGGAGE REGULATIONS).

NOTE: Restrictions on what can be included in your carry-on luggage change frequently. To avoid inadvertently packing any restricted items in your carry-on luggage, we strongly suggest that you consult the Transportation Security Administration website, at www.tsa.gov which keeps a current list of restricted items. From the main website click on *Our Travelers*, then *Air Travel*, and then you will see a link for *Prohibited Items*.

On flights within South Africa: Liquids, gels and aerosols in carry-on luggage may not exceed 100 ml (approximately 3 fluid ounces) per container. These containers must be packed in a re-sealable, transparent plastic bag. The total capacity of the plastic bag may not exceed 1 liter (approximately 1 quart). Each passenger can carry ONE of these plastic bags.



Clothing Options

We've included information below on the weather you can expect for the regions you'll be visiting on your travels. Taking into account the climate you'll encounter and the general suggestions we offer above will enable you to create a flexible wardrobe that's light enough for sophisticated travel and will guarantee comfort in all the conditions you can expect to encounter. The luggage weight and size restrictions imposed by travel realities today have made traveling light an absolute necessity. With modern fabrics – Gore-Tex, Polarfleece, polypropylene, etc. – lightweight packing for comfort and protection through a wide range of weather is easy. A visit to any on-line or local sporting goods/outdoor stores (L.L. Bean, REI, EMS, etc.) will yield a treasure trove of lightweight, specialized, and fashionable clothing and gear that is readily adaptable to your itinerary.



Laundry Service

Laundry services are provided—for a fee—at most of your hotels.



Travel Gear Suggestions

Though it's often fun to do things as the locals do, it can be frustrating when daily necessities or conveniences from home aren't available. To travel wisely these days you must juggle your personal needs and preferences against the physical constraints of your transportation—whether it's an international airplane, a transfer motorcoach, a small ship or a day-long trek on a camel. You'll have to distinguish between what you **must** have, what you'd *like* to have, whether you can zip your suitcase closed, and what you can reasonably expect to wrestle through airport hallways and security checkpoints. Consult the following items to create your personal checklist – ignoring what you don't need and making the tough decisions over borderline cases. Remember that many airlines today will charge you extra for added luggage.

What not to pack: Do not pack aerosol cans, as they tend to leak during air travel. Avoid packing glass bottles; use plastic containers instead. Leave at home checkbooks and any credit cards not essential for your trip, valuable jewelry, and anything that you would hate to lose.

Consider ...

- Daily essentials: toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, hairbrush or comb, shaving items, deodorant, shampoo/conditioner, shower cap, body soap, etc.
- Spare eyeglasses/contact lenses and your prescription
- Sunglasses with a neck strap
- Sunscreen, SPF 15 or stronger
- Insect repellent with DEET
- Travel money bag or money belt, to be worn under your shirt/jacket if possible
- Compact binoculars (one pair each — 8 x 21 or 6 x 16 work well)
- Eye drops, for the dust on safari
- Moisturizer, lip balm
- Swimsuit
- Compact umbrella
- Wide-brim sun hat with chin strap
- Pocket-size tissues
- Moist towelettes (packets) and/or anti-bacterial "water-free" hand cleanser
- Flashlight, extra batteries/bulb
- Photocopies of passport, air ticket, credit cards
- Extra passport-sized photos (to replace your passport if lost)
- Copies of your medicine prescriptions
- Washcloth

Medicines

- Your own prescription medicines
- Vitamins
- Cold remedies: Sudafed, Dristan, etc.
- Pain relief: Ibuprofen/naproxen/aspirin
- Laxatives: Senokot/Ex-Lax
- Stomach upset: Pepto-Bismol/Mylanta
- Allergy medicine for dusty conditions
- Anti-diarrheal (Imodium)
- Moleskin foot pads
- Antibacterial (Neosporin/Bacitracin)
- Optional: motion sickness medicine
- Optional: Prescription medicine to prevent malaria
- Optional: Prescription anti-diarrheal

