



COTTAR'S
SAFARIS

EST. 1919

Kenya Travel Information **Before you go**





Welcome!

The Cottar's Safari team are excited to welcome you for your upcoming, once in a lifetime safari in Kenya.

We hope the below note provides sufficient information to enable you to prepare for your safari.

Contents

1.	Essentials	page 3
2.	Passport	page 3
3.	Vaccinations & Medications	page 3
4.	Travel Insurance	page 4
5.	Medical Air Evacuation	page 4
6.	Flights and baggage allowance	page 4
7.	Vehicles	page 5
8.	Cash & Card	page 5
9.	Valuables	page 6
10.	Safety whilst on safari	page 6
11.	Daily Schedule	page 6
12.	Gratuities	page 6
13.	Climate	page 7
14.	Language	page 8
15.	Etiquette	page 8
16.	Electricity	page 8
17.	Customs Information	page 8
18.	Smoking	page 9
19.	Packing for your Trip	page 9
20.	Food Allergies and Preferences & Drinking Water	page 9
21.	Photography	page 10
22.	Photography Etiquette	page 10
23.	Social Media, Sharing Photos	page 10
24.	Communication	page 11
25.	Community and Conservation Engagement & Philanthropy	page 11
26.	Important Contacts	page 11
27.	Frequently Asked Questions	page 11

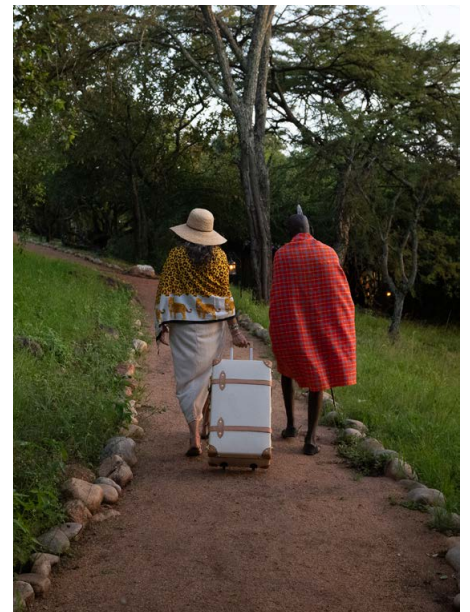


1. Essentials

- 1.1. All visitors, including infants and children who intend to travel to the Republic of Kenya, must have an approved ETA before the start of their journey. It's a bit of a process, so please do follow our guidance note [HERE](#).
- 1.2. Please consult and follow the advice of your doctor for vaccination and medical requirements for travel (see section 3 for details).
- 1.3. Medical and travel insurance including medical air evacuation insurance provision is a must (see section 7 and 8 for details).
- 1.4. Flying within Kenya is often in small planes which have baggage weight restrictions of 15kg - which includes checked baggage, hand baggage and equipment such as cameras.
- 1.5. It is always useful to print out key documents as connectivity may not always be available (see section 23).
- 1.6. Kenya has banned all forms of plastic bags so please remember to pack without plastic bags.

2. Passport

A valid passport and onward airline ticket are required for travel to Kenya. Your passport must remain valid for at least six (6) months from the date of arrival in Kenya. The passport must be signed and must have at least two blank pages left in it after your visas for the trip have been secured (If your passport does not have a number of blank pages left in it, you should contact your nearest passport agency). You'll have your passport stamped multiple times, particularly if you are travelling to multiple countries within Africa.



3. Vaccinations & Medications

Always consult a medical professional in advance of your trip regarding what vaccinations and medications you'll need or can bring along with you on your trip or have a look at the [Center for Disease Control's](#) or your region's equivalent website. This will give you information on vaccinations and other health precautions such as safe food, water precautions and insect bite protection. Please note that some vaccines may be required to be administered up to 2 weeks in advance for them to be effective

In Kenya, larger towns have drug stores and hospitals. However, it is advised that you should carry along adequate supplies of your own medications. It is further suggested that any prescription medications be carried in your hand luggage (not in checked baggage) in their original, labelled containers only and that you carry the prescription script with you.

