

# Botswana



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With its wide-open spaces and incredible wildlife, Botswana is of the few remaining destinations in Africa where the adventuresome safari spirit still survives. A safari in Botswana affords guests with an opportunity to see some of the most incredible wildlife in the waters of the Okavango Delta (Moremi Game Reserve), grazing on the grasslands of Chobe National Park and tracking the arid salt pans of the Kalahari Desert.

To protect Botswana's natural assets, government policy promotes low-volume tourism. Botswana can afford to discourage mass tourism because of its great mineral wealth. It is one of the world's largest producers of diamonds, and it has reserves of gold, copper and nickel.

More than 80% of Botswana's small population of 1.7 million lives in a scattering of towns and large villages, such as Francistown or the capital of Gaborone, leaving plenty of room for animals—and travelers—to roam the countryside unhindered.

## VISAS

A free tourist visa is issued upon arrival for US passport holders traveling to Botswana. Please refer to your Pre-Travel Checklist and itinerary for details. If you are not a US passport holder your entry requirements may vary; please contact your local government office for entry requirements.

## CURRENCY

The Pula is Botswana's currency. Botswana banks will also accept US Dollars, Pound Sterling, Euro, and South African Rand. Therefore, any cash payments to camps for curios, or gratuities to guides or staff, need to be in one of these currencies. Travelers' checks in any of the above currencies are also acceptable and major credit cards.

## PERSONAL SAFETY

Botswana is a relatively safe destination with a low crime rate. The greatest danger is wild animals; always observe park rules, never get out of your vehicle unless you are certain that it is safe, and never confront wild animals.

At safari lodges/camps, listen to the camp staff and guides. Safety precautions need to be taken seriously, and strictly adhered to.

## LANGUAGE

The official language of Botswana is English, although Setswana is widely spoken across the country. In Setswana, prefixes are more important than they are in many other languages. These prefixes include "Bo", which refers to the country, "Ba", which refers to the people, "Mo", which is one person, and "Se" which is the language. For example, the main tribe of Botswana is the Tswana people, hence the name Botswana for its country. The people as a whole are Batswana, one person is a Motswana, and the language they speak is Setswana.

## RECOMMENDED READING

\* *Botswana - The Bradt Travel Guide* - Chris McIntyre



- \* *Okavango: An African Paradise* - Daryl Balfour
- \* *Chobe: Africa's Untamed Wilderness* - Daryl Balfour
- \* *Wild about the Okavango* - Duncan Butchart
- \* *The Bushmen - A Changing Way of Life* - Anthony Bannister
- \* *Botswana: A Brush with the Wild* - Paul Augustinus
- \* *The Lions and Elephants of the Chobe* - Bruce Aiken
- \* *Birds of Prey of Southern, Central, and East Africa* - David Allan
- \* *Newman's Birds of Southern Africa & Common Birds of Botswana* - Ken Newman
- \* *Detective Kubu Series*— Michael Stanley
  - \* Speak to your consultant if you would like to be put in touch with the author.

## JUST FOR FUN

- \* Pula, the name of Botswana's currency, literally means "rain" in Setswana, because rain is very scarce in Botswana - home to much of the Kalahari Desert - and therefore valuable. Pula also means "blessing" as rain is considered a blessing.
- \* Unlike most other African countries, Botswana's flag is dominated by a tranquil blue, a color intended to reflect the peaceful and calm nature of the people. Black-and-white stripes symbolize racial harmony.
- \* David Livingstone didn't discover Victoria Falls, one of the world's Seven Natural Wonders, that separates Zambia and Zimbabwe, but was told about it by his Tswana guides, who referred to it as *mosi wa thunya*, or "the smoke that thunders." The phrase refers to the mist that rises from the falls and the noise the falls make, which can be heard many miles away.

Botswana *Average lows and highs													
Temp.		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Maun	°F	66/90	66/88	64/88	57/88	48/82	43/77	43/77	48/82	55/91	64/95	66/93	66/90
Maun	°C	19/32	19/31	18/31	14/31	9/28	6/25	6/25	9/28	13/33	18/35	19/34	19/32
*Rain variations occur each year. Amounts are dependent on your specific location.													
Rain		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Maun	in	4.33	3.15	2.75	0.98	0.27	0.11	0	0	0	1.18	1.97	3.74
Maun	mm	110	80	70	25	7	3	0	0	0	30	50	95