Other Gear

- Travel alarm
- Hair dryer
- Handkerchiefs
- Basic sewing kit
- Reading materials
- Travel journal/note pad
- Phrase book
- Home address book
- Electrical transformer & plug adapters — see "Regional Electricity" below
- Hand-wash laundry soap (Woolite) clothespins/travel clothesline/stopper
- Photos, small gift for home-hosted visit
- Collapsible walking staff
- Pocket calculator for exchange rates
- U.S. souvenirs for trade with vendors



8. REGIONAL CLIMATE INFORMATION

We can't predict what the weather will be during your travels, but you'll find historical averages and general information on the climate of your destinations below. As your departure nears it's a good idea to visit the *My Account* feature of www.gct.com, where you'll find monthly temperature averages for the countries you'll visit as well as a current 10-day forecast of local temperatures and conditions. Or check Internet weather sites (www.wunderground.com is very comprehensive) for those forecasts.

Remember: you will be in the Southern Hemisphere throughout this tour, *with the seasons reversed* from those north of the Equator (for example, *January is a summer month*).

South Africa: Johannesburg lie in the High Veldt, an area of plains at elevations from 4,000 to 6,000 feet. Summers are warm, though rarely uncomfortably hot; this is the time of year when the most rain falls. Nights are cool in winter, but daytime temperatures are mild and dry weather predominates. A high percentage of sunshine and low humidity year-round make for a pleasant climate.

Kruger National Park: The average daily high temperature in January (summer) is 86°F, but it can get as hot as 117°F on occasion. Nightly lows in January range from 45-64°F. In the winter month of July, the average daily high is 73°F and lows can drop below freezing.

Cape Town: Located where mountains slope down to coastal lowlands, Cape Town has a Mediterranean climate of mild, rainy winters and sunny summers.

Durban and Zululand: The climate is more tropical, with humid, warm summers. Some rain falls year-round, though it's heaviest in the South African summer.

Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe (optional extension): This optional extension destination is humid and hot most of the year, with temperatures often in the 90s.

Here is the data from the weather observation stations closest to our destinations.

WHAT'S THE TEMPERATURE?

Average highs (taken at 2 pm) and lows (taken just before sunrise) in °F.

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Cape Town (Altitude: 56 feet)												
High	78	79	77	72	67	65	63	64	65	70	73	76
Low	60	60	58	53	49	46	45	46	49	52	55	58
Durban (Altitude: 16 feet)												
High	81	81	80	78	75	73	72	72	73	75	77	79
Low	69	69	68	64	57	53	52	55	59	62	65	67
Johannesburg (Altitude: 5463 feet)												
High	78	77	75	72	66	62	63	68	73	77	77	78
Low	58	58	55	50	43	39	39	43	48	53	55	57
Victoria Falls, optional extension (data from Livingstone, Zambia, altitude: 3130 feet)												
High	85	85	85	86	82	77	77	82	90	94	91	87
Low	66	66	64	59	51	45	45	50	59	67	67	66

Please note: The data cited above reflect *climate* as opposed to *weather* conditions, and serve only as general indicators of what can reasonably be expected. A 60 degree *average* high temperature means that days may be as warm as 80 or as cool as 40 – but it’s most likely you’ll encounter temperatures in the 50 to 70 degree range.

9. TRAVEL AND TECHNOLOGY



In General

Cell phone, digital camera, camcorder, PDA, MP3 player: travel today can involve technology that didn't even exist as recently as ten years ago. The variety of digital gadgets and their usefulness when you travel – en route or after you arrive – is enormous. An e-book reader allows you to keep guidebooks for uncounted countries at your fingertips and not increase your luggage weight by an ounce. (*Tip: you can download **this** document from the Grand Circle Travel website and import it into your tablet or e-reader. Many of those devices can display PDF files. A large screen is best, however, since PDF documents don't scale like documents designed specifically for e-readers.*) Lightweight digital camcorders and cameras let you bring home high definition movies and still images of the people you meet and places you visit on your travels.

