



GILMAG SAFARIS TRAVEL, HEALTH AND SAFETY TIPS

VISA

Nearly all visitors to Tanzania need to obtain a visa. Requirements do change from time to time, so please check the Tanzanian Government website to keep up-to-date.

How much does it cost for a Tanzanian tourist Visa?

A single-entry tourist visa currently costs \$50 or \$100 for US Citizens.

How long does it take to get my Tanzanian tourist Visa?

It normally takes only 1(one) business day to process a Tanzanian Tourist Visa online. In certain cases, it can take up to 7 (seven) to receive the approved visa. Please apply as soon as you can, once you are absolutely sure of your travel dates.

How long can I stay in Tanzania on a tourist visa?

For a single-entry tourist visa, you can stay a maximum of 90 (ninety) days consecutively. If you apply for and are granted a multiple-entry visa, then this is valid for 1 (one) year. However, you must leave Tanzania at least once every 90 days and then re-enter the country.

Can I obtain a visa on arrival in Tanzania?

Obtaining a visa on arrival in Tanzania is still possible, but the process can result in lengthy delays because of the requirement to wait at the immigration checkpoint while the application is processed. Anyone choosing this option should be aware that the visa fee must be paid for in cash, specifically in \$USD. No other currency is accepted. Online application is preferable – see below.

How do I apply online for my Tanzanian visa?

To apply online for a visa to enter either the Tanzanian mainland or Zanzibar, you need to complete an online form.

Getting to Tanzania

Below are the routes we recommend for getting to Tanzania from various parts of the world. There are of course other routes available, not necessarily recommended by Gilmag Safaris, but do contact us should you require further assistance. Bear in mind that airline schedules change frequently, so do check carefully before making travel arrangements that depend on airline arrival and departure times.

How to get to Tanzania from the USA

Delta Airlines, through its partner KLM, operate direct daily flights from Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport (AMS) to Kilimanjaro International Airport (JRO). Schiphol is a major international hub with services to and from several cities in the USA, Europe and elsewhere. Civilized departure times from Amsterdam (currently 10.00hrs local time) and arrival times in Kilimanjaro (currently 20.30hrs, local time) are a big advantage, as is the airline's reputation for being professional, efficient and for taking good care of passengers' luggage. Lost and delayed baggage is thankfully rare with KLM.

How to get to Tanzania from Europe

Dutch airline KLM operates direct daily flights from Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport (AMS) to Kilimanjaro International Airport. Schiphol is a major international hub with services to and from many European cities, as well as several cities in the USA and elsewhere. Civilized departure times from Amsterdam (currently 10.00hrs local time) and arrival times in Kilimanjaro (currently 20.30hrs, local time) are a big advantage, as is the airline's reputation for being professional, efficient and for taking good care of passengers' luggage. Lost and delayed baggage is thankfully rare with KLM.

How to get to Tanzania from Asia

Qatar Airways flies from many Asian airports to its hub in Doha's Hamad International Airport (DIA) and from there to Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (NBO), Nairobi, in Kenya. From Nairobi, you then take a flight with Precision Air to Kilimanjaro International Airport (JRO). This flight departs Nairobi around 08:20hrs (local time) every day and arrives at Kilimanjaro International Airport around 09:20hrs (local time) on the same day.

The disadvantage with this option is that the layover time can be quite lengthy. On arrival from Doha at Nairobi's Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (NBO), you currently have an 8 hour wait for your Precision Air flight to take you to Kilimanjaro International Airport (JRO).

How to get to Tanzania from Australia?

You can book an Emirates Airways to fly from major cities in Australia to Dubai, from where you can connect to Nairobi (Jomo Kenyatta International Airport). From Nairobi you can take the Precision Air flight from Nairobi to Kilimanjaro International Airport (JRO). This flight departs Nairobi around 08:20hrs (local time) daily and arrives at Kilimanjaro International Airport (JRO) around 09:20hrs (local time).

Please note that with flights from Australia with Emirates there may be long layovers at Dubai or Nairobi, or sometimes very short connection times at Nairobi which means you may not be able to make the same day flight with Precision Air to Kilimanjaro: this would then mean an overnight in Nairobi and rebooking your flight to Kilimanjaro the following day.

How many international airports are there in Tanzania?

Tanzania has three international airports served by various airlines, including European ones. This makes Tanzania a very accessible country from many parts of the world. Choosing which Tanzanian airport is best suited for your arrival will depend on where you are coming from, which part or parts of Tanzania you are visiting and which type of tourism you are engaging in (safari, Kilimanjaro climb, Zanzibar beach holiday). Below are brief details of the three International Tanzanian Airports.

