

Karibu Tanzania!

(welcome to Tanzania!)



Short Travel Guide - by Tanzania Specialist

The best preparation for your safari...!

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Introduction

You are about to embark on a beautiful trip to Tanzania. This East African country is known for its natural wealth and it's home to three of the seven African wonders:

- The Great Migration in Serengeti National Park.
- The Ngorongoro Crater
- Kilimanjaro, the highest mountain in Africa

The Ngorongoro Crater and Serengeti National Park are famous for the multitude of animal species that can be found here. The Big Five for example (elephant, lion, leopard, buffalo and rhino) can be found in both places and in some of the other national parks as well. Off the coast, tropical islands such as Zanzibar, Mafia, and Pemba can be found, with coral reefs, diving spots and the most amazing beaches.

In Tanzania however, things are a little different and sometimes more adventurous than the average western traveller is used to. In this travel guide, we give you some tips and info that will help you to get the best preparation for your trip!

Overview



Tanzania lies in East Africa between the Indian Ocean and neighbouring Kenya and Uganda to the north, Rwanda, Burundi, and DR Congo to the west, and Zambia, Malawi, and Mozambique to the south. The name Tanzania was given to the country after the unification of Zanzibar and Tanganyika in 1964.

The country nowadays has a population of 62 million people belonging to 120 different tribes. The largest tribes are the Sukuma, Nyamwezi, Haya, Nyakyusa, and Chagga, each with over one million people. Most of the tribes are descended from the Bantu of West Africa. The best-known tribe, the Maasai, is relatively small.

Tanzania has two official languages: English and Kiswahili. However, in most parts of the country, you will find it difficult to converse in English, as English is not widely spoken. Kiswahili is the spoken language of choice for most people, and it is not only spoken in Tanzania but also in Congo, Burundi, Rwanda, and Kenya (among others). It originates from Bantu and Arabic but also uses some English and German words.

Cities

Dar Es Salaam, with a population of almost 6 million, is the largest city and also the former capital of Tanzania. It is an important economic centre, a port city, and one of the fastest-growing cities in the world. Arusha is the capital of tourism in the north of the country, and the third largest city. The actual, but rather unknown, capital Dodoma is located in the centre of the country.



Putting some facts together

- Capital: Dodoma
- Currency: Tanzania Shilling
- Population: 62 million
- Language: Kiswahili and English
- Surface area: 945,000 km²
- Water surface: 61,500 km²
- Neighbouring countries: Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, DR Congo, Zambia, Malawi, and Mozambique
- Highest point: 5,895 meters (Mount Kilimanjaro)
- Time difference: In summer Tanzania is one hour ahead of the UK, in winter it is three hours. The time difference to the USA is 7-10 hours.
- The most popular destinations are Serengeti National Park, Ngorongoro Crater, Mount Kilimanjaro, and Zanzibar.

Going on a safari in Tanzania

In the Western world *safari* usually means observing wild animals in their habitat. Originally however it's a Swahili word that refers to a trip or journey. The good thing is that with us you combine both meanings: you go on a safari (trip) to see lots of wildlife!

The most popular safari animals are the Big Five: lions, elephants, buffaloes, leopards, and rhinos. But the national parks in Tanzania also host countless other impressive animal species and hundreds of beautiful, colourful birds. You can see them all with Tanzania Specialist! Be aware that animals are most active at sunrise and sunset. Around that time temperatures are pleasant and animals are looking for food. The chance to see animals in action is most significant during that time. But also in the middle of the day, there is still plenty of wildlife to see.

The Great Migration



The great annual migration of enormous herds of zebras and wildebeests in Serengeti is driven by rainfall. In January they are in Ndutu (just south of Serengeti), and from March on they start to go up north. They pass Grumeti en Mbagaleti in Western Serengeti and start to reach the northern part of Serengeti in July. Here they cross the Mara River and go into Kenya's Masai Mara National Reserve. From October on they travel back south passing Lobo in the east of Serengeti, to reach Ndutu in December when it's time for the calving season. In total, this route is over 800 kilometres long (!).



Visit local tribes

During your safari in Tanzania, it is possible to visit a traditional tribe. The most famous tribe to visit is probably the Maasai tribe. These are nomadic people who live off their cattle. They adorn their bodies with beautiful bead jewellery, carry long spears in their hands, and wear bright red shukas (blankets). They live in semi-permanent huts - called manyattas - that are made of grass and dung. In their traditional dance, they challenge each other to jump as high as possible while keeping their bodies straight.