Laptops/netbooks/tablets can keep you connected and promise up-to-the-minute information via Wi-Fi and the Internet, but, as with all gadgets, you'll need to determine if bringing them makes sense. Particularly with laptop computers it's often wiser to rely on Internet cafes or, when available, hotel Internet access than pay the packing weight and space penalty for casual Internet use. And, of course, the more time you spend gazing into electronic gadgetry, the less time you have to relish the local people, sites and sights.

To take advantage of the devices you do bring, you'll need to consider some basic variables—particularly in regard to the services that will be available in the countries you visit. You'll encounter a range of electrical current standards, varied physical plug configurations to access that current, erratic availability (electricity and internet access), and different technological standards (cell phone networks can differ across borders.)

You'll need to coordinate your power and data storage needs, and the accessories required to recharge/connect/use these devices under the different conditions you'll encounter. You'll find some tips below aimed at ensuring that your gadgets achieve their full potential. As a general rule, it's good to familiarize yourself with the device(s) you bring by reading the owner's manual *before* you depart. Pay particular attention to electrical, charging and storage requirements to ensure that you understand exactly what you need under which circumstances. And remember that thorough preparation is the best guarantee that you'll get the most benefit from your devices.



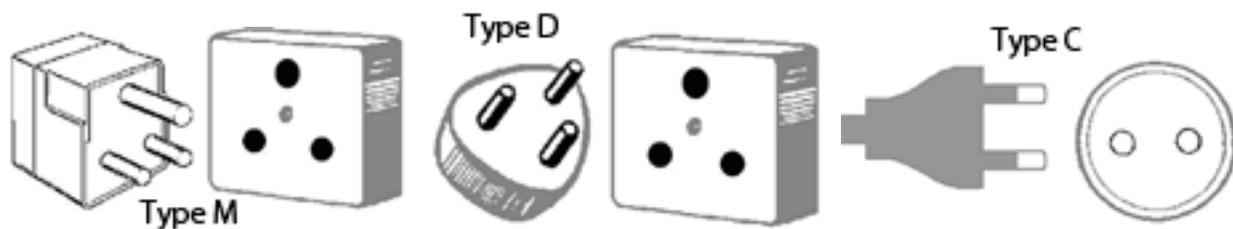
Regional Electricity

Outside the U.S. most countries use electrical systems that differ from the standard U.S. 110 V 60 Hz current and flat two- or three-pronged polarized plug system. The use of 220-240 V and 50/60 Hz current is the overwhelming choice for the rest of the world. Plug shapes, sizes, and configurations vary from country to country and often inside countries as well. In addition, some plugs will work with multiple receptacles and some won't. Europe is largely and conveniently standardized to the Type C "Europlug."

Plugging a 110 V U.S. appliance into 220/240 V 50/60 Hz service will result in a broken appliance, since the motor will burn out as it tries to run twice as fast as it was designed to run. We suggest that you bring dual voltage appliances that will work on both 110 and 220/240 voltage. These are widely available, though you may have to read the fine print to confirm the dual voltage capability. With dual voltage appliances you'll only need to carry whatever plug adapters you need - which are both inexpensive and reliable.

If you do choose to bring 110 V American appliances, such as a hair dryer (note that hotels often supply hairdryers and coffee makers) or shaver, you'll need a current transformer (to cut the 220/240 V in half) as well as the necessary plug adapters. Transformer/adaptor kits can usually be found at your local hardware or at many online stores. Note, however, that transformers are unreliable and tend to burn out - which will render your 110 V appliance useless. If you forget to bring one, you *might* also find them for sale at the airport when you arrive at your destination. A "visitor to South Africa" adapter can also be bought at arrivals Hall in Johannesburg or TAMBO International Airport. Another option is to use battery-operated appliances-which don't need adapters or transformers-just an ample supply of batteries. (Rechargeable batteries are an economical option, but then you'll need a charger.)

South Africa and Zimbabwe use Type M (official) and Type D (older style) plugs and receptacles. Type C, the "Europlug," is also common. Both countries use 230-240 V/50 Hz current.



