

TANZANIA and ZANZIBAR 2018

Passport and Travel Visa

You must have your passport (valid for at least six months after June 27, 2018) with the Tanzania travel visa for entry into the country. We will provide instructions on how to submit your application, payment, and passport to the Tanzanian Embassy in Washington D.C. If you're interested, Tour Connection will collect your materials and include them in our shipment to the embassy in the beginning of April.

U.S. visitors to Tanzania no longer require proof of having the Yellow Fever vaccination to enter the country.

Health/Safety

Health: It is recommended that you visit your doctor, County Health Department, or travel clinic 4-6 weeks before your trip. Malaria is present throughout Tanzania. The CDC (<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/tanzania>) recommends that malaria prophylaxis and preventative measures be taken when traveling in Tanzania. Travelers are encouraged to wear insect repellent and clothing that adequately covers arms and legs.

Security: Overall, Tanzania is a safe country. All of the areas we will visit are safe during the daytime. For any country, it's always wise to keep large amounts of cash in the hotel safe and avoid wearing expensive jewelry. A money pouch that you can wear under your shirt or around your waist will provide a place to keep your passport and cash when you're wandering about.

- On Zanzibar, the area near the hotel is safe at night, but it is still best to travel in a small group.
- In Arusha, you should take a taxi if you are traveling anywhere after dark. Dinner is provided at the hotel and there's a bar in there too, so you probably won't need to wander too far.
- On safari, there are no fences around the lodges to keep the animals out. The large animals typically stay away. We'll see birds and lizards hanging around, but the ones you really need to keep your eyes on are the monkeys and baboons. They work in teams and are excellent thieves.

Jet Lag: In order to minimize fatigue and general restlessness caused by jet lag, there are a few steps you may take including:

- Avoiding heavy eating, caffeine, or alcoholic beverages before or during your flight, and by drinking plenty of water and/or fruit juice while flying.
- Try to sleep on the overnight flight from Toronto to Amsterdam. For the flight from Amsterdam to Nairobi, try to limit sleep to a short nap. Upon arrival in Zanzibar, we'll get to the hotel as quickly as possible and get you to bed.

Bugs: There are only two types of bugs that might annoy you on the trip: mosquitos and Tsetse flies. We are traveling in a dry month, so neither bug will be very prevalent. If we encounter mosquitos, it will most likely be on Zanzibar in the evening. Our hotel has nets over the beds, but you probably won't need them if your air conditioning is on. The Tsetse flies (similar to horse flies) give a good little bite. If we see any, it will most likely be in Tarangire or Serengeti. They stay in concentrated pockets, so we'll just drive further down the road if they find us.

Dust and Road Conditions: Most roads in the parks are unpaved, dusty, and a little bumpy. If dust bothers you, bring a handkerchief or bandana to cover your face if the dust kicks up. We take it nice and slow on game drives and our drivers will do their best to avoid any major bumps.

Altitude: The area surrounding the Ngorongoro Crater reaches 7,500 feet above sea level and may cause temporary altitude discomfort for some travelers. Those affected should avoid over-exertion, drink extra water, and eat lightly.

Toilets: All our hotels and lodges have Western-style flush toilets. When we're out on the road, some of the available toilets are pit latrines and toilet paper might not be available. A travel roll and some hand sanitizer will come in handy.

Food and Water

Food: All of the food at the hotel and lodge restaurants is very safe to eat. For the two meals that are on your own on Zanzibar, there are many great restaurants within walking distance of the hotel that are very popular with tourists and locals. In general, I would avoid street food just to be safe. The exception is the night market at Forodhani Gardens on Zanzibar. It's still wise to only eat food that is cooked while you wait (e.g. Zanzibar pizza).

Water: You should only drink bottled water and use it to brush your teeth. It will be readily available for purchase and some complimentary water will be provided throughout the trip. Also, ask for drinks with no ice, unless the waiter/bartender can confirm that the ice was made with purified water.

Weather

June is during the dry season, so we probably won't encounter much rain, except maybe a quick shower in Arusha or the Serengeti. Here is a chart to give you an idea of the temperature ranges at each location.

Location	Avg. High	Avg. Low	Avg. Rain (in.)
Zanzibar	84	73	0.3
Arusha	70	48	1.3
Tarangire	77	57	0.2
Serengeti	77	57	1.2
Ngorongoro	70	54*	0.5

*It will get into the low 40s on the crater rim where our lodge is located.