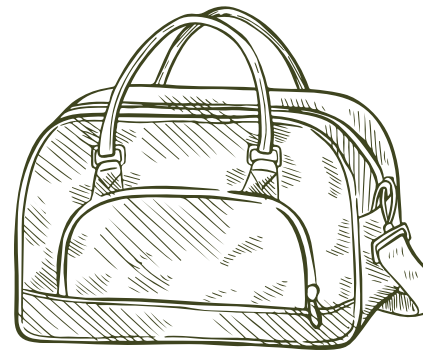
Although we have a small team at camp trained in basic first aid, and a doctor on call; the staff are not qualified to administer medication and will require you to sign a disclaimer on arrival.

Some guests choose to bring the below additional medications:

- | | |
|--|--|
| o Paracetamol | o Inhalers if asthmatic |
| o Piriton | o A broad-spectrum antibiotic |
| o Calpol if travelling with children | o Anti-diarrheal medicine (loperamide) such as Imodium |
| o Dioralyte | o Hydrocortisone cream |
| o EpiPen if known to have an anaphylactic reaction | o Antihistamine cream |
| o Antiemetic | |

4. Travel Insurance

Prior to traveling, please make sure that you have medical insurance coverage. Travel insurance is useful in case you have unanticipated medical expenses along the way, need emergency evacuation, your luggage is lost or delayed, your trip is canceled or portions of your trip are interrupted in any way.



5. Medical Air Evacuation

Please ensure you have a medical air evacuation within your insurance policy. Alternatively, Kenya has a couple of local solutions for medical air evacuation insurance including **Amref Flying Doctors** and **Rescue**. We are available to assist you in obtaining medical air evacuation insurance should you need it.

6. Flights and baggage allowance

6.1. INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS

Guests would normally fly internationally into Jomo Kenyatta International Airport. The airport is located 13 km / 8 mi outside Nairobi and has good international and regional connections.

Going through immigration and baggage collection can sometimes be busy, particularly when multiple international flights arrive at the same time.

When you arrive in Nairobi, you will proceed through passport control before continuing to the baggage claim and customs areas.

Baggage carts are free of charge and are usually readily available. Look for one as soon as you enter the baggage claim area. Once you have collected all your baggage make your way through to the exit gates where someone will be there to meet you as per your itinerary arrangements.

6.2. BAGGAGE ALLOWANCE

Baggage allowance for international flights vary depending on which airline(s), class of service, and routing is used.

Baggage for domestic scheduled flights and many of the private charter flights is restricted to 1 checked bag plus one carry-on bag with a maximum total weight of 33 pounds (15kg) including camera equipment. Exceptions to the 33 pound limit can be made for privately chartered aircraft if flown with spare seating capacity or if a scheduled flight has spare weight capacity there may be the option for additional baggage, but there is no guarantee that they can do this, so it is our strong advice to limit the weight of your luggage to 15kg.



Discover Cottar's Safaris on TikTok

6.3. DOMESTIC FLIGHTS

Wilson Airport, a regional airport about 30-60 minutes (depending on traffic) by road from Jomo Kenyatta. Wilson is the hub for almost all of Kenya's domestic flights and serves as the gateway to the Masai Mara, Amboseli, Laikipia, Mombasa and Kenya's beaches.

Ensure you have time between your international flight and domestic flight to make the transfer between the two airports.

There are three ways to fly domestically between locations in Kenya. Scheduled flights, chartered flights and helicopters. There are many scheduled flight companies, flight times and flight options and scheduled flights are more cost effective to private air charters, however, sometimes, the flight may not be direct and may stop at a few locations before reaching your final destination. Chartered flights and helicopters are a more costly but more direct method of flying.

Cottar's Safaris has its own private airstrip called Cottar's Airstrip, where private charters and scheduled flights can land.

For scheduled flights we suggest flying with Governors Aviation as they will land at our airstrip with 2 guests or more, whereas the other airlines require 4 guests or more to land. The next closest airstrip to Cottar's is Keekerok airstrip which is a wonderful game drive away - the journey time from Keekerok airstrip to Cottar's Safaris is between 90 minutes to 2 hours depending on the wildlife seen enroute and the weather.