If you use multiple digital devices—cell phone, digital camera, and MP3 player for instance – it's handy to have a travel power strip to increase the number of available outlets for charging these devices. Some types include surge suppressors and USB-style plugs capable of charging cell phones and MP3 players without the need for a brand-specific charging block – saving weight and packing space. You'll have to review the specifications of your device to ensure that it will work with the power strip you choose—and that the power strip will work with the various voltages you may encounter.



Cell Phones

If you want to use a cell phone while traveling overseas, be sure to check whether your own phone will work outside the U.S. or whether you're better off renting an international phone. The websites www.travelcell.com and www.globalcellularrental.com have good information on rentals. You may also want to consider buying an inexpensive local phone for your stay.

To use your own phone, it's best to investigate the options and fees your plan offers for international use. Consult your service provider (www.verizon.com, www.t-mobile.com etc.) for details. U.S. service is dominated by the CDMA technology standard, while most of the world uses the incompatible GSM standard. Some U.S. providers do offer GSM, but in either case you may incur high international roaming fees. With GSM, however, you can often choose to have your phone "unlocked" and then add a local SIM card for lower fees. If you can access the Internet as you travel, you can take advantage of email or a Skype Internet telephone (VOIP) account for the best value.

Phone Calling Cards

When calling the U.S. from a foreign country, we advise that you use a prepaid calling card, because the only additional charge you'll normally incur (besides the prepaid long distance charges) is a local fee of a few cents and possibly a connection fee if you are using your card at your hotel. It is best to check with the hotel's reception desk prior to making phone calls to avoid unexpected charges.

Do not call U.S. 1-800 numbers outside the continental United States. This can result in costly long distance fees, since 1-800 numbers do not work outside the country.



Photo Gear

One of the most enjoyable aspects of traveling to new places is the chance to photograph some of the highlights of your experience and bring them home. You can share them with friends and family, relive some of the important moments, and savor them for years to come. Lightweight and compact, digital cameras and camcorders are excellent travel accessories—and you can find models of either cameras or camcorders that will record both movies *and* still images. Camcorders weighing as little as 9 ounces and about the size of your fist can capture high definition movies and high quality still photos; compact still cameras are great for snapshots and can capture casual movie clips. With an ample supply of high-capacity memory cards you can have all you need for your whole trip in a very compact, lightweight package.

Be sure to bring enough batteries. Recharging batteries is not always possible, due to a lack of outlets, electrical shortages or outages—and some cameras go through batteries *very* quickly. Whether your camera uses standard-size (double or triple A) rechargeables or proprietary batteries, it's handy to have backup for extended shooting or for an emergency. Be sure your battery charger will work with the local electrical current. You'll need to bring enough memory cards—these can be hard to find and, if found, will often be pricier than in the U.S. Whatever the storage format (usually Compact Flash or Secure Digital) memory cards are small, light and thin and, as with being thin, there's probably no such thing as too much storage. MiniDVD discs are compact to pack, as well.

Compact cameras, however, are impractical for capturing distant subjects (such as wildlife in Africa or architectural details on Europe's taller buildings), as their lenses rarely reach long distances. Some compact models have a zoom lens of up to 120mm, which is acceptable for moderate distances. For photographing distant subjects a *megazoom* compact (physically larger than a compact – and built for lenses that telescope to 500+mm) or a single lens reflex (35mm film SLR—or DSLR for the digital variety) camera with a telephoto lens of 200mm to 300mm is ideal. With a DSLR you can also consider wide-angle lenses, which are valuable for panoramic shots. As your photographic gear gets more complex, however, you'll need to consider luggage weight and size constraints. Professional quality equipment weighs more, is larger in size, and multiple lenses add size and weight. A single megazoom lens for your DSLR may be the best option for a walk-around travel lens. Large lenses that need tripod support, or double reflex cameras are impractical for casual travel photography. If you use a SLR camera, protect your lens with a UV filter and remember to bring lens caps and covers. When traveling it is easy to get dirt or moisture on the front of your lens, which could permanently damage it. A screw-in filter can protect the lens and if the filter is damaged, it is much less expensive to replace than a lens; caps and covers are common sense.