Around Lake Eyasi you can find the oldest tribe of Tanzania, the Hadzabe. Until recently, they were very isolated, but nowadays tourists can visit their homeland. This nomadic tribe is living a very traditional life that consists mostly of hunting. And similar to tribes further South (like the San) they have a 'click' in their language.

A day on safari - dos and don'ts

Many people are unsure what to expect on a day of safari and wonder what their transport will look like, what a guide does, and if there are any rules and regulations. Below, we put together the most important information.



During the safari, you drive around in a 4x4 Land Cruiser with a pop-up roof. You are going on a private safari with a personal guide, which means you have a lot of freedom. It's up to you to decide what time the game drives start and what time you want to be back in the lodge. You can decide this on the day itself, but it's good to discuss it with your guide. He can advise you on things to see or do. But if you prefer to spend the afternoon in the lodge with a drink in hand - by all means, do so. Even at the camps, you can spot the

animals you see during a game drive. So feel free to spend your day as you like, but keep in mind that park fees only allow you to enter the park once a day. So if you sleep outside the park, it's not advisable to go back there for your lunch.

Altering the itinerary while on safari

While on safari, some travellers wish to change the sequence of the parks, schedule an excursion or park for another day or time, or replace an excursion or park with new ones on the itinerary. Unfortunately, the desired changes can result in full cancellation charges and are, most of the time, impossible to implement. In addition, changes come with extra costs when park fees, excursions or accommodations have to be rebooked. This is why we usually advise against altering the itinerary once you are on the road.

The role of your guide

Your guide is one of the most important people during your safari. It's his job to assist you to the best of his ability and ensure you enjoy the trip. Be aware that different clients have different needs, and that he might misjudge your needs. Therefore, we advise you to be open about your wishes and needs and allow him to do a better job. If you, for example, want more anecdotes and facts about the country, the people, or the animals - be sure to tell him. But if you want less or need a break, don't hesitate to share this with him either.

Conversations with other drivers

Guides tend to keep each other posted about special things they have seen. If a driver sees a special animal, he will make an effort to let others know. This means guides regularly pull over if they see a car coming from the opposite direction - to share experiences with the other driver and check if there is anything ahead that you might want to see.

Guests can misunderstand these conversations since the guides are speaking Swahili and at first glance just seem to have a chat. While in fact, they are trying to give you the best experience possible...! It's good to keep this in mind if your guide stops to talk to other drivers.



Official safari rules

It's good to be aware of some of the national park's official rules when going on a safari:

1. The national parks are open from 6 am until 6 pm and game drives are allowed only within this period. Even when sleeping inside the park, you can only do game drives between these hours. This is to ensure animals can keep their natural rhythm. There are some exceptions; night game drives (allowed in only some parks) come with special permissions to enter the park after 6 pm, and balloon safari operators are allowed to be in the park from 5 am on.
2. Parks only issue 24-hour permits. When spending two nights in, for example, Serengeti National Park, you get two permits that allow you to stay 48 hours in the park. The guide has to pay a fine when you leave the national park too late, so it's good to listen to him when he advises leaving for the gate.
3. A permit allows you to enter the park only once. This means it's not possible to leave the park during the day and come back later. This is why we provide our clients with lunch boxes, which you can open at picnic places in the park or at a beautiful spot your guide will find for you.
4. For the safety of both animals and people, the maximum speed in the park is 50 kph and driving off-road is not allowed in any of the national parks.
5. Never leave the car without the permission of your guide or hang out of the window to see animals. Moreover, do not feed the animals.
6. Drones are not allowed in any national park in the country unless you have a license.



Unofficial safari rules

Except for the official rules, there are a few unofficial rules that we ask our guests to adhere to during their safari. This is to make sure dangerous situations are avoided and things go smoothly. And of course out of respect for the country, its people, and your guide:

1. Always listen to the rules and advice your guide gives you.
2. Make sure you show up on time at the agreed-upon place.
3. A limited number of cars are allowed to stop around one animal. This means your guide can decide to drive if there are too many cars.
4. Try to be as quiet as possible when getting close to animals. Avoid unexpected movements and whisper as much as possible. Never shout. The guide will switch off the engine to avoid movement if you are taking a picture. Might he forget, please remind him.
5. Don't litter, not even cigarette buds. Keep your trash separate inside the car, and your guide will throw it out once you are back in the lodge.
6. Don't take any animals or plants in or from the parks.
7. Give presents you might have taken for local people to your guide. He will make an effort to distribute them fairly.
8. Do not take pictures of Maasai or other local people without their permission. If you do want a picture, a small fee would be appreciated. Please ask your guide for assistance.