Our travel concierge can assist in any kind of flight booking and make special arrangements, such as a private charter from Jomo Kenyatta airport and private immigration processing. The travel concierge can also hold extra luggage at our Nairobi.

7. Vehicles

Road transfers from airports and between major destinations tend to use private vehicles, as do scheduled safaris to popular destinations such as the Maasai Mara. Once at a destination/property you will usually be in open-sided 4X4 vehicles.

8. Cash & Card

Cash and most credit and debit cards are acceptable forms of payment in Kenya.

There are numerous ATMs and banks throughout Kenya but mainly in the big towns and cities. All major credit cards are widely accepted, in particular MasterCard, Visa and American Express. Banking hours are from 9 am to 4 pm Monday to Friday, and 9 am to 12 noon on Saturdays for most banks. Kenya's national currency is the Kenyan Shilling and although foreign currencies such as US Dollars are widely accepted, we'd recommend using local currency to pay for bar bills, souvenirs and meals not included in your itinerary. It is a good idea to alert your bank at home that you are traveling to avoid any issues with withdrawing cash from the ATM or using your credit/debit card for desired purchases.



9. Valuables



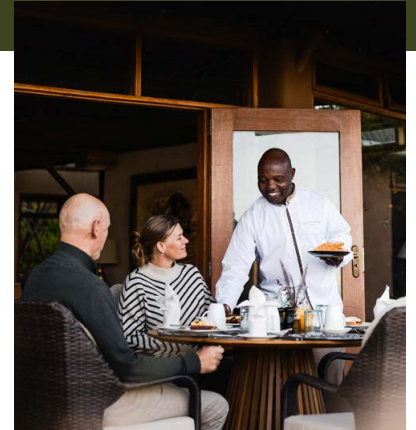
Exercise the same precautions throughout your travels in Kenya as you would at home. Many camps and lodges have safes for the use of their guests. If there are no safes available, it is advised to keep all of your travel documents and valuables with you at all times.

10. Safety whilst on safari

All guests, upon arrival at Cottar's 1920's Camp and Cottar's Bush villa are given a safety briefing. We kindly request that you listen to the briefing and follow the guidance. Our location is unfenced, there is roaming wildlife which presents a higher risk than a normal hotel stay. A guest handbook is provided in the room which also provides safety information.

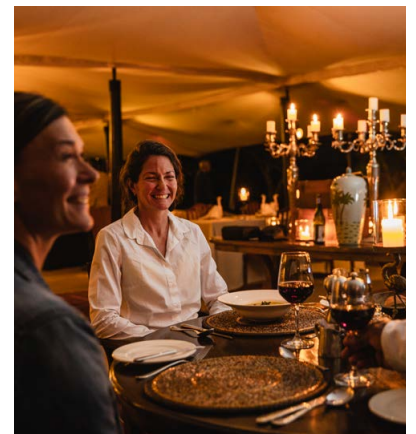
11. What's the daily schedule whilst staying at Cottar's?

At Cottar's Safaris, we do not have a fixed daily schedule. We serve our guests interests, draw from many of our 20 plus **award-winning impact activities**, and curate experiences and a schedule unique to each guest. From wildlife drives to sun downers, from spa time to bush walks, from talks on the plight of raptors to our Maasai Warrior School there is an abundance of exciting experiences during your stay with us.



12. Gratuities

While tipping is never expected, many of our guests like to show their appreciation for our team's hard work with around **US\$30-US\$50** per room per day. You can pay the tips in cash or by credit card, however, please be aware that card payments may incur a small fee. If you'd like to personally thank your guide, spotter, room steward, or waiter, feel free to tip them directly. Whatever you choose to give is truly appreciated.



- CAMP/VILLA TEAM

For general staff tipping we recommend approximately **US\$25** (between US \$15 - \$70) per client per day per room per day. This is put in our main tip box in the manager's office so we can share the gratuities equally with all 80 of our hard-working team members. If one particular member of staff has especially impressed you, please feel free to tip them personally.

