



Get lost in the right direction

Thank you for subscribing to our travel blog – Travel Buddies Lifestyle.

You can rest assured that our checklist is reliable (as far as possible), as Bernie van der Linde, your travel buddy, compiled it.

Bernie was born and raised in South Africa, so she understands the requirements for planning a trip to her home country. South Africa is loved for its sunshine (an average of 2,500 hours of sun every year). It's a dry country classified as semi-arid. The average annual rainfall is about 464 mm (which is relatively low considering the world average of about 860mm).

1 SOUTH AFRICA TRAVEL CHECKLIST

South Africa is an easy country to visit as there are no strict requirements to meet prior to a visit. Nevertheless, there are certain documents, health and safety precautions, and packing requirements you need to be aware of when visiting the country known as “the world in one”. We cover many of the safety precautions on our travel blogs, including safety on the roads.

1.1 Necessary Documents

1.1.1 Passport

- Ensure your passport is valid for at least six months beyond your planned stay.
- Have at least two blank pages in your passport for entry stamps.

1.1.2 Visa (if applicable):

- Research if your nationality requires a visa to enter South Africa.

We recommend consulting the Department of Home Affairs' website.

<https://www.dha.gov.za/index.php/immigration-services/exempt-countries>

- Apply for a visa well in advance (if required) unless it is issued upon arrival in South Africa. Check the South African Department of Home Affairs for specific requirements.

1.1.3 Travel Insurance

- Obtain comprehensive travel insurance.

Ensure that it covers medical emergencies, trip cancellations, and theft or loss of belongings. We recommend using Oasis insurance. Our blog article "Travel Booking Resources" provides a link to Oasis Insurance.

1.1.4 International Driver's Permit

- If you plan to rent a car in South Africa (which we highly recommend), ensure that you have an International Driver's Permit (IDP) along with your original driver's license.
- We use **DiscoverCars** for all our car rentals worldwide. You can find a link to DiscoverCars.com in our blog article "Travel Booking Resources".

1.2 Health and Safety

1.2.1 Vaccination Records

- Carry proof of required vaccinations, particularly for yellow fever, if you are travelling from a country with a risk of yellow fever transmission.
- We recommend that you consult the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention's website:

<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/yellowbook/2024/itineraries/south-africa#:~:text=South%20Africa%20requires%20a%20valid,risk%20for%20yellow%20fever%20virus>

- Requirements in terms of Yellow Fever Vaccinations: South Africa requires a valid **International Certificate of Vaccination or Prophylaxis** (ICVP) documenting yellow fever vaccination no less than ten days before arrival in South Africa for all travellers aged one year or older, travelling from or transiting for more than 12 hours through the airport of a country with risk for yellow fever virus transmission. South Africa considers a one-time dose of yellow fever vaccine (properly documented with an ICVP) to be valid for the life of the traveller.

- Recommended vaccinations include Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, Typhoid, Cholera, Rabies, and Meningococcal disease.
- Unvaccinated travellers with a medical waiver signed by a licensed healthcare provider are generally allowed entry.

1.2.2 Medication

- Consider using medication to prevent contracting malaria if you are travelling to areas where malaria is prevalent (e.g. The Kruger National Park). Kruger stretches over two provinces (Mpumalanga and Limpopo) and is considered endemic for malaria with seasonal transmission. Visitors to these areas are advised to take **malaria chemoprophylaxis** and apply precautions to prevent mosquito bites (e.g. creams, sprays, or not going outside early morning and late afternoon). Preventing mosquito bites is the first line of defence against malaria. Remember, there are many game reserves located in malaria-free areas.
- Pack a basic **first aid kit** with sufficient prescription medications for your entire trip. Stock up on pain relievers and any personal medical supplies in case you travel to more rural areas with limited access to pharmacies. However, many pharmacies in South Africa will be able to assist you should you run short of any necessary medication.
- Pack travel-specific health kits that contain insect repellent, hand sanitisers, and motion sickness medication.