Before you travel

Before you fly to Tanzania, there are a few things you need to take care of. You need a visa, book your flight tickets, get the shots you deem necessary, and arrange your (travel) insurance. Also, your passport must be valid for at least six months after returning from Tanzania. Read on for all the practical information that can help you prepare.

International flight tickets

People who book a safari in the northern parks only can book a return flight to Kilimanjaro International Airport (JRO) near Arusha. If however, you also go to Zanzibar or do a safari in one of the southern parks, it's best to fly to KIA and book your return flight from either Zanzibar or Dar Es Salaam. Our travel consultants will be happy to advise you on this.

Tanzania visa

To enter Tanzania, you need a valid visa. You can apply for this visa online or upon arrival in Tanzania (depending on your nationality). When flying to any of Tanzania's international airports, it's easy to get your visa upon arrival, even though the process might take some time. When travelling overland from Kenya or Uganda to Tanzania, we strongly advise you to apply for your visa online beforehand. Visa application at the border is usually slow and can cause an unnecessary loss of time.

The online visa must be applied for at least two weeks before departure and currently costs 50 USD (100 USD for US citizens). To apply for a visa online, only use the official website of the Immigration Department of Tanzania: <https://visa.immigration.go.tz/>

Before applying, check on the website of the Immigration Department if the rules for visa application still apply as described above. You are solely responsible for getting a proper visa.

East Africa Community Visa (EAC visa)

You might have heard about the EAC visa. This is a visa you can apply for if you travel to several East African countries in one holiday. Please note that Tanzania is NOT included in the EAC visa and is only for people travelling to Rwanda, Uganda and Kenya. It can be issued in Uganda or Rwanda, depending on which country you visit first.

Children travelling alone or with a single parent

Children below the age of 18 travelling alone or with just a single parent need a consent form from the (non-travelling) parent(s). You will have to show this together with your visa application.

Addresses of Tanzanian embassies

United Kingdom

Tanzania High Commission
Tanzania House
3 Stratford Place
London W1C 1AS
+44 (0)207 569 1470
e-mail: ubalozi@tzhc.uk
Website: <https://tzhc.uk/>

United States

Embassy of the United Republic of Tanzania
1232 22nd St. NW
Washington D.C 20037
+1 (202)884-1080
e-mail: ubalozi@tanzaniaembassy-us.org
Website: <https://www.us.tzembassy.go.tz/>

Addresses of embassies in Tanzania

United Kingdom

British High Commission Dar es Salaam
Umoja House, Hamburg Avenue

P.O. Box 9200
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
+255 22 229 0000
e-mail: bhc.dar@fco.gov.uk
Website: <https://www.gov.uk/world/tanzania>

United States

U.S. Embassy Dar es Salaam
686 Old Bagamoyo Road, Msasani

P.O. Box 9123
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
+255 22 229 4000
e-mail: paodar@state.gov
Website: <https://tz.usembassy.gov/>

Health care and insurance

Health care in Tanzania is of varying quality. Cities like Dar Es Salaam and Arusha have some decent hospitals, but it's always better to prevent getting sick. Make sure you have proper health insurance when travelling to Tanzania, and check if you want to take malaria medication or the recommended vaccinations. Except for health insurance, we also advise a few other insurances, like the Flying Doctors insurance (see below).



Vaccinations

Tanzania is a tropical country, and some vaccinations are recommended when visiting. We advise you to ask your physician or local health centre for up-to-date advice on vaccinations at least eight weeks before travelling to Tanzania. Some health insurance plans will cover the cost of various vaccinations, so it may be wise to check with your insurer.

Make sure all your vaccinations are recorded in your yellow vaccination certificate. If you don't already have one, get it while getting your first vaccination. Don't forget to take your vaccination certificate with you on your trip. The customs officer may ask you to show the vaccination certificate. It also contains important information a doctor might need in case of an emergency.