Bring lens paper for cleaning the lens and a waterproof bag to protect your camera—a heavy duty Ziploc style bag is a good choice. If your camera's flash is detachable, remember to pack it. Be sure to bring a camera with a flash that can be turned off, and learn how to turn it off when it's not needed. (At some sites, and in many museums, flashes are not permitted; in other situations flashes can frighten wary wildlife.) It's good to note that in some countries you may be charged for photography at specific sites; and that some cultures and individuals are less receptive to photography than others. It's always best to respect local customs.

Disposable cameras are also an option. They are inexpensive and capable of perfectly acceptable photos in light that is not too dim or bright. A panoramic disposable can add a particularly interesting perspective when compared to standard photo formats—and may suggest inventive ways of seeing your subjects. X-rays do not damage the data of digital cameras (in any media format), and so poses no problems for travelers using digital cameras.

10. COUNTRY DEMOGRAPHICS

South Africa

Area: 437,877 square miles

Capital: Pretoria (administrative), Cape Town (legislative), Bloemfontein (judicial)

Government: Republic

Language: In polyglot South Africa, there are eleven official languages; English and Afrikaans are the most prevalent. Many of the whites and people of mixed race claim Afrikaans as their mother tongue. Afrikaans is about as close to Dutch as Portuguese is to Spanish.

Location: South Africa is Africa's southernmost country, and borders Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique to the north; the Indian Ocean to the south and east; and the South Atlantic Ocean to the west.

Geography: South Africa has three major natural regions: the plateau, the mountains, and the coastal belt.

Population (2007 estimate): 43,997,828

Religion: Most South Africans list themselves as Christians (about 80%), but there are significant communities of Hindus, Muslims, and Jews.

Agricultural products: Corn, wool, wheat, sugarcane, fruits, vegetables, beef, poultry, mutton

Major industries: Gold, chromium, diamonds, machinery, textiles, iron and steel, chemicals, fertilizer, metalworking

Time zone: South Africa is 7 hours ahead of Eastern Time in their summer, 6 hours ahead in their winter.

Holidays:

01/01 New Year's Day
03/21 Human Rights Day
04/06 Good Friday
04/09 Family Day
04/27 Freedom Day
05/01 Workers' Day
06/16 Youth Day
08/09 National Women's Day
09/24 Heritage Day
12/16 Day of Reconciliation
12/25 Christmas Day
12/26 Day of Goodwill

Historical Overview

The San, nomadic hunter-gatherers, were the earliest people to inhabit southern Africa. DNA evidence suggests that they—sometimes referred to as “Bushmen”—lived here as long ago as 100,000 B.C., very likely making them the oldest people in the world. If so, then we can all trace our genes to them. In the fourth or fifth century B.C., the first Bantus arrived, bringing tribal structure to the region and taking over most of the arable land.

Europeans arrived in the late 15th century—first from Portugal, then from Holland. The latter settled here and took slaves from Madagascar, India, and Indonesia. The Dutch were losing their foothold by the late 18th century, leaving them vulnerable to the British, who set up a base in Cape Town as a stopover en route to India and Australia. The British continued what the Dutch had started: fighting the native Xhosa people, pushing eastward to expand their reach and erecting fortresses along the Fish River.

The remaining Dutch Boer farmers fled British control and set off to establish their own colony in the north and the east of South Africa. En route they came across many deserted or decimated villages and villagers who were dazed and confused. The Boers would meet the culprits of this ransacking when they came upon the Zulu, who were attempting to take over the land from surrounding tribes. The Boers faced them down and formed their own settlements, but were soon confronted by the British who were also engaged in land acquisition struggles. When diamonds were found in nearby Kimberley, the Boers found a serious incentive to stay—and to fight the British with everything they had.