Time

Tanzania is in the Eastern Africa Time (EAT) zone. In June, Tanzania is 7 hours ahead of Michigan.

Electricity

The electrical voltage in Tanzania is 220V-240V (U.S. is 120V). If you plan on plugging anything in, check to see if it's dual voltage (up to 220V-240V). If it is, you just need an outlet adapter. The outlets take type D and type G adapters. If it isn't dual voltage, then you'll need a voltage converter too.

Money

The currency is the Tanzanian Shilling. However, U.S. Dollars are widely accepted.

- Cash – bring U.S. Dollars with you in several different denominations (\$20s, \$10s, \$5s, and \$1s). The notes must be newer and not in poor condition.
- The current exchange rate is around 2200Tsh to \$1.
- ATMs – there are ATMs near our hotel in Zanzibar and in Arusha. Some dispense in Shillings and Dollars.
- Credit cards – Visa and MasterCard are widely accepted at upscale restaurants, hotels/lodges, and large souvenir shops.
- Travellers Cheques – do not bring these. No one will cash them.

Tipping: Tips are welcomed whenever someone assists you. Here are some tips on tips.

- Safari guides: \$20 per guide, per day. We will be on safari for six days, so \$120 total per guide would be the average tip. Since there will be six people in each vehicle to divide that amount, plan on about \$20 per person total. If you really like your guide, feel free to chip in extra. You can provide the tip on the last day.
- Other guides: At Ng'iresi Village, around \$5-10 per person would be a decent tip for your guide. We will probably have several guides for our group that day, so you can just tip the guide who showed you around. For the half day tours (Stone Town, Prison Island, Spice, Jozani), \$3-\$5 per person is sufficient.
- When we are eating the meals that are included, we will either have a buffet or a set menu. For either situation, you may leave a small tip on the table, if you'd like. For the two meals that are on your own in Stone Town, a 10%-15% is adequate if you're happy with the service.
- Some hotels/lodges have a communal tip jar, so that you can provide a few dollars for distribution to the behind the scenes staff. If a porter carries your bags to your room, \$1-\$2 per bag is plenty.
- These are all guidelines, so please feel free to tip the amount you feel is appropriate.

Communication

Cell phones: There should be decent reception on Zanzibar and in Arusha. If you need your phone on the trip, please check with your provider about international plans.

Internet: Wifi is available in many locations. Some hotels have guest computers.

Culture

- Hakuna Matata — It's more than just a catchy song from the Lion King. It loosely translates as "no worries" and it's a philosophy that is widely practiced in Tanzania. If the hot water runs out or we have a slight change of plans, you now know what to say.
- Handouts — As tempting as it may be, please do not bring any handouts for the children (e.g., candy, pens and pencils, toys). There are several reasons to avoid handing out gifts, including the fact that many children in the tourist areas skip school to receive "presents" from the tourists. This is a major problem in Tanzania. Please help us practice responsible tourism.
- Respect — By Tanzanian standards, we are extremely rich. Please do not wear lots of jewelry or carry expensive electronic equipment out in the open. Also, try not to leave expensive items out in the open in your hotel room. This is interpreted as flaunting wealth.

Language

Although Tanzania has many local dialects, Swahili is the official language. English is Tanzania's second official language and its commercial language. Most people you encounter will be quite fluent in English.

In case you want to learn a little Swahili, here are some basic pronunciation rules:

- 'a' = father
- 'e' = wet
- 'i' = fee
- 'o' = road
- 'u' = too
- The second to last syllable is typically stressed.
- If the word begins with 'm' or 'n' before a consonant, briefly hum the 'm' or 'n' sound before saying the rest of the word.
- Every letter in a word is pronounced.

Useful words and phrases:

Swahili	English	Swahili	English
Jambo	Hello	Samahani	Excuse me.
Habari	How are you?	Twende	Let's go.
Nzuri	I'm fine.	Bei gani	How much?
Karibu	Welcome	Maji	Water
Kwaheri	Goodbye	Ndiyo	Yes
Tafadhali	Please	Hapana	No
Asante (sana)	Thanks (very much)	Kahawa	Coffee
Jina lako nani	What's your name?	Chai	Tea
Jina langu ni ...	My name is ...	Maziwa	Milk
Rafiki	Friend	Sukari	Sugar

Luggage

These requirements are based on Precision Air's and Roy Safari's restrictions.