Julius Nyerere International Airport, Dar es Salaam (DAR))

Serving Tanzania's biggest city and named after Tanzania's first president, this is the biggest airport in Tanzania and actually one of the largest in East Africa. More than 2.5 million passengers pass through here every year and for tourists, this is best suited to those who wish to visit Tanzania's Southern Safari Circuit. That circuit includes parks such as Nyerere National Park (Formally Known as Selous Game Reserve), Udzungwa Mountains National Park, Ruaha and Mikumi National Park.

Kilimanjaro International Airport (JRO)

Sharing its name with Africa's highest mountain, Kilimanjaro International Airport is very popular with visitors to Tanzania's Northern Circuit of National Parks – iconic parks such as Serengeti, Arusha, Tarangire, Lake Manyara, as well as Lake Natron, Lake Eyasi and the famous Ngorongoro Conservation Area. It is also the most convenient airport for climbers tackling the mountain itself. The airport is served by international airlines such as KLM, Ethiopian Airlines, and Qatar Airways.

Zanzibar Abeid Amani Karume Airport (ZNZ)

For those visiting Tanzania for a beach holiday in the Zanzibar archipelago, the Abeid Amani Karume airport is the gateway airport for international visitors. It is situated just to the south of the main island's principal town, Stone Town, and within a short distance from the beautiful beaches which attract an increasing number of visitors. For those combining a safari holiday with some beach time, there are flights from the Tanzanian mainland.

Do international flights fly to Arusha airport?

Arusha Airport is located around 10km from the busy city of Arusha, but only handles domestic flights. These are mainly to Dar es Salaam, Zanzibar, although the airport also handles charter flights to some of the country's national parks.

Why do I have to check in for my flight 3 hours in advance?

For international flights, Gilmag Safaris strongly recommends that you arrive at the airport at least 3 hours before your scheduled departure. This allows for any delays. Remember also that some destinations require you to complete and submit certain documentation in advance of your flight. It is

your responsibility to comply with any regulations for your destination and to complete and submit any documentation required. We suggest that you should bring a copy of any documentation to the airport.

Should I check in online, or at the airport?

Gilmag Safaris recommends that, wherever possible, you should check in advance, online. This avoids the possibility of potential delays at the departure airport.

What is my baggage allowance?

As baggage allowances and restrictions vary by airline and are subject to alteration, we suggest that you contact your airline or check their website to get the latest information relevant to your flight.

Domestic flights in Tanzania

To avoid some of the long road journeys by safari vehicle, some of our visitors prefer to take internal flights to visit national parks. These flights are at an extra cost. The information below is given to provide an idea of the internal flights currently available but is subject to change.

Arusha to central Serengeti (Seronera Airstrip)

Flights depart from Arusha Airport at 08:00hrs, and arrives Seronera Airstrip at 09:30hrs, via Manyara Airstrip.

Flights depart from Arusha Airport at 10:00hrs, and arrives Seronera Airstrip at 12:30hrs, via Manyara Airstrip and Kilimanjaro International Airport.

Arusha to northern Serengeti (Kogatende Airstrip)

Flights depart Arusha Airport at 08:00hrs, and arrives Seronera Airstrip at 10:00hrs, via Manyara Airstrip.

Flights depart Arusha Airport at 10:00hrs, and arrives Seronera Airstrip at 13:00hrs, via Kilimanjaro International Airport and Manyara Airstrip.

Arusha to western Serengeti (Grumeti airstrip)

Flights depart Arusha Airport at 08:00am, and arrives Seronera Airstrip at 10:00am, via Manyara Airstrip.

Flights depart Arusha Airport at 10:00am, and arrives Seronera Airstrip at 13:00pm, via Kilimanjaro International Airport and Manyara Airstrip.

Central Serengeti (Seronera airstrip) to Arusha

Flights depart Arusha Airport at 10:15hrs, and arrives Seronera Airstrip at 12:20hrs, via Manyara Airstrip.

Flights depart Arusha Airport at 13:45hrs, and arrives Seronera Airstrip at 17:30hrs, via Manyara Airstrip and Kilimanjaro International Airport.

Central Serengeti (Seronera airstrip) to Zanzibar

Flights depart Arusha Airport at 10:15hrs, and arrives Seronera Airstrip at 14:20hrs, via Manyara Airstrip and Arusha Airport.

Northern Serengeti (Kogatende airstrip) to Arusha

Flights depart Arusha Airport at 10:15hrs, and arrives Seronera Airstrip at 12:20hrs, via Manyara Airstrip and continue to Zanzibar.

Flights depart Arusha Airport at 13:45hrs, and arrives Seronera Airstrip at 17:30hrs, via Manyara Airstrip and Kilimanjaro International Airport.

Flight from northern Serengeti (Kogatende airstrip) to Zanzibar

Flights depart Arusha Airport at 10:15hrs, and arrives Seronera Airstrip at 14:20hrs, via Manyara Airstrip and Arusha Airport.

Flight from Arusha to Zanzibar

For flights from Arusha to Zanzibar, we recommend booking with either Precision Air or Auric Air.