Malaria

Although progress in malaria control has been made throughout Tanzania, there is still a risk in cities (including Dar Es Salaam), national parks, and islands such as Zanzibar and Mafia. Most visitors take malaria medication to be on the safe side. At night, they protect themselves with mosquito repellent and long-sleeved tops and trousers when going outdoors. Mosquito nets are provided in almost all lodges.

Yellow fever

Tanzania is mapped by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as a country with no risk of yellow fever. See also [the map on the website of the CDC](#).

The government of Tanzania does require proof of yellow fever vaccination from people arriving in the country, but **only** if they are travelling from a country with a risk of yellow fever OR have a layover of 12 hours or more in a country with a yellow fever risk. It means people coming directly from the United States or Europe do NOT need the yellow fever vaccination to enter Tanzania.

In addition, be aware that your doctor may advise against this vaccination because you are older than sixty or have a medical condition. If this is the case, you can travel to Tanzania from/ via countries with yellow fever, carrying a letter from your doctor that exempts you from this rule.

Insurance

Make sure to have good health and travel insurance when travelling to Tanzania. This is mandatory even for people travelling to Zanzibar, where you need to subscribe to the Zanzibar Mandatory Travel Insurance before travelling. Besides, we advise having a few other insurances.

Travel Insurance

We obligate our clients to have proper travel insurance. Travel insurance usually covers medical costs, as well as damage to or loss of luggage. We gladly recommend Chapka Travel Insurance (for EU citizens only). It covers any travel and your travel consultant can easily take out the policy for you. This needs to be done within 48 hours of finalising your booking with us (when your travel dates are fixed). Please note that Chapka focuses on travel and/or cancellation insurance only, and does NOT facilitate swift evacuation from remote areas during medical emergencies (as does the below-mentioned Flying Doctors Insurance).

Flying Doctors Insurance

The [AMREF Flying Doctors](#) have been conducting medical evacuation flights in Tanzania (including Mount Kilimanjaro), Zanzibar (including Mafia and Pemba), Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi



since the 1950s. This Flying Doctor Service is a flying ambulance service with its doctors and pilots on standby 24 hours a day, every day of the year. Flying Doctors insurance adds to your regular travel insurance and is not compulsory. In an emergency, however, they can immediately evacuate you from remote areas and fly you to a hospital in Nairobi / Kenya. Tanzania Specialist is a member of the Flying Doctors, which means we can arrange this for you.

The costs for Flying Doctors Insurance are 40 USD per person for 30 days.

Please note: The price covers your trip to one or more countries mentioned above. The service does not include hospital costs, medical treatments or medication, so adequate travel health insurance is still needed in addition to the Flying Doctors Insurance. Also, mountain evacuations are not covered by the AMREF Flying Doctors.

Zanzibar Mandatory Travel Insurance

If you are travelling to Zanzibar, you are obligated to obtain the Zanzibar Mandatory Travel Insurance, regardless of your own travel insurance. Each traveller needs to apply for this insurance in advance. After a payment of USD 44 per person, you receive a QR code to be shown upon arrival.

The basic coverage of this mandatory travel insurance includes the cost of emergency medical expenses, repatriation expenses (body and medical), personal accidents, baggage delays, baggage theft, baggage loss, legal expenses, and personal liabilities. To apply for Zanzibar's Mandatory Travel Insurance, please visit <https://visitzanzibar.go.tz/>.

Cancellation insurance

Travel cancellation insurance is also recommended in case you need to cancel your holiday before departure or during the trip. Be aware that some insurances only partly reimburse the amount in the event of a cancellation, so be sure to check this carefully!

Luggage and travel essentials

Our vehicles have limited space for luggage during the safari. Therefore, we request that you leave your hard-case suitcases at home and travel with soft-case bags that are easy to stow away in our vehicles. Soft-case bags are also less likely to get damaged on the road.

Baggage during your flights

Please check with your airline to know the size, weight and number of pieces of baggage permitted on your international flight. Also, make sure you carry essential items, for example, medications, in your hand luggage during the international flight, in case your suitcases are delayed or get lost during the flight.



Domestic flights (for example, from Arusha to Zanzibar) have a baggage allowance limitation of 2 pieces of up to 20 kilograms combined, per person (depending on the airline), **and allow soft case bags only!** This means 5 kilograms of hand luggage (trolleys are not allowed as hand luggage!) and 15 kilograms of check-in luggage. The maximum dimensions (LxWxH) for a check-in luggage are 125 centimetres or 49 inches. The maximum dimensions (LxWxH) for hand luggage are 85 centimetres or 33 inches.

