

# Health & Safety in Africa

abacus  
AFRICAN  
SAFARIS

## Personal Safety and Health

a. **Question:** Is travel in Africa safe for tourists ?

**Answer:** We will discuss travel safety in terms of (a) dangers as a result of war, political turmoil or general lawlessness; and (b) the incidence of crime in an otherwise politically stable and law-abiding region. Safety from wild animals when on safari is discussed as a separate topic below.

- (a). Our travel itineraries and destinations are selected to take care that we do not put you in harm's way. We monitor the safety status of each country, region and destination on an ongoing basis. We specifically exclude offer of travel and destinations in regions that may have the potential for being unsafe.
- (b). You can become the victim of crime anywhere in the world -- it is always wise to take appropriate precautions when traveling. In general, downtown areas of cities in Africa should be avoided after dark. Keep travel documents, large amounts of cash, airline tickets and valuables in a secure place in your hotel, lodge or camp. Never leave baggage and personal items unattended, especially at airports. Take care not to flash money, expensive cameras and jewelry in public places. Do not take walks on deserted or lonely beaches and streets, especially after sunset. Do not pick up hitchhikers when traveling by car. Always seek and heed the advise of your local hotel or tour guide.

Our choice of itineraries, transfers and destinations take into account your personal safety. Take care to follow advise and demonstrate sensible judgment and your travel in Africa will be a safe and enjoyable experience.

b. **Question:** What medical services are available ?

**Answer:** There is no general answer to this question, since your travel itinerary may take you to cities with excellent medical services and to remote areas with more limited resources. If you have a medical condition, please take this into account when planning your itinerary. Many safari destinations have qualified emergency first-aid staff members. Ask your travel consultant to confirm that this applies to the specific destinations that you choose.

c. **Question:** What medical precautions do I need to take ?

**Answer:** Your travel itinerary will determine which countries you will visit in Africa, and which regions within each country. Some countries require advance inoculations (vaccination) and will ask to see certified proof on entry - we will advise you of these when making your booking.

Malaria is also present in many parts of Africa - we will again advise you if you will be visiting a malaria area. As a general rule, our safari destinations fall within malaria areas. Anti-malarial medication is essential when visiting these destinations - please consult your doctor or a local health department to prescribe the appropriate prophylactics and the latest health precautions. Medication may need to be started a week before you travel into these areas.

**d. Question:** Can I refill my medical prescriptions when traveling ?

**Answer:** If you are on prescription medication, please ensure that you have an adequate supply to last the duration of your trip, since matching your medication at an African pharmacy may not be viable. Ensure that you have copies of all prescriptions when traveling. You may be asked to produce these at the port of entry to any of the countries visited.

**e. Question:** What travel insurances will I need ?

**Answer:** We always recommend that you purchase trip cancellation and curtailment insurance at time of booking. Safari and adventure camps and lodges may require you to have insurance cover for medical emergency and evacuation. Ask your insurance broker and your travel consultant for advise. Please note that Abacus African Safaris cannot be held liable for losses that you may incur due to loss, damage or theft of baggage or personal items and for personal injury or illness.

**f. Question:** Is the water safe to drink ?

**Answer:** While tap water is frequently purified and safe to drink at many of the destinations that you will visit, seek the advice of the hotel, lodge or camp management. Bottled water will always be available. Never drink water from streams, rivers and pools without purification.

**g. Question:** Am I safe from the wild animals when on safari ?

**Answer:** When on safari, you may typically be tracking and viewing wild animals in an open 4x4 vehicle - herds of elephant, buffalo, lion, rhino, leopard and many others. You may feel very exposed, but the wild animals are mostly accustomed to the vehicle and will usually ignore it. You will always be accompanied by an experienced (and armed) ranger and your safety is the highest concern. Please however always follow the advice given: - remain in the vehicle at all times; don't stand up; and observe silence when requested. Wild animals are unpredictable and deserve a high degree of respect.

When on a foot safari, the ranger will not track carnivores or the larger, more dangerous species. However, such encounters can occur. Once again, follow the instructions of the ranger for your own and the group's safety. Never turn and run. Your ranger is armed and is there to protect you when necessary.

At night, back at your lodge or camp, you will be personally escorted to your accommodation. Do not wander the paths alone, since it is not uncommon for wild animals to roam through the premises at night.

Follow instructions and demonstrate good judgment and you need not be concerned about your safety.

**h. Question:** Is it safe to swim in the ocean and the rivers ?

**Answer:** Always swim in areas demarcated as safe for swimming. In some coastal areas, there is a need for bathing beaches to be protected by shark nets. Never swim at or after sunset. There are countless pristine, safe, sandy beaches - among the most beautiful in the world.

In general, do not swim in rivers. Hidden dangers are frequently submerged objects, currents, pollution and in the remoter areas, due to parasite infection, crocodiles and hippos!

Follow the advice of your guide when white-water rafting and canoeing.