They resisted the British with guerilla tactics in the First Boer War, but the British returned with greater force to defeat them in the Second Boer War at the turn of the 20th century. The formation of the Union of South Africa in 1910 by the British and the Dutch-Afrikaans set the stage for apartheid with its race-based policies, restrictions, and repression. Blacks were segregated to live in backwaters known as “homelands.”

The white, ruling Afrikaans paid lip service to the supposed self-sufficiency of these regions, but provided no means or opportunities for improvements. In the 1960s, blacks began to protest with strikes and marches. It wasn't long before things turned violent: 69 were killed in Sharpeville and members of the African National Congress (ANC) were jailed, Nelson Mandela among them.

Opposition against apartheid grew worldwide, and with the economic impacts of sanctions and divestments, the National Party's FW de Klerk lifted the ban on the ANC and, 27 years after his imprisonment, released Nelson Mandela. In 1994, he won the country's first multi-racial election by a landslide and became president.

Some of the disparities of apartheid remain, but South Africa is far more optimistic than it once was. Thabo Mbeki was elected into office in 1999 after Mandela's retirement, earning even more votes than his predecessor. In recent years, South Africa has stepped up its fights against HIV/AIDS, with Mandela gaining international attention as an outspoken advocate of anti-AIDS drugs.

Zimbabwe—Optional Extension

Area: 150,803 square miles

Capital: Harare

Government: Parliamentary democracy

Language: English (official), Shona, Nguni

Location: Zimbabwe (formerly Rhodesia) is almost twice as large as Great Britain. It is bordered on the north by Zambia, on the east by Mozambique, on the south by South Africa, and on the west by Botswana. Victoria Falls, approximately one mile long with a maximum drop of 420 feet, is located in the Zambezi River on the Zambia-Zimbabwe border.

Population (2007 estimate.): 12,311,143

Religion: Predominantly traditional tribal beliefs, Christian minority; several million blacks adhere to African independent sects, of which some 3,000 have been listed.

Agricultural products: Corn, cotton, tobacco, wheat, coffee, sugarcane, peanuts, cattle, sheep, goats, pigs

Major industries: Mining, copper, steel, nickel, tin, wood products, cement, chemicals, fertilizer, footwear, food items, beverages, clothes

Time zone: Zimbabwe is 7 hours ahead of Eastern Time in their summer, 6 hours ahead in their winter.

Holidays:

01/01 New Year's Day

04/06 Good Friday

04/09 Easter Monday

04/18 Independence Day

05/01 Workers' Day

08/08 Heroes' Day

08/12 Defense Forces Day

12/22 Unity Day

12/25 Christmas Day

12/26 Boxing Day

Historical Overview

The name “Zimbabwe” comes from the capital city of the Monomotapa Empire, whose heyday occurred between the 5th and 15th centuries in this part of Africa. A remnant of this empire survives today at the Great Zimbabwe ruins, about 110 miles south of Harare, where there is an acropolis atop a 200-foot-high granite hill and a great enclosure in the plains below. The fortified acropolis housed the priests of the Mwari Cult. In the great enclosure, traders exchanged local gold and ivory for porcelain, glass beads, and other luxuries from overseas markets. Evidence shows that trade was brisk with lands as far away as India and China.

By the late 19th century, the area was occupied by African tribes including the Ndebele and the Shona, led by the powerful chief Lobengula. In 1890, a British column led by Cecil Rhodes marched from South Africa in search of precious minerals. They established Fort Salisbury (now Harare) and disbanded. Through treaties and persuasion, Rhodes and his British South Africa Company acquired mineral rights in Lobengula's kingdom.

Rhodes claimed the territory north of the Limpopo River for Great Britain and distributed it among his pioneers and the indigenous Africans. The country was known as Rhodesia for many years in his honor. The northern portion is now Zambia, while the former Southern Rhodesia was renamed Zimbabwe in 1980 in honor of its historical and cultural heritage.