If your luggage exceeds this limit, airline companies usually charge from 5 to 7 USD for each extra kilo, which you can pay directly at the check-in desk. Please note that if you travel with hard-case suitcases, a domestic airline can block you from flying. Tanzania Specialist cannot be held liable in case your hard-case suitcases get damaged during the safari or if the airline blocks or charges you when the above luggage regulations are not followed.

To protect your luggage from dust and/or moisture, we recommend you bring a suitcase or laundry bags as additional covers. Most lodges and tented camps offer a laundry service for your (outer) clothing, but only for a minimum stay of two nights.

What to wear during your safari?

It is common practice in Tanzania to cover shoulders and wear skirts and pants that reach below the knees. The islands and the coastal regions are dominantly Islamic, and women usually cover their hair as well. It's respectful to adhere to these customs, but don't feel obligated to do so. Especially in hotels and on safari, shorts, skirts, and uncovered heads are no problem.



Safari clothing

During the safari, it's best to wear casual clothing, preferably cotton clothing in safari colors (see picture). We advise against wearing dark or bright colors during the safari (black, blue, red) - these will attract flies and insects. Colors that don't stand out, like khaki or olive green, are best.

Keep in mind that Tanzania is very close to the equator, which means the sun can be very hot. It is therefore advisable to wear long sleeves, a hat, dark sunglasses, and/or sunscreen. Too much sun can lead to dehydration, nausea, dizziness, or headaches. After sunset, it is advisable to wear long trousers (and possibly long sleeves) because of the mosquitoes. Bring a sweater or jacket for the early mornings and cooler evenings, since especially in the northern part of Tanzania it can get chilly. We also recommend comfortable (sports) shoes and swimwear for swimming pools and days on Tanzania beaches.

Ban on plastic bags

As of June 1, 2019, the Tanzanian government has officially banned plastic carrier bags, regardless of their thickness. They can no longer be imported, exported, manufactured, sold, stored, supplied, or used on the mainland. However, plastic or plastic packaging for medical products, industrial products, the construction industry, agriculture, food, sanitary, and waste management are not banned.



Please consider this prohibition when packing. Plastic carry bags used specifically for carrying toiletries are permitted, as long as they remain in your possession at all times and will not be disposed of in-country. Ziplock bags required by airlines for carrying liquids are also allowed, as long as you take them back home. Plastic bags for duty-free purchases may not be imported.

First Aid kit

It is wise to take your own first aid supplies, such as plasters, (sterile) gauze, something that helps for blisters, iodine, and medication for common illnesses such as headaches and stomach problems. We also advise women to take pads and tampons, because they might not be available everywhere.

Medical equipment and special needs

If you use (electrical) medical equipment, it's important to inform us in advance. We, in our turn, will inform the lodges where you will be staying. The power supply is not consistent everywhere, and voltages might fluctuate, so it's advisable to take extra chargers or batteries.

Be aware that for some medication or medical equipment, you need a medical certificate from your doctor stipulating these are for your personal need only and that the amount is adequate for the duration of your stay. Furthermore, we advise you to **carry important medication in your hand luggage** and not in your check-in baggage. This way, you won't miss your medication if your baggage is late or gets lost.

If you have allergies or other special needs, please inform us in advance so we can let the lodges know.

Photography and video

If you intend to take some amazing shots of the Tanzanian animals and landscapes, consider the following when preparing:

- Bring enough memory cards and extra batteries. It's possible to buy them in Tanzania but it's best to avoid the hassle of going into town and finding them.
- Bring lens caps, cleaning cloths, and a tight-fitting camera bag to protect the camera from dust.
- Bring a UV- or light filter to protect the lens in the highlands.
- A zoom lens (e.g. 300 mm) is recommended for photographing wild animals.
- Note that many tented camps offer limited power by using solar power or a generator. Usually, there are a restricted number of hours of power per day, and voltages (220 - 240V) may fluctuate. We advise taking a plug adapter (Tanzania uses UK 3-pin sockets) and a voltage converter.
- When taking pictures of locals, always ask for permission. Nowadays people are more used to cameras, but not everyone likes to have their picture taken. Especially in remote areas, it shows respect to ask for permission first.
- The use of drones is only allowed for licensed citizens, businesses, and government officials. It is possible to apply for a temporary license in advance.
- Professional photographers and videographers can book our special safari car. This is an open-windows, pop-up open-roof safari jeep which offers maximum shooting experience, with the flexibility to position your tripod and other equipment.



