

General Booking Information



These notes should be read with the booking conditions. Please read them – if you do not, we cannot be responsible for any misapprehensions about your trip. Information contained on our website may change between publication and any booking. Please check with us for any possible changes prior to booking.

About Wild about Africa and its bonding

Wild about Africa is a trading name of *Discovery Worldwide Ltd*, which is a fully bonded operator. We are also members of ABTA (Y1608) – the *Association of British Travel Agents*. We are licensed by the *Civil Aviation Authority* (ATOL 5206) for holidays including flights, and also via ABTA's own bonding scheme for holidays which don't include flights. Thus the complete financial protection of your holiday is ensured.

We are part of the *Sunvil* family of companies which has operated holidays since 1970. Over the last decade, *Sunvil* has usually been rated within the 'Top Ten' UK operators in the *Guardian/Observer* newspaper 'Best Travel Companies Readers' Survey' (the largest such survey in UK). In the last eight years, the adventurous travellers of *Wanderlust Magazine* have twice voted our parent company, *Expert Africa*, as their favourite tour operator. We are the first operator to scoop top place in their survey twice, and the only operator ever to have scored a 100% satisfaction rating. Most recently, in 2012 *Expert Africa* won 'Best overall tour operator to sub-Saharan Africa' in the British Travel Awards. We remain owner-managed and fiercely independent.

Booking procedure

We will take time with you to plan a trip that will suit you and at a price that you are happy with. When you wish to proceed with the booking, we then ask you for a completed booking form, with a deposit. This is normally held on file, whilst we complete the reservations. Because of the time and expense of communicating with Africa, we cannot make overseas arrangements without a signed booking form. If anything on the planned itinerary is not available, then we will discuss the options with you. Normally, we can make an equally good plan. If you don't like what we suggest, then you can cancel without penalty. When all the reservations have been confirmed, your deposit is processed, and we will issue you with a confirmation invoice.

Changes after booking

We will usually confirm the price of your trip when you book. Once we have issued you with a confirmation invoice, we will absorb most price increases, including currency fluctuations (but not airline charges or government action). If a hotel/lodge/safari becomes unavailable after we have confirmed your itinerary, we will contact you immediately to make alternative arrangements. If we substitute this with a less expensive safari or lodge, we will

reimburse the difference. If this happens whilst you are abroad, then we will make every effort to facilitate the change for you. However, itinerary changes that you choose to make whilst abroad are not the responsibility of *Wild about Africa*, or its agents. Extra costs incurred in this way are your responsibility.

Payment, ticket dispatch and late bookings

The balance of your account is due 10 weeks before your departure. For late bookings we require the full amount to be paid immediately on confirmation. Tickets and a final information pack will be sent to the address on your invoice, 7 to 14 days before you leave. If this address changes, please advise us immediately.

Amendments

After a booking has been confirmed, any changes that you request are generally very costly. You may be liable for an amendment charge and/or cancellation charges from the safari operators. Camps or lodges involved. For alterations within eight weeks of departure, *Wild about Africa* have the right to treat this as a cancellation of the original holiday (attracting cancellation charges) and regard it as a new holiday booking. However, in practice, we will do all we can to help make arrangements that suit you, at the minimum possible cost.

Children and infants

We arrange many trips for families with children. Some of the trips in this brochure have minimum age limits so will not always suit your particular group. However, we are happy to suggest a private trip where necessary. In particular, remember that children are unpredictable, and this is dangerous in areas where there are animals. The risks in taking children abroad are entirely the responsibility of the adults accompanying them. *Wild about Africa*, and the lodges, camps, and hotels concerned, can accept no responsibility for any accident which befalls a child, unless caused by their own negligence.

Special requests

If you have any special requests or needs that are vital to the enjoyment of your trip, please let us know in writing on your booking form. Where you have requested rooms with particular views, single tents, meal requirements etc, we will pass this on to the airlines or our colleagues in Africa. We will then try our best to ensure that you get what you have requested and the hotels, lodges and safari operators will try hard to help. However, we cannot guarantee a request unless it is stated on your confirmation invoice using the word 'guarantee'.

Safety and theft

Theft is a problem in many countries, including the UK. It is becoming more common in Africa. In some of the cities, mugging is also on the increase. It is your responsibility to take sensible precautions. Never leave anything in the vehicle unless it is under constant supervision, as theft from cars is becoming much more common.

Most travel insurance policies generally exclude claims for thefts of items from unattended vehicles, unless in a locked boot (valuables are never covered). Check your policy document before you travel for precise exclusions. Similarly, most policies, including our own, stipulate exclusions and maximum limits on claims for stolen items. If you wish to take valuables overseas, then it is often easier to get cover for them under your house insurance than under any travel policy.

Wild environments

In taking a trip to Africa, you acknowledge that it involves risk. Many of our trips spend time in wild, uncontrolled environments. Wild animals present threats, things may drop from trees and even plants can sometimes pose risks to your safety and your health. All of these risks are your responsibility. We will do what's reasonable to inform you of the main risks and we'll often have you guided by expert local guides. You can minimize the risks by following the advice of your hosts and guides. In unfenced camps, always request a guide to escort you when walking around. Do not touch any plants, animals or insects, however harmless they seem; any could be hazardous.