- One carry-on item: 21.5"x15"x8" and less than 15 lbs.
- One piece of checked luggage that weighs less than 50 lbs. Due to limited space in safari vehicles please make sure to pack your belongings in a soft-sided duffel bag or similar style with soft sides and pack conservatively. Traditional suitcases with rigid frames or hard plastic sides should not be used.
- Check the Transportation and Safety Administration (TSA) website www.tsa.gov to find out the current list of acceptable items you may bring on a plane before packing.
- Please attach the provided Tour Connection luggage tag to your checked luggage.

Photography

If you love taking pictures, you are in for a treat. You'll probably capture the best vacation pictures of your life. A camera with a zoom lens comes in handy, but it's not necessary. A lot of the animals will be within a short distance to the vehicle.

Ask permission before you photograph people. Most will either nod yes or politely decline. On our drive from Arusha to the game parks, we may pass Maasai children along the road. Please do not ask your driver to stop so that you can take a photograph. These children will expect money or a gift. This is the same issue as mentioned in the "Hand Outs" section (they should be in school). We will visit a Maasai village between Tarangire and Serengeti. You will be able to take pictures there.

Souvenirs

Always bargain when shopping in a market or small shop. If it is an upscale store and the price is clearly marked, it usually isn't worth bargaining. However, if you are in a market or store where the prices aren't labeled, you are expected to bargain – it's part of the culture. Here are some basic guidelines to get you started:

- Ask how much the item is, then offer half of that price. That will get you started. That probably isn't the price you'll pay, but it will start the conversation.
- Always keep a positive attitude, stay polite, and have fun.
- If the seller won't budge on the price, try walking away. You know your offer was in the realm of possibility if they call you back.
- If you've been bargaining for a few minutes and you decide you don't want the item, just walk away.
- Remember that 100Tsh is only about \$0.04. If the seller is set on 5000Tsh after a few minutes of bargaining, it isn't worth the energy to get the price down to 4900Tsh in order to save \$0.04.

Here are some of the most popular types of souvenirs in Tanzania:

- Makonde carvings: these intricate African blackwood (mpingo) carvings are created by the Makonde people.
- Spices: there are several different styles of samplers that you can purchase in Zanzibar. My favorite is the super pack that is shrink-wrapped in a coconut shell.
- Tinga Tinga paintings: this style was named after Edward Said Tingatinga (1937-1972). The style is difficult to describe, but I will point it out when we are shopping.
- Batiks: these dyed fabrics are relatively cheap and very attractive. There are thousands of varieties to from which to choose.
- Zanzibar carvings: the wood carvings on Zanzibar are most prevalent on the traditional doors. Since it's difficult to bring a door home with you, there are small boxes and other items for purchase that showcase the skills of the woodcarvers.
- Maasai jewelry: the Maasai women create very beautiful beaded necklaces and bracelets.
- Tanzanite: this beautiful gemstone was originally discovered near Arusha in 1967. Since then, its popularity has soared.

On Safari

We will be visiting three different areas known for amazing game viewing: Tarangire National Park, Serengeti National Park, and the Ngorongoro Conservation Area (Ngorongoro Crater).

I can't guarantee which animals you'll see, but here is an abridged list of the animals I've seen in the Serengeti, Ngorongoro, and Tarangire on each trip: lion; elephant; leopard; cheetah; hyena; zebra; giraffe; wildebeest; black rhino; warthog; baboon; vervet monkey; hippopotamus; crocodile; buffalo; dik dik; bushbuck; waterbuck; gazelle; eland; antelope; oryx; hartebeest; topi; impala; eagle; ostrich; vulture; lilac-breasted roller; and many, many more! Our guides are excellent at tracking down a wide variety.

Here are some game viewing tips to increase your chances of seeing a wide variety of animals:

- Be as quiet as possible so you don't disturb the animals or the other people in your vehicle.
- If everyone is looking at a herd of wildebeest or zebra out one side of the vehicle, look the other way to see if any predators are stalking the herd.
- If you think you see something in the distance, let your guide know. He will stop to identify the animal. You will be the hero of the day if you spot something rare.
- Look high and low. Leopards and birds will most likely be in the trees. Chameleons, tortoises, snakes, and lizards will be on the side of the road.
- If you see a pile of steaming dung, there is probably an elephant in the vicinity.