

The Routine

Here's how the days generally flow when you're at the camps

6:30 – 7:00 a.m. – Meet at the main lodge for the morning game drive – it's very early, but the sounds of the bush that time of day are amazing, and early morning and dusk are when the animals are most active, so that's when the viewing is the best. You'll have coffee and a biscuit or a small piece of fruit before you get on the jeep and you'll stop for a break where you can have another cup of coffee and another bite of something.

11:30 – 12:00 or so – Lunch

1:30 – 3:30 – Relax, walk around, or take a “field trip”

3:30 – Afternoon tea.

4:00 – Meet at the main lodge again for the afternoon game drive. The best part of the afternoon game drive, besides the animals, is “sundowners” – a cocktail break halfway through the drive, where they serve your favorite beverage (which they research in advance), and a snack, and you watch the sunset over the bush (like nothing you've ever seen before) and wait for the nocturnal animals to stir themselves to action.

6:30 – 7:30 – Arrive back at the lodge (could be later if there's something going on out there). Shower time!

8:00 – Meet for dinner at the main lodge

PACKING FOR AFRICA

Luggage

The weight limit per person (**including hand luggage**) is 20kg, or **44 lbs.** The bag must be soft-sided and frameless so that it can be squeezed into small aircraft holds. Weight is more important than size. The [duffels](#) we have used on past safaris are 32x14x14 and hold just about the right amount of stuff.

Bring a small backpack or tote bag – a smart strategy is to bring that same bag on the game drives. Put in that bag anything you might want quick access to on the plane (or in the jeep) – iPad, book, reading or sun glasses, wallet with identification and money and a credit card, lipstick or Chapstick, camera. Plan to use this instead of a purse – don't bring both – too much weight, and bulk, and really not necessary.

The best way to be sure your luggage doesn't weigh more than the maximum is to do a "dry run" - pack at home a week or two before we go, and weigh it there, so you can make decisions about what to pack (or not pack) so that you come in under the limit. There's not much flexibility in terms of these weight limits, and you'd hate to have to start taking things out of the bag to leave at the airport if you find out at the last minute that your bag weighs more than the allowable limit.

It's hard to keep clothes looking good when you're shoving them into a soft-sided duffel. We found that Eagle Creek's Pack-It products worked well to keep things organized and relatively wrinkle free. We each had one [Pack-It Folder](#) for shirts and pants and one [Pack-It Cube](#) for socks and underwear. These too, are available pretty much wherever travel stuff is sold.

More about the packing limit

- Shampoo and conditioner are provided at the camps, so you won't need to pack them.
- Don't wear any fragrances or shiny jewelry - they attract bugs and some animals.
- A good "weight management" strategy is to wear your heaviest stuff (like hiking shoes and jackets) on the plane, because if you're wearing them, they don't count towards the weight limit for your luggage. It can get warm in those small planes, so if you do "dress heavy", be sure you're wearing layers that you can peel off if you get too warm.
- All the camps have complimentary laundry service, so you really don't need outfits for more than 3 days. Dry cleaning is not available.
- Camps have rain ponchos for the guests, so you won't need to pack an umbrella or rain gear.
- Each room will have a hair dryer, so you don't need to bring one.
- All camps have 220-volt power. Make sure that all your chargers support both 110/220. Otherwise you'll need a voltage converter.

- While the camps *should* have plug-adaptors, you might want to bring your own, just to be safe. [European Type C](#) and [British Type G](#) adaptors to come in handy. [South Africa Type M](#) might also be found, but it's probably not worth buying one. A [Universal](#) adapter will make life easy
- Cellular service is sometimes available but will be spotty. Camps may have computers where you check or send e-mails.