Many safari lodges and operators will require you to sign a record of safety briefings that you have been given; some will also include a personal indemnity. Often this is done on arrival. We ask you to listen carefully and take heed of such briefings; if you cannot accept local rules made for your safety, then do not book a trip with us to Africa. That said, the contract for your holiday is between you and *Wild about Africa*, so nothing that you sign can absolve any lodge from its responsibilities.

Local representation and agents

We do not have agents or representatives in every village or park. We do, however, have agents or close contacts in every country which we deal with. Someone in your destination country will have a record of your arrival and departure information. All our agents will have a record of your trip, and can help you with any problems. Lodge/camp managers/guides will usually also provide help way beyond the call of duty – provided that you ask them.

If you have difficulties whilst on holiday, then contact us immediately. If you need to telephone us, then we will pay for

the telephone call. If that's not possible, then speak to your local contact/agent. If you only voice problems on your return, we are powerless to help. In a medical emergency you must also telephone your insurance emergency number. In a situation which is likely to result in a personal insurance claim, you should also alert your insurers.

Passports, visas and health

All passports, visas, health certificates, inoculations, prophylactics and international driving permits, etc. are the responsibility of the traveller. Passports should be valid for 6 months after you return and must have at least two clear pages for immigration stamps. At going to press, holders of British/American passports do not need visas for the countries included here, except Zimbabwe, Zambia and Tanzania. If you do not have a British/American passport, you must tell us when you book. If we are told later, then we cannot be held responsible for any trouble, delays or extra costs incurred. All children over 16 must have their own passports.

Safety standards and regulations

Safety standards and regulations overseas are often different to what you're used to. The monitoring, enforcement and compliance with these local regulations are matters for the authorities in that country. Similarly, liability requirements vary from country to country, as does the responsibility placed on an organisation by local law. Therefore take all precautions to

protect yourself and your party whilst in Africa. In particular, you should familiarise yourself with fire escape routes, and the regulations in any national parks that you visit. We recommend that you review the advice given by your foreign office or state department on any country that you are visiting, both just before you book and just before you travel, i.e. www.fco.gov.uk.

A few facts of life

We believe that the information contained on our website is correct at time of writing. You must read our descriptions carefully to avoid making the wrong decision in choice of destination. If you're unsure of anything, speak to us and ask our advice. Members of our team have extensive knowledge of all of the countries we visit.

Please bear in mind that it is impossible to qualify every statement made on our website. Arrangements in Africa are seldom 'set in stone'. If you visit, you must accept that things don't always work the way they would in your home country. If you want a totally predictable trip: do not go to Africa. The finer details of your itinerary will always depend on local circumstances, and you sometimes have to adapt your plans.

People in Africa have very different ways of life than we have in the UK, Europe and America. Their cultures demand your respect. We are sure that you will have a superb trip. But if you do experience niggles, then try to be patient and understanding. Gracefully accept that you cannot expect things in Africa to be the same as they are at home.



QUALITY CHARTER

AITO is the Association for independent and specialist holiday companies. Our member companies, usually owner-managed, strive to create overseas holidays with high levels of professionalism and a shared concern for quality and personal service. The Association encourages the highest standards in all aspects of tour operating.

Exclusive Membership

AITO sets criteria regarding ownership, finance and quality which must be satisfied before new companies are admitted to membership. All members are required to adhere to a Code of Business Practice which encourages high operational standards and conduct.

Financial Security

AITO members are required to protect money paid by customers to the member for any holiday sold under the AITO logo and to comply with UK Government Regulations in this respect. Members submit details of their bonding and guarantee arrangements to the Association on a regular basis.

Accurate Brochures and Websites

All members do their utmost to ensure that all their brochures and other publications, print or electronic, clearly and accurately describe the holidays and services offered.

Professional Service and Continual Improvements

All members are committed to high standards of service and believe in regular and thorough training of employees. Members continually seek to review and improve their holidays. They listen to their customers and always welcome suggestions for improving standards.

Monitoring Standards

AITO endeavours to monitor quality standards regularly. All customers should receive a post-holiday questionnaire the results of which are scrutinised by the Association.

Responsible Tourism

All members acknowledge the importance of AITO's Responsible Tourism guidelines, which recognise the social, economic and environmental responsibilities of tour operating. Those demonstrating their achievements beyond the pure acceptance of this principle are recognised by the award of 2 or 5 star status.

Customer Relations

All members endeavour to deal swiftly and fairly with any issues their customers may raise. In the unlikely event that a dispute between an AITO member and a customer cannot be settled amicably, AITO's low-cost Independent Dispute Settlement Service may be called upon by either side to bring the matter to a speedy and acceptable conclusion.

Wild about Africa is a member of the Association of Independent Tour Operators. To contact the Association visit www.aito.com or call 020 8744 9280.