The Ndebele took up arms in 1893 and again in 1896. European settlers spread from the area around Fort Salisbury, and by 1897 the railway had reached from South Africa to Bulawayo, the capital of Lobengula's former kingdom. A few years later the line was extended to reach the coalfields of Hwange, the copper belt in Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia), and Salisbury, which was already linked by rail to the port of Beira in Portuguese Mozambique.

Southern Rhodesia was granted independence by the British in 1923 as an autonomous member of the Commonwealth, but the passage of the Land Apportionment Act in 1931 solidified political power in the hands of the white minority. In 1953 Southern Rhodesia was joined with Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland (now Malawi) into the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Vigorous opposition by nationalists in Zambia and Malawi led to the dissolution of the federation in 1963 and to independence for Zambia and Malawi in 1964. In 1965, Rhodesia's prime minister, Ian Smith, announced a unilateral declaration of independence.

During the 1960s and 1970s, nationalism was building in Rhodesia under the parties led by Joshua Nkomo and Robert Mugabe. Both groups had to take refuge in neighboring independent countries. From there they waged a seven-year struggle for liberation from white minority rule. At last an agreement was reached to hold a popular election in 1980. Mugabe won a landslide victory to become Zimbabwe's first prime minister under majority rule, and continues to hold office today.

The parliament passed a Land Acquisition Bill in 1992, allowing the government to redistribute about half the land owned by white commercial farmers to black peasants. In his successful 1996 re-election campaign, Mugabe made a pledge that drew a large measure of concern from Zimbabwe's 100,000 remaining whites, promising to do more to speed up the resettlement of poor blacks on land acquired by the government. But there has been concern and controversy among the black population as well, with Mugabe's recent years being marred by scandals, charges of corruption, economic problems, and even outcries about his choice of wives.

After 28 years as the head of what had effectively become a one-party state, Robert Mugabe's once-iron grip is waning. In Zimbabwe's 2008 elections, for instance, the leader of the country's opposition party, Morgan Tsvangirai, won the popular vote, but Mugabe refused to step down from power quietly. He strong-armed opposition supporters and insisted on a run-off election, despite widespread condemnation from world leaders. In the end, South Africa's president Thabo Mbeki brokered a power-sharing agreement in which Mugabe retains the presidency, with Tsvangirai serving as prime minister.

11. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



Recommended Reading

The Africans by David Lamb (Culture)

Written with humor and sympathy by the Los Angeles Times correspondent for Africa, this portrait of sub-Saharan Africa combines travelogue, news analysis, personal anecdotes, and portraits of nations.

The Covenant by James A. Michener (Fiction)

An epic historic novel that traces South Africa's past from 500 years ago to modern events, told from the perspective of three families—African, Afrikaans, and English.

Cry, the Beloved Country and *Ah, But Your Land Is Beautiful* by Alan Paton (Fiction)

Critically acclaimed novels of social protest against apartheid, written by a leading South African writer.

Ethnic Pride and Racial Prejudice in Victorian Cape Town by Vivian Bickford-Smith (History)

Essential reading for anyone interested in South African urban history or Cape Town.

The Grass Is Singing by Doris Lessing (Fiction)

The life and despair of the wife of a South African farmer form the core for this moving novel.

A History of South Africa by Leonard Monteath Thompson (History)

One of South Africa's eminent scholars provides fresh insights into the country's history, from its earliest inhabitants to the present day.

History of Southern Africa by Kevin Shillington (History)

Acquaints readers with the major events that have shaped the countries in the southern half of Africa.

Kruger - Images of a Great African Park by Michael Brett and Nigel Dennis (Natural History)

A striking visual presentation of one of Africa's great wildernesses and most visited national parks. Includes photographs of Kruger and its many inhabitants, and descriptions of conservation, natural history, and the diverse habitats of the park.

The Legacy of Ladysmith by J.K. Crane (Mystery)

In this novel, a biographer's research on a Scottish patriarch uncovers some truths about the man and the South African town of Ladysmith that his family would like suppressed.