Clothes

- Casual – you can wear the same pants you wore on the game drive (or cleaner ones) with a nicer looking shirt for dinner, so your wardrobe can be very casual and very “narrow”, which helps with the weight limit thing.
- Natural colors – brown, green, tan, khaki – the idea is to blend into the landscape – no bright colors which can upset the animals, and nothing blue or grey, which attract tsetse flies. African Sleeping Sickness is not a problem these days, but the tsetse's are very annoying, so you don't want to be wearing something that attracts them.
- Camouflage clothing, or anything suggestive of the military, is a no-no...camouflage clothing is actually illegal in some parts of Africa.
- Lightweight, machine washable and dryable, cotton or cotton/nylon blends are best – don't bring anything that requires dry cleaning (that service is not available at the camps).
- Jeans are not good to bring for several reasons – they're blue (tsetse flies), they're heavy, and they take a long time to dry (which means if you send them out in the morning, you might not get them back by the end of the day, or you'll get them back wet).
- Bring a short list of things that you really like and that all go together (not hard to do given the narrow color pallet you're working with) – you'll get really bored wearing the same 3-4 neutral-toned outfits over and over again, so be sure & bring things that are fun to wear and that enable a little bit of variety by mixing and matching. I had fun “accessorizing” with neutral toned bandanas and scarves.
- I was glad to have a couple of nicer tops and a few pieces of casual (inexpensive and lightweight) jewelry to wear to dinner after a day in the bush – even with the same pants and shoes, it made me feel a little more dressed than I did during the day.
- You'll be able to purchase clothes at each camp. I believe I have a safari shirt from each camp we visited.
- It'll be cold sometimes on the morning drives, warmer in the afternoons, cool again in the evenings – so think in terms of layers - short sleeved or sleeveless tops with long sleeved shirts (or shirts with sleeves that roll up), and a lightweight jacket or fleece, allow you to be warm in the morning, and by removing layers you can stay comfortable during the day as the temperature rises. Pants that are convertible to shorts, or that roll up, are good choices. REI and Eddie Bauer are good places to find them.
- Temperatures will range between the lower forties at night and the lower eighties during the day.

- **Stanley & Chief's Camp are tented and do not have heat.** It can get into the lower 40s at night. You may want to plan to sleep in long johns (silk weighs less than thermal and should keep you warm enough) or cotton flannels – it gets cold at night, even though the quilts are warm and they put a hot water bottle in your bed (between the covers) right before you turn in (which makes them very cozy on cold nights). In the morning, you'll appreciate having some warm jammies on for that few minutes before you can get dressed. I learned that you really can make it through the day without a shower in the morning – those Tilley hats make all difference (one of the reasons you don't want to take it off during the day). We took showers after the morning game drive or before dinner, when it was a lot warmer, and when we really needed one – you'll collect a lot of dust on those game drives!
- Shoes – you'll want something comfortable and sturdy for the game drives – like hiking boots or trail shoes – don't bring white sneakers or running shoes – think natural colors. In addition, bring something casual and lighter-weight for walking around the camps between game drives (you can wear the same flats to dinner), and bring rubber or plastic thongs for the pool and/or outdoor showers.
- Consider a pair of flip-flops for the outdoor showers.
- A pair of lightweight gloves is a good idea
- A good hat is very important – look for one that fits well, is comfortable, and has a chin strap so it won't blow away in an open-air jeep (if it does, you won't be able to run after it into the bush). Ideally, it has an air vent or mesh or holes near the top so it breathes, which keeps your head from getting too hot when the sun is beating down on it. Once you put it on for that morning game drive, you probably won't want to take it off until right before you get in the shower (usually right before dinner). Tilley Endurables is a company that makes the best hat I know of this purpose – they are very well made, come with a replacement guarantee (even if you lose it in the bush or an elephant eats it), stylish (in an African bush sort of way), and easy to "accessorize" (with a scarf or a pin, or a patch, or not). They're pricey but it was worth it. They are available at REI – you can also order them online from [Tilley Endurables](#) if you know your hat size.
- You might also want a knit hat for the chilly mornings
- Bring a swimsuit. The water may be too cold to actually swim in, but there were lots of days when the air was warm enough for sunbathing, and cargo pants just don't work at the pool.
- **Don't forget sunscreen & insect repellent. We're going during dry season, so bugs shouldn't be a problem, but it's good to have something just in case.** Roy likes [Ultrathon](#) lotion. 100% DEET products are overkill.
- Put sunscreen on first. Then the insect repellent.

