



**CEDARBERG**  
**AFRICA**  
PERSONAL SAFARI PLANNING

# *Safari Guide*

Everything you want & need to know



# The experience

Personal Safari Planning at your fingertips

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# Introduction

**Welcome to our safari planning guide!**

Here we try to unlock some of the mystery of booking a safari in Africa. We're here to ensure that the process is pleasurable and easy.

For many, seeing wildlife in its natural habitat is the focus of their African trip. The essence of a safari is that you are on the move, staying a few nights in each region to experience a variety of habitats which result in diverse wildlife.

For others, the game-viewing safari is but one part of a more general interest holiday.

Either way, it's important to not rush a safari, to allow enough time to appreciate an area and to get the most from your specialist guide.

**Our focus is on tailor-made safaris: designing a hand-crafted safari after careful discussion with you.**

## How the Guide works

In this guide we'll be outlining and answering the key questions you may have. The real things you are asking as you are thinking about your safari.

We'll provide links to some of our website pages or blog articles to give you more detail.

We also list a number of Special Interests and occasions towards the end which you can dip into.





# What makes a good safari?

- **Different habitats**

The essence of a good safari is that you are on the move, staying a few nights in each region to experience a variety of habitats which result in diverse wildlife.

- **Exclusivity**

You also don't want to share the experience with the world and their dog. You want quality wildlife sightings, in a small vehicle or with fewer people, accompanied by an expert guide.

- **Deeper understanding**

For many, seeing wildlife in its natural habitat is the focus of their African trip. But you don't just want to tick the animal sightings off a list. You want to understand how African wildlife live together in a holistic balance.

- **Decent length of time**

While you want to make sure you don't miss anything, it's equally important to not RUSH a safari, to allow enough time to appreciate an area and to get the most from your guide's expertise. And, of course, to spend an afternoon or two by the pool or enjoying the sights of the animals at the waterhole.

**Enjoy our insightful article - [A Day on Safari](#)**





# 1st - Time Safari Visitors

The safari world can feel daunting. So many destinations, so many options, such a wide variation in pricing. It is difficult to know where to start.

## Here are a few things to think about:

- Where do you want to go?
- What is the best time for you to travel?
- What does your budget look like?
- How do you want get around?
- What kind of places do you want to stay at?
- When do you need to book to ensure you experience everything you want?
- Who is travelling with you?
- Are there any special interests or health concerns you need to take into account ?

All of these elements are exactly why working with a safari planning expert is a useful way of planning your safari.



# Returning adventurers

So you've been to Africa a couple of times. Now you want to stretch your boundaries further. Each country is so different that there are always new regions to explore.

Tell us where you have been before in Africa. What you liked about it, and what you didn't. This is helpful for us to know what regions to recommend you explore next! Don't expect to have the same experience in two completely different countries. Some countries may offer authentic encounters with agricultural tribal groups. But another country may be more Westernised.

Read more in our ['New Destinations for Second-time Visitors'](#) article

# Where to travel to ?



It's almost impossible to recommend one wildlife region above another – each has its own unique charms, 'special' animals and outstanding guides.

For 1st Time Visitors we highly recommend considering; South Africa, Tanzania or Kenya

**We highlight some stand out features below:**

## **South Africa**

Varied country, lots of non-safari delights including beaches, wine, culinary experiences. Also a great option for self-drive holidays.

## **Wildbeest Migration**

Tanzania or Kenya

## **Primarily Safari Destinations**

Botswana, Zimbabwe, Zambia

## **Gorilla Trekking**

Rwanda or Uganda

## **Best of Bush & Beach**

Tanzania, Kenya, South Africa & Zambia with Malawi

## **Perfect for Unique Scenery**

Namibia, Madagascar, Rwanda

## **Indian Ocean Island Add-ons**

Mozambique, Mauritius and Seychelles

## **Off The Beaten Track Experiences**

St Helena, Madagascar, Malawi & Ethiopia

*All of our destinations can be done by a first-time visitor,  
(especially if you have specific interests.)*



**Read more in our [Guide to the Top African Safari Countries](#)**





# When to travel

This is intrinsically related to whether a safari is the primary reason for your holiday. Typically, in both Southern & East Africa, game-viewing is best in the dry months.

**Southern Africa - winter and spring months of June through to October**

**East Africa – two rainy seasons with a drier climate in between.**

So June to mid-October and then December to mid-March (broadly speaking).