Precision Air offers two flights daily to Zanzibar, the first one departing from Kilimanjaro International Airport at 10:10hrs, arriving at 11:30hrs and the second flight departing from Arusha Airport at 15:15hrs and arriving in Zanzibar at 16:35hrs

Auric Air offers one flight daily, departing from Arusha Airport at 12:45hrs, arriving in Zanzibar at 13:50hrs

How much luggage can I carry on Tanzanian domestic flights?

Our best advice is to carry as little luggage as is possible. For guidance, you should bring a small soft-sided bag with a maximum weight of 6kg and a main bag of no more than 15-20kg. You should avoid hard-shell bags or suitcases as these can be difficult to store.

As many of our visitors combine a safari holiday or Kilimanjaro climb with some beach time on Zanzibar, we can usually make arrangements for you to store any excess luggage at your arrival/departure hotel. It can then be collected when required for the next stage of your trip. Note this is only possible if your departure point from Tanzania is the same as your arrival point.

Money

Please read our advice on money carefully. If you have any additional questions, do feel free to ask when you are making your booking.

What is the currency in Tanzania?

The Tanzania Shilling is the country's official currency.

Which other currencies are acceptable in Tanzania?

Although Tanzania has its own currency, US Dollars are also widely accepted, and these are often more welcome than the Tanzanian Shilling. Note: dollar banknotes dated 2009 or before will not be accepted. Euros are also accepted in some places but are not as popular as US Dollars.

Can I use travelers' cheques in Tanzania?

As is the case in many places in the world, travelers' cheques are no longer acceptable in Tanzania. Please do not bring them! You should rely on a combination of credit cards and cash during your trip.

Is it possible to change money in Tanzania?

As long as you have your passport with you for identification, you will be able to change money at reasonable exchange rates in official Foreign Exchange offices in Tanzania. You should never change money in the streets, as moneychangers working on the streets are not reliable.

Will my credit card be accepted in Tanzania?

Visa cards are widely accepted for purchases and ATM withdrawals in Tanzania; Mastercard is also accepted, though not quite as widely. Some places – but not all – accept American Express, which can also be used in some ATMs.

Are there ATMs in the remote areas of Tanzania?

It is better to withdraw sufficient cash from ATMs or use the Foreign Exchange offices when you are in the city or at airport, as ATMs are few and far between in rural areas. It is always good to have some cash with you at all times.

Will there be additional charges if I pay by credit card?

Where credit cards are accepted by hotels, restaurants and shops, additional charges of between 3 and 5 per cent are normally levied by way of surcharge. Please ask the vendor before making the transaction if these charges will be applied, as this will avoid any nasty shocks when you receive your credit card statement.

What is a good souvenir to bring home from Tanzania?

Many visitors want to bring home something to remind them of their time spent in Tanzania. A good authentic souvenir would be a wooden carving, with traditional masks and tribes people figurines being the most popular items. Do make sure that what you are buying is genuinely Tanzanian, as woodcarvings from other African countries are also offered for sale. Other popular souvenirs are the colourful, traditional Maasai blankets. You may not want to actually wear these once you are back home, but these versatile, tartan-patterned garments also make excellent tablecloths, throws or picnic blankets. Some people do indeed wear them as shawls. Other popular purchases in Tanzania are soapstone sculptures, available in many outlets.

A particular specialty of our land is Tanzanite, which is a precious blue gemstone unique to the country with which it shares its name. This beautiful item is not inexpensive, so you should do some careful research before you buy, and even better try to use the knowledge and expertise of a guide you can trust. You want to make sure that what you buy is genuine.

Artwork is another popular gift or souvenir, particularly tinga-tinga, which genuinely originates in Tanzania and takes its name after its creator, Edward Tingatinga. It is charmingly simplistic, full of bright colours and often depicts wildlife or other African themes, making it the perfect souvenir.

Is haggling/bargaining acceptable practice in Tanzania?

For some visitors, agreeing a price for something they want to buy in Tanzania can be a difficult experience. Bargaining in Tanzania is the custom, and we understand that in your home country it most probably is not! Any visitor wanting to buy something here will be quoted a higher price than will be given to a local. You may feel that you are being 'ripped off' but consider the initial quoted price to be an opening offer. Just make a counteroffer (much lower, obviously!) which will almost certainly be rejected. This process of offer/counteroffer can go on for some time, but remember that the person selling the item has to feed his family, remember to keep a smile on your face, try to keep the conversation good-natured and remember that you can always walk away – still smiling – if you can't reach agreement. Sometimes walking away can produce a further reduction in the price!

Is it the custom to give tips/gratuities in Tanzania?

Getting to know and understand local customs is not only interesting, it is also a way of avoiding awkward and embarrassing situations when you are in another culture. Here we look at tipping, which is an integral part of life and business in Tanzania. Knowing who to tip on your trip is important, as many people are involved in a successful Tanzanian adventure.