- GUIDES

We leave this up to your discretion, as this will depend on how long you stayed, how much time you spent with them and how much they impressed you with their wealth of knowledge and experience. As a guideline we would recommend **US\$15** per guest per day for the driver guide and **US\$10** per guest per day for the spotter.

- SPA THERAPIST

Again, at your discretion please tip them individually but a guideline would be **US\$5** per treatment.

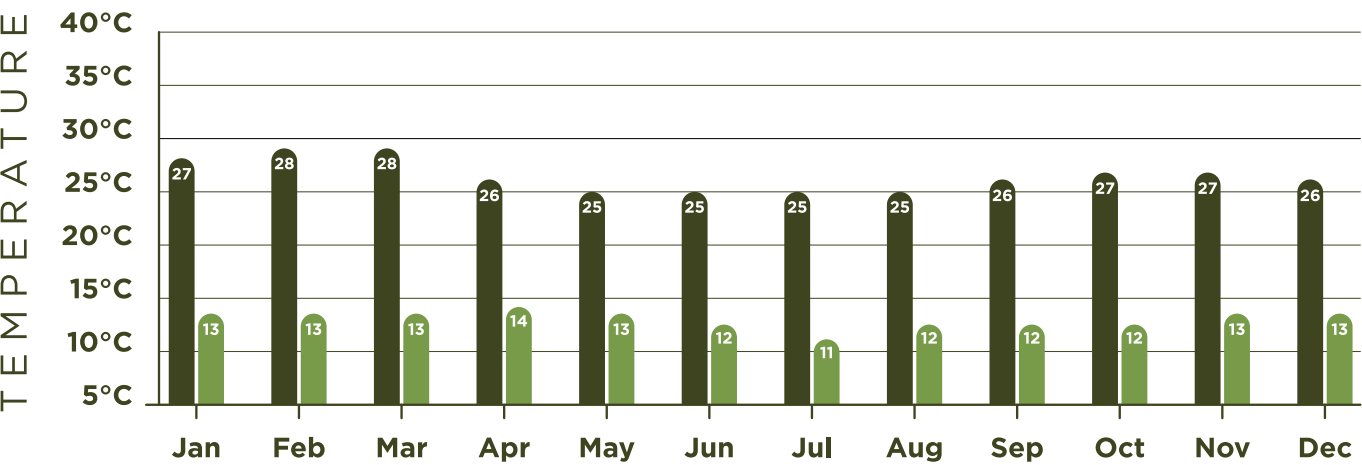
A 10% tip is customary in city restaurants and bars when a service charge is not included.

Please note that tipping amounts are given in US dollars to provide easy reference for our clients, but do remember that it is entirely optional and if you tip you can do so in any currency. It is preferable that tips are given in cash at the properties because credit card payments have tax implications.