1.2.3 Safety

Never stop on the side of the road to purchase souvenirs unless there are several other cars around.

- We recommend downloading the **Namola** app, which includes a panic button, smart alerts, all the emergency numbers with a click of a button, location history, and community reports in the area where you are travelling.

1.3 Packing Essentials

South Africa is in the southern hemisphere, so midwinter is in the middle of the year, and high summer is in December and January. The average daily temperatures in South Africa range from 15°C to 36°C in the summer and -2°C to 26°C in the winter. South Africa is known for its warm coastal subtropic (particularly in Kwa-Zulu Natal), hot deserts (places bordering Namibia), humid highlands, snow-topped mountains (Drakensberg) and Mediterranean weather in the southwest of the country.

Cape Town weather: Cape Town is synonymous with year-round southeaster or northwest winds. The winter months (June to August) are mostly cold and rainy.

To find out more about South Africa's weather patterns, we recommend that you consult the information pages of South Africa: <https://southafrica-info.com/land/south-africa-weather-climate/>

1.3.1 Clothing

- Pack lightweight clothing for the daytime, particularly when visiting the Kruger National Park in Summer. The average daily temperature in Spring is 30 degrees, 32 degrees in Summer, 29.6 in Autumn and 26 degrees in Winter. During the summer months, temperatures can easily rise to high in the 30s.
- Wear warmer layers for cooler evenings or mornings in regions like the Drakensberg Mountains or when visiting game reserves.
- Pack swimwear if visiting coastal areas. Most of the rest camps in the Kruger National Park and private luxury lodges have swimming pools, and swimming is possible throughout the year in many provinces.
- Comfortable walking shoes and sandals. South Africa has some of the best hiking trails.
- A hat, sunglasses, and sunscreen.

1.4 Travel Accessories

- A sturdy backpack for day trips.
- Travel-sized toiletries.

- Reusable water bottle. Most lodges do not allow plastic bottles.
- Power adapter (South Africa uses Type C, D, M, and N plugs, 230V supply voltage, and 50Hz).
- Lightweight rain jacket or poncho.

1.5 Technology and Gadgets

1.5.1 Electronics

- Camera, a smartphone with extra memory cards.
- A selfie stick.
- Portable charger or power bank.
- A travel Wi-Fi router or local SIM card for data connectivity. SIM cards can be purchased at most South African airports.

1.5.2 Apps and Guides

- Download offline maps and travel guides.
- When recommend the following app when visiting the Kruger National Park
 - **LatestSightings** will assist you in finding animals where they were last spotted.
 - **KrugerGuide** is ideal for downloading Kruger maps.
 - **KrugerExplorer** is a paid app (R249) that is worth downloading for maps, routes, animal guides, and sightings.
- We highly recommend downloading **Radarbot** (if it is available from your app store). This app warns you of speed limits and speed cameras.
- Install a translation app if necessary. However, English is widely spoken in the country.

1.6 Emergency and Important Contacts

1.6.1 Local Emergency Numbers

- Nationwide emergency response number: 10111
- South African emergency number: 112 from any cellular phone in South Africa.

- Ambulance services: 10177
- Remember to make a note of your country's embassy or consulate in South Africa.

1.6.2 Copies of Important Documents

- Make photocopies or digital copies of your passport, visa, travel insurance, driver's license, and vaccination records. Keep these records in your hotel's safe or on your cell phone.

1.6.3 Money Matters

- The local currency in South Africa is the **South African Rand** (ZAR). It is always a good idea to have some cash on hand for tips and small purchases.
- Inform your bank about your travel dates to avoid issues with your credit/debit cards.
- Budget Planning: Plan for a mix of cash and card payments. Many places accept cards, but some of the places may have cash-free zones.

By following this checklist, you'll be well-prepared for an enjoyable and safe adventure in South Africa. Safe travels from all of us at Travel Buddies Lifestyle! If you need any additional assistance or advice, you are welcome to email bernie@travelbuddieslifestyle.com.

Until next time. Enjoy your travels.
Your Travel Buddies,

Bernie & Petra