Tipping your driver guide

If you read the reviews given by previous visitors, you will quickly realize how important a good driver-guide is to an unforgettable safari. Driver, guide, entertainer and walking encyclopedia: this guy performs all of these roles and goes out of his way, above and beyond; to give you the best Tanzanian experience you could ever wish for. If you are happy with his services, then you should make a point of tipping him separately and generously: tips are an expected part of his remuneration package.

Tipping your mountain guide/porters/mountain chef and support staff

Those who climb Kilimanjaro will be blown away by the beauty of the mountain and the feeling of sheer exhilaration at reaching the summit. But as well as congratulating yourself, you will also want to make sure that the incredible mountain crew who helped get you there are rewarded, too. Part of the trip, towards the end, is the so-called 'Tipping Ceremony,' about which we provide full details to all those climbers taking the trip. The mountain crews certainly earn their tips, we are sure you will agree.

Tipping a safari chef

Those who choose a camping safari are often delighted by the quality of the food they receive out in the wilderness. After a hard day's safari, you will expect a great meal, and the Safari Chef who works hard to satisfy you should be tipped separately.

Tipping the staff at your hotels or lodges

Most of our Gilmag Safaris visitors are delighted and surprised by the high-quality experience they encounter at their accommodations. Service levels are a particular positive! Just consider the amount of

work that goes in to making your time memorable. If you wish to make sure that everyone involved is properly rewarded – including those behind the scenes, such as chefs etc – then look out for ‘staff tip box’ which can often be found in the accommodation’s reception area. This system ensures that any tips are equally divided between staff members.

When to tip on a Tanzania safari

Knowing when to tip is also important. For accommodations, tipping at the end of your stay is the best policy, as by then you will know if you have enjoyed good service! And you don’t want to be constantly thinking about who to tip, and when, throughout your stay. For the safari driver-guides, Gilmag Safaris suggests that you tip at the end of the trip, when the driver-guide drops you off at the airport and you say goodbye.

How should I tip?

We at Gilmag Safaris understand that the very act of tipping can be a little awkward for any visitor who comes from a culture where tipping is not an everyday activity. So, here’s some advice. We strongly recommend that you tip in cash, which can be in Tanzanian Shillings, although if you can tip in US dollars, then that is even better.

One good bit of advice for anyone who gets a bit embarrassed by tipping is to bring some small, sealable envelopes with you. When you’re ready to tip someone, you can personalize your offering by writing the recipient’s name on the envelope and put the tip inside. This can avoid any awkwardness.

How much should I tip?

Another potentially difficult subject is, of course, how much to tip. We at Gilmag Safaris offer some suggested amounts below, based on our years of experience, while recognizing that the amount is a matter of personal choice. Of course, the amounts we suggest assume that you are satisfied with the service you have received!

Private safari or group safari

Driver-guide: \$25 US per day / per couple (or per individual, if travelling solo) Airport Transfer Guide: \$20 US per Transfer / per couple (or per individual, if travelling solo)

Private or group mountain climb (for Kilimanjaro, mount Meru or other)

Mountain Guide: \$25 per day / per group

Mountain Chef: \$15 per day / per chef / per group

Mountain Porter: \$8 per day / per porter / per group

Summit Porter: \$15 per day / per summit porter / per group

Transfer Driver: \$20 per transfer / per group

Hotel staff

Tip Box: \$20 per stay / per couple (or per individual, if travelling solo)

How to pack

Packing is always a balance between bringing as little as possible and not forgetting anything vital.

What clothing do I need for my trip to Tanzania?

The clothing you need depends entirely on whether you are going on a safari trip, climbing a mountain or relaxing on a beach in Zanzibar. Of course, you might be doing more than one of these activities. Gilmag Safaris' destination experts have put together separate packing lists for each of these adventures and you can access these detailed lists here:

- Safari Packaging List
- Mount Kilimanjaro Packing List
- Zanzibar Packaging List

Which is better for my Tanzanian trip – backpack or suitcase?

Actually, a good-quality duffel bag is better than either, for your main bag! Hard-shell suitcases are not suitable for Tanzania, simply because your luggage will need to 'squash down' in your safari vehicle and also in any of the small planes used for internal flights taken in Tanzania. Note the baggage allowance for domestic flights (usually 20 kg per person for your checked-in luggage, 6 kg per person for hand baggage) is less than is allowed for your international airline. So pack wisely and don't bring more than the domestic flight limit. A small backpack is best for your hand luggage/cabin bag, as this can also be used as your daypack when out on safari (see below).

What sort of daypack should I use for my safari?

A small backpack is best for when you are walking, especially if you are on a walking safari. It needs to be just big enough to carry your camera or phone, a water bottle, sunscreen and insect repellent. The less you can carry, the better – keep the weight to a minimum, as it puts less strain on your back, knees etc.