Smart Packing

- Passport and a copy of your passport
- Money belt for money and papers
- Vaccine passport
- Warm sweater and long trousers
- Memory card, spare batteries and charger for your camera
- Swimsuit
- Rubber shoes (in case of a beach extension)
- Headgear
- High factor sunblock and lip balm
- Body lotion
- Wetties for hands and face
- Sanitizer
- Sunglasses and if needed spare glasses or contact lenses
- Mosquito repellent (preferable with DEET)
- First Aid kit
- (Phone with) flashlight and alarm clock
- Linen bags for laundry or as protection from dust and moisture
- Binoculars
- English plug or world plug

When in Tanzania...

Africa for many people is still a very unfamiliar continent, and chances are this is your first time travelling to the continent. Tanzania is a beautiful and safe African country, but things are different here. Foodwise, culture-wise, and money-wise. To help you out we've summed up the most important information about Tanzania and explained below how things are done here (so you know what to expect once you get off that plane!).

Food & drinks

Food and drinks in the lodges, camps, and resorts in Tanzania are mostly European style, but with a selection of Tanzanian dishes. Think chapati, mandazi, or samosa (picture) for breakfast, and rice, beans, fresh veggies, curries, fresh fish, and roast meat for lunch and dinner.



Hotels usually serve the Tanzanian breakfast together with a full English breakfast with eggs, bacon, tomatoes, cereals, and delicious tropical fruits. Lunch then often consists of hot meals and both lunch and dinner can be a three- or more-course meal. In smaller lodges and camps, meals are mostly served as a set menu, while the larger lodges offer lunch and dinner in buffet form. During the safari, you have a packed lunch, which you can enjoy at special picnic areas along the way.

Drinks

The local beer (the most famous being beers with the wonderful names Kilimanjaro, Serengeti, and Safari) is good and most hotels offer a choice of wines. Tap water is not suitable for consumption in Tanzania. During the safari, we provide you with plenty of bottled drinking water and there is always a bottle or jug of purified drinking water in the rooms. You can also buy bottled drinking water in lodges and small shops along the way. Make sure you drink enough water. The heat in Tanzania can cause you to dry out before you know it.

Money

In Tanzania, you pay with the local currency, with US dollars, and/or with credit cards. The local currency is the Tanzania Shilling, which is available in banknotes of 1,000, 2,000, 5,000, and 10,000 shillings and coins of 50, 100, 200, and 500 shillings. 1 Euro is equivalent to about 2,800 Tanzanian shillings, and 1 USD to about 2,700 Tanzanian shillings. Please check your currency converter to know the precise rate.



The Tanzanian shilling is not available or tradable outside the country. However, it is good to have it with you for local purchases and tips. ATMs can be found in international airports and in towns and villages near national parks. We recommend that you bring only a small amount of cash (Euro/USD) from home and instead withdraw money upon arrival and/or while travelling. Note that ATM withdrawals cost a small fee and that your credit or debit card must be activated and set for world coverage for this purpose.

USD bills should not be older than 10 years. If they are older, they are usually not accepted in stores, banks, and exchange offices.

How much cash to take?

How much cash you should have in your pocket depends of course on your personal needs and wishes. It might be good to realize that the prices in tourist areas are comparable to those in Europe. Then again, your accommodation, meals, and pre-selected activities are already paid for, and cash money will mostly be spent on additional activities, drinks in the hotels, souvenirs, and tips (see below to know how much to tip). Make sure you have enough cash on you to last for a couple of days because ATMs are not always close by.

Credit cards

Mastercard, Visa, and American Express are usually accepted by ATMs, as well as in lodges and hotels. Some remote camps might have difficulty processing your credit cards, due to their remote location and poor connections.

Tipping

Tips are appreciated but not mandatory in Tanzania. We recommend tipping local staff if possible, knowing that wages are generally low. If you are satisfied with the service, please don't hesitate to show your appreciation by for example giving 1 USD or 2.500 TSH to the person carrying your suitcase to the room. Many times it's also possible to leave a tip for the complete staff when checking out. Receptions usually have a tipping box.