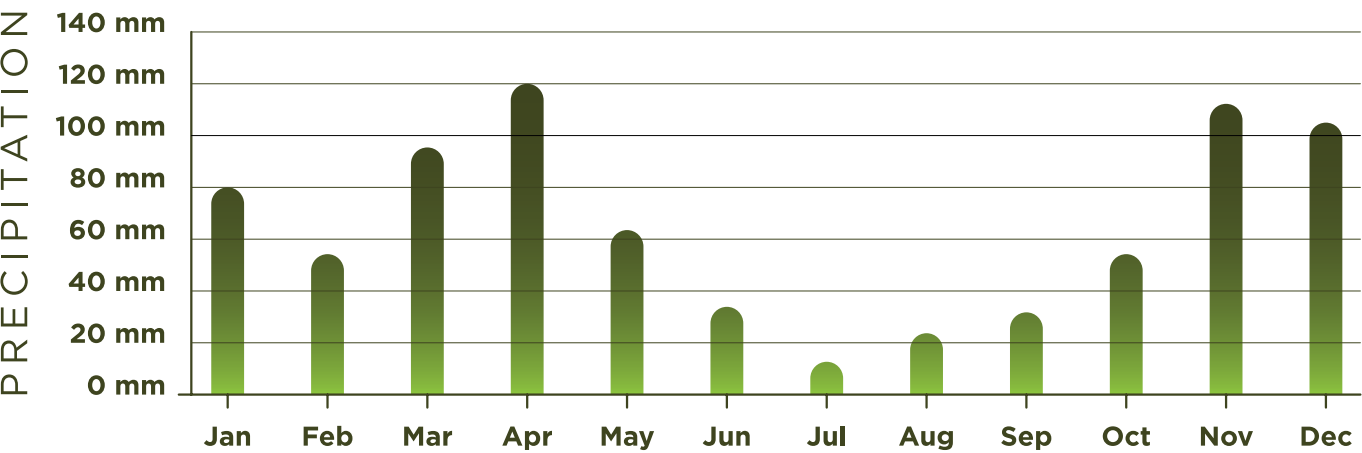
13. Climate

The average temperatures in the Maasai Mara are as below:

Season	Day Temps (°C)	Night Temps (°C)	Day Temps (°F)	Night Temps (°F)
Winter (Jun-Aug)	23-26°C	8-12°C	73-79°F	46-54°F
Summer (Dec-Feb)	26-29°C	12-16°C	79-84°F	54-61°F



With approximately 1,400 mm (55 in) of yearly rainfall, the Maasai Mara experiences two main rainy seasons—long rains (Mar-May) and short rains (Nov-Dec)—with April being the wettest month and July the driest.



14. Language

English is widely spoken and understood in Kenya, although Swahili is the official language in Kenya and Maa is the local language in the Maasai Mara. A few useful Kiswahili words and phrases are below:

English	Kiswahili
Hello	Jambo
Goodbye	Kwaheri
How are you?	Habari?
Good, fine	Mzuri
Please	Tafadhali
Thank you	Asante
Yes	Ndio
No	Hapana

15. Etiquette

By and large the people of Kenya are easy-going, amiable, humorous and helpful, making traveling and interacting with them a real pleasure. Make sure your cultural interaction genuinely benefits the local community and is an experience that is both meaningful and impactful.



16. Electricity

Electricity in Kenya runs on 240 volts. The most common sockets used are those with three rectangular prongs (British system) and all “two pin” plugs can fit into these as well. The majority of camps and lodges do have generators or some form of power, so generally batteries can be charged whilst there. If you do bring electrical chargers it is a good idea to bring your own international travel adaptor just in case your equipment does not fit the available sockets. Many camps and lodges have smaller power capacities so some items such as powerful hairdryers may not work or may cause electrical damage.

17. Customs Information

Visitors are permitted to enter Kenya with up to 200 cigarettes or 50 cigars or 200 grams of tobacco, plus one bottle of wine or liquor, in addition to their personal effects. There are no restrictions on the amount of foreign currency that may be imported into Kenya, and it is no longer necessary to declare foreign currency on arrival.

Forbidden items include sheath knives and weapons, and in a nod to reducing plastic, there is a complete ban on the use of single plastics such as plastic carrybags. Kenya’s ban is seen as one of the toughest in the world. The fine for carrying plastic bags could be up to US\$38,000 (£30,000) or prison sentence of up to four years, although officials say that for now, ordinary shoppers will be warned and have their bags confiscated.

18. Smoking

In Kenya there is a law banning smoking in many public and private places across the country. Aside from bars, offices, theaters, streets and places of worship, smoking is also banned in parks and markets.

19. Packing For Your Trip

1. **Always pack light** - The small, local flights that take you between different parks and camps usually have a weight restriction of 15kgs including hand luggage. We also recommend that you use primary bag: a light, soft duffle bag and for hand luggage: a backpack.
2. **Laundry is possible** and often included in most camps and lodges. Due to cultural beliefs, sometimes the laundry will not accept underwear, in which case some hand wash soap is provided in the room.
3. **Layers are essential** due to the differing temperatures throughout the day.
4. Some camps **can't accommodate high voltage** items like shavers, hair straighteners or blow dryers
5. Most camps will offer **insect repellent, shampoo, conditioner and soap**. It's worth enquiring about this so you don't need to pack it
6. **Trek-specific gear** items may be required (e.g. if gorilla trekking or planning on doing a lot of walking).
7. Most camps will provide night torches, however **head torches can be extremely useful**, but not essential.
8. We will provide you with a **gifted refillable water bottle** so there is no need to bring your own.