What size bag should I take on a safari trip?

If an internal flight is full, then bags need to be squeezed in- hence the need for soft bags, not hard-shell. Weight restrictions, rather than size restrictions, are applied but as a rough guide the dimensions of your luggage should not exceed 62cm x 30cm (24 x 12 inches).

What is the luggage allowance on Tanzanian domestic flights?

Please note that both Precision Air and Auric Air impose a maximum weight allowance of 20kg (44lbs) per person including hand luggage. Luggage must be of the soft bag (i.e. duffel bag) type and its maximum dimensions should not exceed 24 inches (60cm) x 18 inches (45cm) x 13 inches (33cm).

What sort of plugs do I need in Tanzania and what is the standard voltage?

Standard voltage in Tanzania is 230 – 240 volts. Electrical sockets usually require the 3 square-pin variety, as used in the United Kingdom. Easy Travel recommends that you should bring a universal travel adaptor. You will need a voltage converter and plug adaptor in order to use U.S. appliances.

Is Wi-Fi widely available in Tanzania?

There is Wi-Fi available in all of Tanzania's main cities, although connections are often slower and can be less secure than you might experience in your home country. Once you are in the National Parks you really are out in the wilderness and there is very rarely a Wi-Fi connection. Remember that you are here to immerse yourself in nature, so disconnect and relax!

Am I allowed to bring plastic bags into Tanzania?

No! Tanzania is at the forefront of the global movement against single-use plastic bags and since June 2019, plastic bags are no longer allowed in the country. As a result of the ban, visitors to Tanzania must avoid carrying or using plastic carrier bags in their luggage. One exception is that currently plastic 'Ziplock' bags (i.e. those specifically used to carry toiletries or medicines) will be permitted. It is expected that those types of bags will remain in the permanent possession of visitors and will not be disposed of in-country.

What travel documents are required?

- Passport
- Tourist Visa. (You can buy this at the airport when you arrive, though it is better to buy it online in advance)
- Travel vaccination certificates.
- COVID-19 Vaccination certificate, or COVID-19 passport
- Travel Insurance (policy number and emergency numbers)
- Medical Insurance (policy number and emergency numbers)
- Flight tickets
- Trip itinerary with Gilmag Safaris contact details
- Photocopies of important documents, or keep images of these on your phone

- Spare passport photos
- International driving license (if you plan to hire a car)
- Cash (\$ US are preferred and do make sure any notes aren't older than 2009. Euros are the next best currency to bring)
- Credit card (Visa, Mastercard, American Express. Note that American Express is not accepted everywhere)
- Money belt or secure pouch

Local law and customs

Getting to know the local laws of Tanzania before you visit can stop you from getting yourself into trouble. Below we look at some laws that might be different from those in your own country.

LGBTI in Tanzania

Visitors should be aware that the law in Tanzania strictly prohibits same-sex activity, and any contravention can lead to imprisonment for up to 30 years.

Drugs

Tanzania does not tolerate the use of illegal drugs, with severe penalties – including long prison sentences – for offenders.

Cybercrime

Use social media carefully while in Tanzania, to avoid flouting cybercrime laws.

Photography

Please note that it is illegal to photograph personnel, such as the military or the police.

Things for women to avoid wearing in Tanzania

Women visiting Tanzania should avoid wearing very short skirts or shorts and strappy tops when outside tourist resorts. Such dress can cause offence and be misconstrued. The best advice is to wear trousers or a skirt that is knee-length or longer. Upper garments should cover the shoulders. Note that standards of dress and behavior in predominately Muslim Zanzibar are even more conservative.

Things for men to avoid wearing in Zanzibar

Apart from when on the beach, men should not wander around topless. Zanzibar is a conservative, Muslim society and men should keep their shoulders covered when in Stone Town or in the rural villages.

Health

Taking care of your health and wellbeing when traveling abroad is very important. Well before your departure date, it is vital to consult your doctor or medical adviser for up-to-date medical travel information and to ensure that you have had the correct vaccinations to allow you to travel to Tanzania. You should also consult them about anti-malarial measures, as it is common for any course of anti-malarial drugs to start before your departure date. We would recommend consulting your doctor at least three months in advance of departure.

Travel insurance

Do I need travel insurance to visit Tanzania?

The answer is 'yes, absolutely.' You should study the terms of the policy before you take it out, to ensure that it meets your individual needs, but we at Gilmag Safaris would suggest that you take out travel insurance when you make your booking or very shortly after. Some companies will only offer cancellation cover if a policy is purchased shortly after booking. Make sure that you have cancellation cover, in case you are unable to travel due to illness or unforeseen event such as accident.

Which travel insurance should I choose?

We recommend that all visitors carefully check the extent of a policy's cover before purchasing it.