Tip your guide

We highly appreciate it if you also tip your guide at the end of the safari, as we trust you will be satisfied with his service. As a general guideline, we advise you to give 10 USD per day per person in your group, for the duration of the safari. But of course, you are free to decide about this yourselves once your safari is over. Our guides earn decent salaries, but these tips are often used as savings for the extended family (and can, for example, help a cousin finish school).

The weather

There are not many seasonal differences in Tanzania. The weather is usually pleasant and differs only because of height differences. In the higher areas, it's cooler with a fairly big difference between temperatures at night and during the day, while the coastal areas usually have a much warmer and more humid climate. Temperatures can rise above 35°C here.

Tanzania has two rainy seasons, which does not mean it won't rain at all in other months, or even that rain will fall every day in these months. But in general, one can say:

- The short rainy season runs from the end of October to the beginning of December.
- The long rainy season runs from the beginning of April until the end of May.

It's definitely possible to visit Tanzania during the rainy season. Most roads will still be accessible, the national parks are all freshened up and green, and there are fewer tourists and fewer vehicles. Showers usually take place at the end of the afternoon, while the skies are clear and sunny during the day. There is however a chance you get stuck on dirt roads during heavy rains. Be flexible when this happens. This is also part of your safari experience.

Safety while travelling

Tanzania is definitely a safe country to visit, especially for people going on organized game drives with private guides as you will do with us. There are of course some places to avoid in big cities like Arusha and Dar Es Salaam, but - as with all big cities - by taking some precautions, you will be fine. Also during the safari, there are a few things to keep in mind:

- Never leave your passport, money, or valuables in the room, unless there is a safe.
- Put your valuables in a safe or leave them in special lockers at the reception.
- Do not leave important items (such as money or your bag) unattended in the safari vehicle, even for a short time.
- Leave valuable jewellery at home. Wear a (simple) necklace, watch, or wedding ring, but avoid flashy jewellery (that also monkeys might steal).
- Be wary of pickpockets during the day.
- Avoid going out by yourself at night, especially in the cities avoid going out by foot at night. Always take a taxi.
- If you need a taxi, only use registered taxi companies that you can order at the hotel reception.

Taxis and other forms of transport

You have your own safari jeep, so all transport of your booked itinerary is included. But if you need to hire a taxi, please ask your hotel to call a reliable company. In many places, it's also possible to order a tuk-tuk - these are popular ways of transport and relatively cheap. They carry up to three people. In some cities, you can also order Ubers / Bolt.



Local mini-buses (daladala) and motortaxi's (boda boda) are for adventurous people. In general, the daladala don't have the safest drivers and are cramped up. Boda bodas are not safe (e.g. drive like crazy).

Phone calls

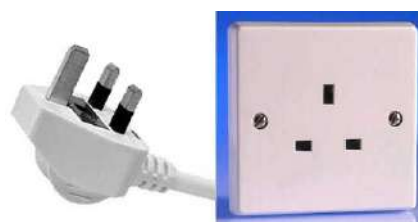
All lodges and camps in the national parks have a radio to connect them to the outside world. This means you can call in case of an emergency, but this connection is not meant for lengthy long-distance calls. Most places have a mobile phone network, but not all of them, and roaming is expensive. However, most lodges offer WiFi which allows you to make your international calls home.

Tanzania's country code is +255.

Electricity

Many camps in the national parks run on solar power and generators and don't offer power 24/7. Usually, power is available from 05:00 - 09:30 am and from 7:00 - 11:00 pm (when guests are using facilities at the camp).

The voltage in Tanzania is not the same as in Europe or the United States. Hotels in Tanzania offer a voltage of 220-240V that often fluctuates. The sockets are three-pin (UK, Type G). It's advisable to bring an adapter for the sockets and a voltage converter for sensitive equipment.



Souvenirs

In Tanzania, there are many beautiful, mostly handmade, souvenirs. In shopping malls and supermarkets, prices are fixed, but stalls along the road are used to bargaining. Typical souvenirs are jewelry with beads, carvings, paintings, shoulder bags made of natural materials and African fabrics, coffee, and tea. Don't take anything made of skin, shells, coral, ebony, or ivory – exporting these is prohibited.

Handing out gifts or money

While driving outside of the national parks, you might get people asking you for money, candy, or pens. It's up to you if you give something, but our advice is not to do so. If you want to do or bring something for local people, it's best to talk to your guide or travel consultant about it and maybe bring something to hand out in places your guide deems appropriate.