## **Why we recommend the dry season for your safari.**

Animals need water and food. During the dry season there's less surface water and the vegetation is sparser, so animals are easier to spot especially around the remaining water sources. It's also a pleasant climate for game viewing with warm sunny (rather than scorching) days.

But we do understand that there may be other reasons for your travel timing that conflict with this, like escaping the chill of the northern hemisphere winter. This particularly goes for South Africa.


Keep in mind that there are often great slightly off season specials available, should your dates be flexible.

Take a look at our [Best Time for a Safari in East Africa](#) blog

and

[Best Time for a Safari in Southern Africa](#) blog





# How much to spend

This can be a hard question to answer as ideally you don't want to skimp. Most safaris probably cost more than you want to spend at first glance.

We've outlined some helpful information below:

South Africa and Namibia probably give you the best value for money (as priced in Rands)

Botswana, Kenya and Tanzania are the most expensive

Rwanda is generally priced higher than Uganda due to the higher Gorilla permit price

Zambia and Zimbabwe are great alternatives to Botswana, due to the slightly lower price point

To help out we've created this useful guide to assist you, dive into our **Safari Pricing- a guide.**



# How long to spend ?

- We recommend a minimum 10 - 12 nights in the country – given the cost and time to get to Africa, you want to make the most of it all, once you're here.
- If you are visiting South Africa or Namibia for a varied trip, or if you want to do both safari and beach, then we recommend a minimum of 10-12 nights.
- Ideally, we recommend 12 -14 nights for the complete safari experience.
- If you are retired, or have generous leave, we recommend spending 2½ to 3 weeks.
- If your focus is purely on a safari experience, 6-8 nights can work.
- Overall, we recommend focusing on fewer destinations and having at least 2-3 nights in each, to minimize wasted travel time.

## TIPS

- Try to minimize travelling days by reducing the need for internal scheduled flights.
- A light charter flight will use up less time than scheduled flights.
- Self-drive usually needs a little more time than private touring, so its all up to balancing your time vs cost.
- Given that some lodges and hotels offer long stay offers, you may find that those extra nights don't add substantially to the cost - and often staying longer can include benefits like complimentary intra-lodge transfers. All the more reason to work with safari experts!



# Number of travellers

We have welcomed couples, families, and friends travelling together. Increasingly, we work with multi-generational families - three or more generations all coming together to explore, reconnect and enjoy the beauty of Africa.

**Here are some considerations to be aware of:**

**Couples** – Everything is on offer. However some specialist private touring can be expensive for only a couple.

**Family** – Check out our [Family Travel](#) pages and our [Articles on Family Safaris](#)

**Two Couples** – this works very well. Private touring is less expensive and many lodges offer two bedroom villas with identical en suite bedrooms.

**Multi-Generational families** – we see an increasing number of Multi-Generational families. A Private Villa or Safari House works very well. But often budget and a suitable range of activities also needs to be considered. Its also useful to know which lodges allow kids over 6, which over 12 and so on. And where the adults can enjoy a break while the young ones enjoy informative, supervised activities on offer at the lodge. And where a private vehicle is the best option so you can enjoy the safari at your own pace.





# Mode of Travel

This will also impact the cost of your safari so consider how you want to get around

Fly-in Safaris

Private Touring

Luxury Self-drive (South Africa & Namibia – mainly in the non safari areas)

Scheduled tours

*A mix of the above*

**Take a look at our article “[Mode of Safari Travel](#)”**

# Type of Accommodation

Crisp linen sheets with three digit thread count, or relaxed, family style accommodation. Our Safari experts pick only the best of all worlds, so you can choose the style that best suits you.

Classic Hotels

Boutique Guest Lodges

Traditional Safari Lodges

Tented Camps

Bush Camps

Mobile Safaris

**[Take a look at our Safari Accommodation page](#)**



# When to Book

Aim for at least **3 - 6 months in advance**, or even more if you want to go to a very popular area in peak season.

- **8 -12 months** – You want to go to a popular area or in peak season. Or if you have specific places that you'd like to stay. Some places get booked up almost a year ahead.
- **4 -8 months** - This is the most common booking period. Most places are available. But you may not always get your first choice. It pays to be a little flexible on dates if you want a specific lodge.
- **2 - 4 months** – Not recommended for the peak season such as July to October or Christmas. But should be possible in quieter months. Don't expect the most well-known and popular lodges to have space, however an experienced safari specialist like us will know of good substitutions.
- **Less than a month** – Surprisingly, a good option as you don't have time to get lost in the options! Not every lodge will be available but if you are flexible, this can work for your safari plans.