- You can purchase clothes that have been treated with a bug repellent already (like the Buzz Off brand) or you can spray your clothes before you leave with Permethrin. It will help to repel insects for about a half dozen launderings. Roy did this to our clothes last trip and he probably will do it again this trip. It's probably overkill, but Roy's pretty compulsive (which is what makes him such a great vacation planner).
- Binoculars. Everyone needs his/her own – very important – you don't want to have to share yours when you're looking at something amazing. Binocular size is expressed by two numbers, for example 8x42. The first number is the magnification; the second is the diameter of the lens. Therefore, 8x42 binoculars provide 8x magnification and have a 42mm objective lens. You'll want a magnification of 8 or 10. A larger lens provides a brighter image but also adds to the size and weight. We all picked up inexpensive Nikons. Ashley & I have 8X25 while Roy has the 8x40.
- If you're inclined to motion sickness, bring Dramamine or something similar (small planes can get bumpy).
- You might appreciate having something like Pepto-Bismol or Pepcid. The water is filtered/bottled but, just in case, you might also want some Imodium, or, as Roy does, a prescription for Cipro(floxacin), a broad-spectrum antibiotic.
- Tampons – trust me, you don't want to try to find these in Africa.

Cash, Currency, Tips

- Botswana and Zambia have a cash-based economy based on US dollars
- In South Africa, US dollars (as well as South African Rand) are accepted.
- The US currency that you bring should have been printed within the last 5 years and in good shape (no tears, no writing.)
- While this trip is pre-paid, the camps will accept Visa, MC & AX for miscellaneous charges (like when you buy me a premium bottle of wine.)
- Tips are included in the tour price except for the Tour Director... \$150 each.
- There is a \$30 per person Tourism fee to be paid upon arrival in Botswana
- There is a KAZA UNIVISA (\$50 pp) which is obtained at the port of entry and allows you to enter Zambia & Zimbabwe. However, sometimes they run out and you would then need to get a Zambian Visa (\$50-80) and a Zimbabwe visa (\$30).

So, here are the packing lists that we used for our last trip. E-mail me if you have any questions.

Roy

3 cargo pants
1 pr kakis (for dinner)
2 shorts
3 long sleeve shirts
2 t-shirts
4 pr underwear
3 pair socks
2 pair light dress socks
bandana
fleece
Safari jacket
flannel pjs
1 pr hiking shoes
1 pr Topsiders
1 pr flip-flops
sun hat
gloves
silk thermal underwear

Deb

3 pants
1 shorts
3 long sleeve shirts
2 t-shirts
x pr underwear
x bras
x pair socks (crew socks and **NOT**
those tiny ones)
bandana
silk scarf
flannel pjs or sweat suit
coat or fleece
Swim suit
1 pr boots
1 pr shoes
1 pr flip-flops
sun hat
gloves
silk thermal underwear

Roy's List of Stuff

Some notes:

- Don't bring Benadryl as it contains an ingredient on Zambia's controlled substance list. It's a good idea to bring a copy of the Doctor's prescription for all of your meds.
- There are no port-a-potties in the bush. If you can't hold it for 4 hours, a travel sized roll of toilet paper might come in handy.

Aleve (naproxen)

Antacids

Antibiotic cream (Neosporin)

Antibiotics – Cipro

Anti-itch cream

Antihistamine/Decongestant (Claritin-D)

Aspirin

Band-Aids

Batteries - for still and video cameras

Battery Charger

Binoculars

Camera

Cell Phone

Cell Phone Charger

Chapstick

Contact lenses - make sure you bring *both* a spare set and your glasses.

Dental floss

Dramamine (Less Drowsy)

Duct tape for emergency repairs (not a whole roll, just a few yards wrapped around a pencil)

Ear plugs

Eye drops (Visine)

Glasses, toolkit

Glasses, extra pair

Gum

Hand Sanitizer

Hats

Imodium (Loperamide)

Insect repellent (Ultrathon)

Kleenex, pocket size

Nail clippers and file

Needle & thread

Pen & notepad

Pepto-Bismol tablets

Prescription Medicine

Q-tips

Safety pins

"Shout" laundry pre-treatment

Sunscreen

Tampons

Toilet Paper-travel size

Tweezers

Voltage Converters/Adapters

Zip-lock bags