What should my travel insurance policy cover?

You should ensure that you get the maximum coverage possible, and if you are proposing to do any high-altitude trekking (such as climbing Kilimanjaro) or any other activity (such as a hot-air balloon safari) then you should make sure that these are specifically covered by your policy.

In general, you should make sure that as a minimum you are covered against the following risks: medical expenses, including repatriation to your home country, if required; personal injury, loss or damage to personal possessions, cover against injury or damage caused by you to 3rd parties, flight and trip cancellation, cancellation by you, cancellation caused by natural disaster or cancellation for any other reason.

How much will my travel insurance cost?

The cost of travel insurance varies according to your age, state of health (such as pre-existing conditions), countries to be visited, level of cover required and other factors. Rather than take out single-trip cover, some travelers take out an annual or multi-trip policy. If you already have or are taking out such a policy, you need to make sure that it is sufficiently comprehensive to cover your proposed trip to Tanzania.

Why is health insurance necessary for my trip to Tanzania?

Your travel insurance has to cover against poor health or injury to ensure that you can get the necessary treatment while in Tanzania. The cost of such treatment can be very high. It is also worth checking that your policy will cover the cost of repatriation to your home country, if it is deemed necessary.

Does my health insurance cover me worldwide?

Some policies will cover you worldwide, while others will limit their cover to certain geographical areas while excluding others unless an extra premium is paid. Do check your policy carefully!

Will my insurance policy cover me for climbing Mount Kilimanjaro?

Most policies will only cover you for climbing to altitudes of up to 4,500 meters, but as Mount Kilimanjaro summit is 5,895 meters you will need to purchase specialist insurance cover which includes altitudes up to 6000 meters and which offers helicopter evacuation.

Should I consult my doctor before visiting Tanzania?

We advise all our prospective visitors to consult with their doctor around 3 months before their Tanzanian trip. You should discuss with them the nature of your trip; any strenuous activities you intend to undertake and determine any vaccinations that you will need. You can also take the opportunity to discuss which anti-malarial drugs might be appropriate for your trip.

Will I need to take anti-malarial drugs to visit Tanzania?

Yes, Tanzania is a malaria zone, and some areas are prone to mosquitoes and the malaria that they carry. There are different drugs available to combat malaria, and your doctor (or travel clinic) can advise which might be most suitable.

Can I get hold of all medicines in Tanzania?

You should bring any prescription medications with you from home, as availability can be limited in Tanzania. You should also be aware that not all medicines/drugs are actually legal in Tanzania, even though they may be permissible in your home country. You should check if any prescription drugs you intend to bring are authorized for use in Tanzania and we would advise that you bring a copy of your prescription or even a letter from your doctor outlining the nature of the medicine, how much you'll take and stating that it's strictly for personal use.

Are there good medical facilities everywhere in Tanzania?

Tanzania offers fairly limited medical facilities in its principal cities. These are listed below:

Arusha

- Aga Khan Hospital
- AICC Hospital
- NSK Hospital
- Total Care Medical Centre
- Selian Lutheran Hospital

Dar es Salaam

- Aga Khan Hospital
- Ebrahim Haji Ithnasheri Asheri Charitable Hospital
- Oysterbay Hospital
- TMJ Hospital Limited

Kilimanjaro

- Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Centre
- Jaffery Charitable Medical Services

Please note that if you become seriously ill or are involved in an accident, it may be necessary to evacuate you by air to neighboring Kenya. Such an evacuation is a very expensive operation.

Can I safely drink the tap water while in Tanzania?

You may see locals drinking tap water while in Tanzania, but we do not recommend that visitors copy them. Bottled water is freely available and Gilmag Safaris recommends all visitors to drink only this and any water designated as 'safe' by your hotel or lodge.

Locals are fully adapted to Tanzanian tap water, but its different composition -containing minerals which may not be present in the water of your home country – means you should avoid drinking it. Visitors drinking Tanzanian tap water may fall ill and while this is usually limited to a bad stomach, it can confine you to your accommodation and spoil a few days of your Tanzanian vacation.

Don't let this prevent you from drinking water when in Tanzania! Gilmag Safaris recommend that you drink at least two litres of water while you're here. Keeping well-hydrated in the Tanzanian climate is absolutely crucial.

Will I be at risk of getting diarrhea during my Tanzanian trip?

A visit abroad puts you at an increased risk of getting diarrhea; there is no point in denying it. Gilmag Safaris advises you to include appropriate medicines to combat this in your first-aid kit.

Will I be at risk from tsetse flies in Tanzania?

Yes, the tsetse fly can be found throughout Tanzania's Northern Circuit, the most popular part of Tanzania for visitors. Certain areas are particularly popular with the tsetse (as well as with visitors). These are the forested parts of Serengeti National Park, Tarangire National Park and Lake Manyara National Park.

What dangers are posed by a tsetse fly?