Long Walk to Freedom: The Autobiography of Nelson Mandela by Nelson Mandela (Autobiography)

Mandela chronicles his life, including his early tribal years, prison internment, return to South Africa, and anti-apartheid leadership role, which earned him the Nobel Peace Prize.

My Traitor's Heart by Rian Malan (Culture)

A brutally honest and riveting inquiry into apartheid's heart of darkness, written by the great-nephew of Daniel Malan, who was an architect of South Africa's apartheid system.

African Laughter: Four Visits to Zimbabwe by Doris Lessing (Travel Account)

British author Doris Lessing recounts her visits back to her homeland, Zimbabwe, 25 years after her exile from old Southern Rhodesia for opposing the minority white government.



Grand Circle Community & Useful Websites

If you have access to the Internet, the following sites offer a wealth of information:

Visit the Grand Circle Community website for a world of travel news and information:

www.gct.com/community

Government websites:

International health information: CDC (Centers for Disease Control)

www.cdc.gov/travel

U.S. Customs & Border Protection: traveler information

www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel

Transportation Security Administration (TSA): agency responsible for screening luggage in U.S.

www.tsa.gov/public

National Passport Information Center (NPIC): for passport information

www.travel.state.gov

General travel information websites:

Travel books

www.amazon.com

www.barnesandnoble.com

World weather

www.intellicast.com

www.weather.com

Foreign languages for travelers: basic terms in more than 80 languages

www.travlang.com/languages

Travel tips: packing light, choosing luggage, etc.

www.travelite.org

Net café guide: 100s of locations around the globe

www.cybercafes.com

Electric current and plug types

www.kropla.com/electric2.htm

Foreign exchange rates

www.oanda.com/converter/classic

ATM locators

www.mastercard.com/atm for **Cirrus ATMs**

www.visa.com/pd/atm for **PLUS ATMs**

Country information:

www.southafrica.com **South Africa**

www.welcometoswaziland.com **Swaziland**

www.gocapetown.co.za **Cape Town**

www.zimbabwetourism.co.zw/defaulta.htm **Zimbabwe**



Tourist Board Addresses

Tourist offices offer free brochures, maps, and pamphlets with information that pertains to many of your destinations. If these materials would enhance your vacation planning, you can write or call the following tourist board offices:

South African Tourist Office

500 5th Avenue, Suite 2040
New York, NY 10110
Telephone: 1-800-593-1318
Fax: 1-212-764-1980

Zimbabwe Tourism Office

1270 Avenue of the Americas, Suite 2315
New York, NY 10020
Telephone: 1-212-332-1090
Fax: 1-212-332-1093

Measurement & Temperature Conversions

Conversion Chart			
U.S. Standard to Metric		Metric to U.S. Standard	
1 inch	= 2.54 centimeters	1 centimeter	= 0.4 inch
1 foot	= 30 centimeters	1 meter	= 3 feet 3 inches
1 mile	= 1.6 kilometers	1 kilometer	= 0.6 mile
1 ounce	= 28 grams	1 gram	= 0.04 ounce
1 pound	= 454 grams	1 kilogram	= 2.2 pounds
1 U.S. gallon	= 3.8 liters	1 liter	= 1.1 U.S. quarts

To convert Kilometers to Miles:

Multiply the first digit by 6. A 40-kilometer drive is about 24 miles (6×4). For a one-digit figure, use .6. For a three-digit number, multiply the first two digits by 6; thus, 150 kilometers equals about 90 miles ($15 \times 6 = 90$).

To convert Celsius to Fahrenheit:

Double the Celsius temperature, then add 30 degrees.

For example, if the temperature is 20°C , that's about 70°F : ($2 \times 20 = 40$; $40 + 30 = 70$).

For Celsius temperatures below zero, ignore the minus sign, double the number, and subtract it from 32.

Thus, -10°C equals 12°F ($2 \times 10 = 20$; $32 - 20 = 12$).

To convert hectares to acres:

Multiply the hectares by 2.471. For example, a 3-hectare area is equal to 7.413 acres: ($3 \times 2.471 = 7.413$).