Visiting Zanzibar during Ramadan



Ramadan brings a slower, more reflective rhythm to Zanzibar's islands on both the main island (Unguja) and Pemba. Since most Zanzibaris are Muslim, daily life revolves around fasting hours, and there is a calm, peaceful atmosphere during the day. By evening, the mood lifts. Streets and beaches fill with people gathering to break their fast, creating a warm and festive atmosphere that locals look forward to all year. In Stone Town, for instance, the pace slows, shops may open

later in the day, and activities are best planned for cooler mornings or after sunset. Alcohol remains available in licensed hotels and resorts, but it is not openly served in public areas.

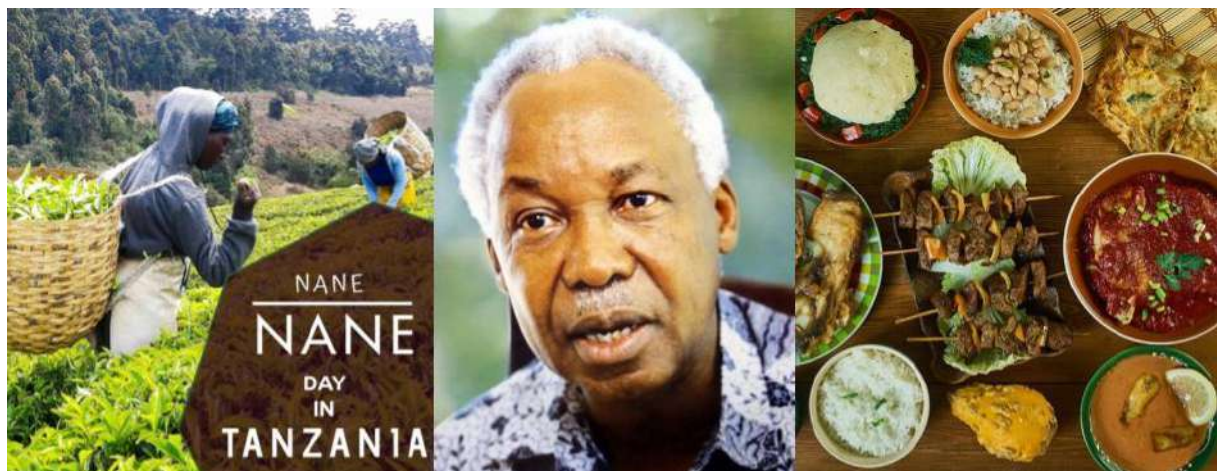
Once the sun sets, you can head to places like Forodhani Gardens or the beach, where families and friends gather for iftar. Visitors are welcome to join in and sample local street food while enjoying the easy and social energy of the evening. During the day, a bit of cultural awareness goes a long way. Avoid eating, drinking, or smoking in public, and dress modestly with shoulders and knees covered in areas outside your hotel. Far from limiting your experience, these small adjustments often lead to a deeper connection with local life, and many travellers find Zanzibar even more welcoming during this time. Nightlife still exists in beach resorts and hotels, though it tends to be more low-key than other times of the year.



National holidays

In addition to the Christian holidays, Tanzania has several national and Islamic public holidays:

- **January 1st:** New Year's Day
- **January 12:** Zanzibar Revolution Day
- **April 7:** Karume Day
- **April:** Eid al-Fitr (end of Ramadan, exact date depending on the lunar cycle)
- **April 26:** Union Day
- **May 1:** Labour Day
- **June:** Eid al-Adha (sacrifice feast, exact date depending on the lunar cycle)
- **July 7:** Saba Saba (Dar Es Salaam International Trade Fair)
- **August 8:** Nane Nane (Farmers Day)
- **September 15 (likely):** Milad un Nabi (birth of Prophet Muhammad)
- **October 14:** Nyerere Day
- **December 9:** Independence Day



Preserve Tanzania's nature with us!

Tanzania Specialist invests in, and lives from, the beautiful nature that Tanzania offers. This is why we do everything in our power to preserve the environment to the best of our ability. We ask you, as our guest, to not leave waste on the Kilimanjaro, on the beach, or in the national parks. Instead, please keep it with you until you or your guide can dispose of it properly when arriving back in the hotel. It's just a small gesture, but it will help future generations to enjoy this beautiful country just as we do!



*We wish you safari njema (safe travels) and
warmly welcome you: karibu Tanzania!*