Potentially, a tsetse fly bite is extremely dangerous. Its bite can result in symptoms such as an unpleasant fever, fatigue, swelling to the lymphnodes, headache, fatigue and aching joints and muscles. A severe rash on the skin is also a possibility. Tsetse flies can also carry a very dangerous parasite which can cause something called "human African trypanosomiasis" (or "sleeping sickness." Sadly, this can often be fatal without the correct treatment.

How can I protect myself against the tsetse fly?

While there is no way of completely protecting yourself against the tsetse fly, there are nevertheless several things you can do to try and avoid being bitten by the tsetse fly and other annoying insects while in Tanzania. Your choice of clothing is important: choose long-sleeved shirts to cover your arms and long trousers (pants) to protect your legs. Even the colour of what you wear can play a part, as dark and bright colours are favoured by the tsetse fly. Instead, go for beige, olive-coloured or white clothes to minimize the risk of getting bitten. And although no insect repellent is guaranteed to be 100% effective,

we at Gilmag Safaris recommend visitors to bring insect repellent with them and use it. Keeping out of bushes and other wooded areas is another useful tip.

Vaccinations necessary to visit Tanzania

What vaccines must I have to visit Tanzania?

You must have had appropriate vaccines against Covid-19 to be allowed to enter Tanzania. If not vaccinated, then you need to present a negative PCR Certificated taken not more than 72 hours before arrival. You should keep up-to-date with the rules in force, as these change from time to time.

Will I need to show a yellow fever certificate when I arrive in Tanzania?

If you arrive from a country designated as being at risk of yellow fever then you will have to be able to demonstrate that you have been vaccinated against the disease. This is a requirement of the Government of Tanzania. You will also require proof of yellow fever vaccination if, during your journey, you have a layover longer than 12 hours in a country with a known yellow fever risk. (This might occur if you are changing planes, for example).

Apart from any mandatory vaccines (see above), what other vaccines are recommended for my trip to Tanzania?

Unless you require the yellow fever vaccine, all other vaccines are recommended rather than mandatory. We at Gilmag Safaris recommend that you consult your physician, medical advisor or travel clinic and ensure you are up-to-date with these. We recommend vaccination against Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, Rabies and Typhoid.

Is it possible to travel to Tanzania without a yellow fever vaccine?

Remember that proof of this vaccine is only required if you arrive from a country designated as being at risk of yellow fever, or during your journey, you have a layover longer than 12 hours in a country with a known yellow fever risk. If either of these apply to you, but for any reason you are not able to take the yellow fever vaccine then you will need to contact your doctor to provide you with an official letter

which explains why you are not able to have this vaccine. You will be required to show this letter to the authorities on arrival at the arrival airport or at the Tanzanian border.

Are there any exemptions from the requirement for a yellow fever vaccine certificate?

There is no requirement for infants (less than 6 months old) to be vaccinated against yellow fever. Additionally, anyone who suffers from an allergic reaction to the vaccine is not required to be vaccinated. However, anyone claiming exemption from the vaccine requirement must obtain an official letter of exemption to present to the authorities on arrival in Tanzania.

How much does it cost to have a yellow fever vaccination in Tanzania?

If a vaccination against yellow fever is required while in Tanzania, this costs \$50 USD for foreigners and 30,000 Tsh for Tanzanian residents and citizens of the East Africa Community. An official receipt is issued for payment of any vaccination charges.

Should I have a vaccination against rabies before my trip to Tanzania?

While a rabies vaccination is not mandatory for a trip to Tanzania, it is certainly advisable if your proposed itinerary is likely to bring you into close contact with dogs or wildlife. Please note that rabid dogs are quite commonly found in Tanzania, particularly in rural areas. You should also be aware that in the more remote areas, medical treatment may not be readily to hand. As a bite or scratch could prove fatal, Gilmag Safaris advises all visitors to ensure that they have an up-to-date vaccine against rabies.

Which visitors are most likely to encounter rabid dogs or other wildlife?

Anyone who is likely to come into contact with dogs or wildlife is at risk of being bitten or scratched and therefore at risk of getting rabies. Such visitors include those camping, those spending time outside of their safari vehicle and indeed any visitor to the more rural areas of Tanzania.

Should children be vaccinated against rabies before travelling to Tanzania?

Children are as likely, if not more likely, to be bitten or scratched by a rabid dog or other creature. Gilmag Safaris advises all children travelling to Tanzania to be vaccinated against rabies.

Country safety

Will I be safe in Tanzania?

Tanzania is a relatively safe country and visits are generally trouble-free. Most experts would consider Tanzania to be one of the safest destinations in Africa. But crime can happen anywhere in the world and there are always things that a visitor can do to help keep themselves safe during their trip. First of all, do not carry around large amounts of cash or valuables when you are out and about. There is no point in bringing an expensive diamond necklace or watch to Tanzania, but if you must, leave it in your hotel safe and get a receipt for it. Take a good look around before using an ATM: even better, make sure you have a companion with you when doing so. Do not wander around in unfamiliar parts of the cities, and don't walk around after dark. Avoid very crowded areas where pickpockets might operate.