Please see [HERE](#) our suggested packing list

20. Food, Food Allergies and Preferences & Drinking Water

1. The food on safari surprises many people by the abundance, variety and quality of the menus and food served.
2. We request that you **please advise us of any dietary requirements, allergies or preferences** so that the camps and lodges can prepare in advance and ensure that they have exactly what you would like for your stay.
3. Travelers are advised not to drink or brush their teeth with any tap water.
4. Bottled mineral water is provided in your room at all camps and lodges on safari. At the lodges and camps on safari, purified water is also used to make ice and for washing fruits and vegetables.





21. Photography

We recommend bringing all the photographic equipment you will need from home and having your equipment insured before you depart. For photographing birds and game, a telephoto lens is indispensable. We recommend a 70mm to 300 mm lens as well as a wide angle lens. Tripods are generally impractical, because your shots are taken from inside your safari vehicle. A beanbag for resting your lens on the edge of the roof hatch or car window is much more useful. Because many travelers take more photos on safari than they do on other trips, we strongly recommend that you bring more film/memory with you than you think you will need. In addition to bringing all your own camera equipment and film from home we urge travelers to bring an additional set of camera batteries (which may be difficult to buy on safari) and some zip lock plastic bags to protect equipment from dust.

22. Photography Etiquette

When you are photographing people always ask their permission first. Always be considerate of anyone's desire not to be photographed. Please do not take photos of any airports, government buildings and installations or of military or police personnel. Remember to always respect the wildlife and the fragility of the ecosystem you have entered and remember it is our duty to ensure these remain undisturbed by our presence.



23. Social Media, Sharing Photos

We have a vibrant social media community and would love for you to join us. Our links are below. We would also love if you take some amazing photos to kindly tag us on the tags below.



Instagram: @cottars.safaris [instagram.com/cottars.safaris](https://www.instagram.com/cottars.safaris)



Facebook: @cottars [facebook.com/cottars](https://www.facebook.com/cottars)



TikTok: @cottarssafaris www.tiktok.com/@cottarssafaris



YouTube: @CottarsKenya [youtube.com/@CottarsKenya](https://www.youtube.com/@CottarsKenya)

24. Communication

WiFi is available in most camps and lodges, but sometimes only in the main mess areas and other times only in the rooms. The signal strength may vary in each location. Mobile networks are fairly comprehensive in Kenya and chances are that a mobile signal is available in a lot of places that you visit. However, safari etiquette requests that if at all possible, please leave your mobiles on silent or switch them off all together whilst out on a game drive or in any public areas. Each car is equipped with a VHF radio that enables the guide to alert the other vehicles when something interesting is spotted or, again, for an emergency or breakdown.

25. Community and Conservation Engagement & Philanthropy

Cottar's Safaris supports a community-owned conservancy and partners with the Maa Trust for socioeconomic investments for the local Maasai community. Such investments include supporting a primary school of over 1,000 children, integrated health programmes and management of a conservancy. Some of our guests that stay with us are interested in learning more, participating in conservation and community initiatives and/or giving. Please feel free to reach out in advance or during your stay to learn or engage further.



26. Important Contacts

MAIN NAIROBI OFFICE

Liz: bookings@cottarssafaris.com | +254 (0)733 773 377 / 8

CAMP OFFICE

Camp Manager: manager@cottarssafaris.com | +254 (0)716 346 734

EMERGENCY

Louise Cottar: louise@cottarssafaris.com | +44 795 826 9958

Calvin Cottar: calvin@cottarssafaris.com | +254 733 468 180

27. Further Frequently Asked Questions

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you do have any additional questions or requests. Alternatively, we have developed an [FAQ document](#) for further information.



PLANNING YOUR SAFARI? MESSAGE MARA ON WHATSAPP

Your 24/7 concierge for accommodation information, camp experiences, and travel inspiration.