No matter when you book, you will always receive all of the Cedarberg Africa team's expertise at no extra cost.





# Why use a safari specialist?



**Glad you asked!**

- **First-hand experience**

Our team frequently travels to all our recommended hotels and lodges- this way we can suggest the best accommodation and experiences, because we *really* know all the details.

- **All our Expertise at no extra cost**

We receive lower *wholesale* rates from the game lodges and hotels. So we make our money on the difference between our Wholesale Rates and the Retail prices you see on a website or the online booking portals. The result is a price which is very similar to the one that you would pay if you had tried to do it all by yourself, but without the personal insight we bring to the table.

- **Save hours of research**

Plus – by using a safari specialist – you’ve saved hours & hours of your time trying to compare lodges, cross referencing review sites, looking at endless pictures of rooms.

- **We are there if things go awry**

If you book online, you are on your own if things go wrong. If you book with a safari specialist, we are here to help you. Cedarberg Africa has a duty manager on hand 24/7 to assist with any issues.



# *How to plan a tailor - made Safari*

How the process works:

## **The Start**

You complete our enquiry form, email or phone us.

This starts a conversation, either over the phone, video call or via email.

## **The Chat**

Tell us what you want to see, where you want to go, what you don't want to miss!

Even if you are still unsure about your plans, we find a quick phone call can help to point you in the right direction. We'll chat with you about where you want to go, your accommodation preferences, how active you wish to be, any special interests, how you want to travel around, and what memories you are hoping to bring back from your trip.

## **The Tailor-made Proposal**

We start presenting some ideas, often via a digital itinerary. This is usually shared with you within 24 hours.

## **The Budget**

At this point we start talking about how much you want to spend, so that we can offer you an itinerary which is in the right ball park.

## **The Last Details**

This is where we make the final tweaks to your itinerary until it is just right!

## **The Real Fun Begins**

Its booking time! Now your dream starts to feel like reality as we book your perfect safari!





# Special Interests & Occasions

*There are a host of reasons to book an African Safari, and we highlight some specific specials we've experienced in:*

- **Kids on Safari**

Bring the young ones on an unforgettable experience. From tailor made Kids Clubs to conservation, cooking and even tracking, there is a world of wonders to explore for your cubs.

- **Anniversaries and Birthdays**

Celebrate milestones with an unforgettable safari experience in and throughout Africa.

- **Bucket List Trips**

This is our general term for when you want to splurge a little more. Check "African Safari" off your list in style with our curated adventures.

- **Horse-riding Safaris**

Embark on an intimate sensory journey exploring Africa's wonders on horseback. From outrides to complete horseback safaris, we've got your tempo.

- **Walking Safaris**

Embark on an intimate sensory journey exploring Africa's wonders on foot. While Zambia pioneered this intimate style of safari, many private concessions now offer half day/full day walking safaris.

- **Special dietary requirements**

Enjoy gourmet cuisine prepared by private chefs during your luxurious African safari- whatever your needs. Connect with us for recommendations on lodges that offer additional kitchens/special chefs to suit your requirements.

- **Sabbaticals or Work & Play**

Unwind and reconnect with nature on a transformative sabbatical safari experience. For a month or more - we've got what you're looking for. Blend seamlessly between remote work and thrilling wildlife encounters with a hyper personalised safari.

- **Golfing Safaris**

South Africa in particular boasts some of the most exceptional golf courses in the world. Combine a enjoyable and challenging 18-hole with spotting the big and little 5.



# *What's next?*

We hope this quick overview was useful.  
So what are the next steps?

## **Connect with Us!**

You may like to start chatting to one of our team, especially if you have questions. Oftentimes, a quick phone call can set you up to get answers to many of your questions in only a few minutes. Afterwards, we can lay out some safari trip options for you.

Call or email us to arrange a time for a video chat.

### Email us

or

Call our South African office on +27 (0)27 482 2444

or

Call our UK office on +44 (0)20 8898 8533

*We can't wait to welcome you to Africa*



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# Your Safari Vision Board

Animals

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Lodges/Hotels

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Destinations

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Budget

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Special Interests

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Activities

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Notes

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# Travel Packing List

Documents	Clothes	Personal Care



*Adventure awaits where the wild things roam . . .*



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