

David W Shaw Photography Workshops

Discover Botswana! Packing List





A Note on Equipment

Weight Restrictions: The standard Discover Botswana itinerary does not include flights on small planes. While this eases the often troublesome weight restrictions imposed by small plane travel, it is important to keep your luggage manageable. A medium suitcase, duffle or pack for your clothing and personal items, and a camera bag or pack, should be sufficient. If you are forced to push the boundaries of what is permitted on a commercial, international flight to Africa, you are probably packing too much!

Weather Considerations: Northern Botswana lies at about 20 degrees south latitude. It's tropical, and warm. The Okavango Delta and Chobe National Parks are just north of the vast Kalahari Desert, which means, for most of the year, it is also very dry. Precipitation falls almost exclusively during the "green" season which lasts from December to March. However, even during the rainiest months of the year, (December and January) monthly rainfall is only about 15 cm. Temperatures are coolest during the dry season from May-August, and peaks in October.

What does this mean for our trip? We are unlikely to encounter significant rain, though an afternoon thundershower is not entirely out of the questions. Temperatures will likely range from around 60F at night to the mid-80s during the day. There may be significant variation in this range, so plan for layers, and some warm days!

Stick to the List: If you pack what is listed, you'll have what you need. Please don't stray far from these guidelines and read the notes for each item carefully. There is no room in the African wilderness for poor quality, or poorly maintained gear, so make sure everything you bring is ready for some tough use. As always, call if you have questions.

Clothing

- Sandals or breathable sneakers. *I find comfortable sport sandals with a heel strap are my choice for daily use on safari, but you may prefer a sneaker.*
- Hiking or other closed toe shoe or boot. *You will be required to wear closed-toed shoes around camp, after dark.*
- Light Socks (4-5 pair).
- Lightweight pants or long skirts (2-3 pair). *Think sun protection.*
- Shorts (2-3 pair).
- Short-sleeved shirts (3-4).
- Lightweight, long-sleeved shirts (2-3). *Again, think sun protection.*
- Underwear. *As needed.*
- Fleece sweater or light puffy jacket. *It can get cool at night.*
- Light Rain Shell (optional). *We won't be exposed to rain often, or for long, but a light water resistant, nylon shell may be useful*
- Brimmed hat. *A sun hat is VERY important.*
- Bandana
- Sunglasses. *At least one pair, maybe two if you are prone to losing things!*

Gear

- Day Pack or Camera Pack. *Something big enough to hold the camera equipment and other stuff you will want during the day, but not so big as to be cumbersome.*
- Waterproof rain cover for your pack. *Always a good idea.*
- Suitcase or dufflebag. *Something easy to hand-carry. Roller bags that are hard to carry by hand are not useable on the sandy ground around our camps.*

- Luggage lock. *Definitely use for international flights.*
- Binoculars. *Even photographers will want a pair!*
- Headlamp and spare batteries. *For navigating camp at night.*
- Water bottle.
- Small quick-dry towel or wash cloth. *Bath towels are provided.*
- Toiletries and personal medications. *Consider packing a second set of medications and leaving them with your travel partner or guide.*
- Insect repellent. *Pack in a ziplock bag in case it leaks during travel.*
- Sunscreen. *Lots and strong.*
- Umbrella (optional).
- Electric plug adapter(s). *Like THESE.*
- Small first aid kit. *Band-aids, Neosporin, painkillers, blister care, etc. There will be a fairly comprehensive first aid kit on hand, but having your own for minor issues is useful.*
- Field Guides (see reading list) and personal reading material.

Photography Equipment

Keep your photography equipment to the minimum you need. My typical setup includes the list below, and nothing more. Bear in mind you'll be carrying all this with us each day.

- 2 Camera bodies. *Or a body and backup point and shoot.*
- Wide angle zoom. *16-35 or similar.*
- Mid-range zoom. *24-70, or 24-105.*
- Mid-range telephoto. *70-200 or similar.*
- Long telephoto. *Examples: 100-400, 150-600, 500 or 600 prime.*
- Polarizers.
- Several spare batteries and charger.
- Memory cards. *Lots!*
- Tripod. *Optional but useful if you want to do some night photography.*
- Computer. *Optional.*

As always, if you have questions about this gear list or specific items you'd like to discuss, feel free to email me dave@david-w-shaw.com, or call 907-590-7023.