If in doubt, take local advice from your guide or hotel staff as to where it is safe to walk. Trustworthy local knowledge is always the best.

Is it safe to travel to Tanzania?

Gilmag Safaris is a local company with years of experience and as Tanzanians we know our country very well. You should be assured that you will be picked up by one of our trusted driver guides when you arrive at the airport and looked after until you leave at the end of your trip. Gilmag Safaris will make sure that you have an adventure – that's what you are here for – but it will be a safe adventure. Whether you are here for a safari, a Kilimanjaro climb or a beach holiday in Zanzibar, our staff are here to take care of you. All of our trips are tried and tested, and our visitors always feel safe. If you have any concerns, please do ask our team members when you are making your booking..

What is it like to travel to and around Tanzania during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Like most responsible governments worldwide, Tanzania has developed a comprehensive set of Standard Operating Procedures in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic. Gilmag Safaris staff are all fully trained in the preventative measures required to minimize risks.

Safety on game drives

Our Gilmag Safaris game drives are carefully designed to give you the best Tanzanian adventure possible. And the safest adventure possible: to ensure your safety, we transport you in our fantastic Land Cruisers, which we maintain rigorously in our own workshops. And with great, safe, reliable vehicles, we also have great, safe, reliable driver-guides to drive them. These experienced guys stick to the National Park rules, which are designed to keep both visitors and the wonderful wildlife safe. Below you will find some of the guidance that you should follow, or be aware of, to keep you safe and protect the environment:

Take your safari with a reliable, professional and socially responsible operator

Budget safari operators cut corners, often at the expense of safety and the protection of the environment, so choose a well-respected operator with good reviews.

Stick to the National Park rules

If you have chosen a reliable, trusted safari operator, then they will comply with the National Park rules, designed for the safety of visitors and the wildlife. And as a visitor, you should listen and follow the advice of your driver-guide and the park rangers and wardens. Note that driving in the parks is allowed between 6am and 6pm only, unless permission has been given for a night game drive, for example

Make sure your driver sticks to the speed limits inside the National Parks

It can be tempting to want to go faster, when on the trail of a rare wildlife species. But the roads are rough and the 50km per hour speed limit in the parks is there for a good reason. That reason is – once again – the safety of you and the precious animals. Do not put pressure on your driver-guide to exceed the speed limit!

Make sure your driver guide sticks to the properly authorized roads

Deviating from the designated tracks is not allowed and a responsible driver-guide knows this. Encouraging driver-guides to leave the roads is irresponsible as it frightens the wildlife.

Wild animals are potentially dangerous! Y

our driver-guides and the National Park staff will advise you of the rare occasions when you can leave the safari vehicle. On such occasions, you must obey their advice as to how close you can approach the animals.

Smoking while on game drives is not permitted

In designated areas, where smoking is allowed, you must dispose of any cigarette ends very carefully as these can otherwise cause fires with potentially disastrous consequences for both people and the wildlife, as well as catastrophic damage to the environment.

Never leave the safety of your safari vehicle while on game drives

It is strictly prohibited to leave the safari vehicle within 200 meters of any wild animal. Your driver-guide will guide you as to when you can leave the vehicle and he must be strictly obeyed. (If you are on a walking safari, then you will be accompanied by a Park Ranger whose instructions must be followed at all times for your own safety).

Never encourage your driver-guide to get too close to the wildlife

Strict rules apply as to how close vehicles can get to the wildlife (no closer than 25 meters). Breaking these rules can result in a driver-guide losing his job. Bring a good zoom lens, on your phone or camera, to get those close-up pictures, as getting too close to the animals can scare them away from a hard-earned meal. Sometimes, of course, animals such as big cats will come very close to your vehicle of their own free will – enjoy those precious moments!

Wildlife safety

A number of other simple, common-sense rules are in place to protect you, our wildlife and the vegetation on which it depends. Please respect these rules, to keep everyone safe and to preserve the precious wildlife and its habitat.

Comply with the local rules

Always observe animals from the safe, legal distance. And remember that these rules apply also to birds and – if visiting the coast or Zanzibar – to marine animals as well.

Never swim in Tanzania's lakes and rivers

It may be very hot but resist any temptation to cool off in any nearby water. Crocodiles and hippopotamus are among the wildlife that could attack. The waters also conceal many waterborne diseases.

The Wildlife 'Right of Way'

When it comes down to it between humans, vehicles, and wildlife...it's always the wildlife which gets priority!

Don't ever feed the wildlife!

Wildlife is exactly that – wild. Relying on food from humans creates dependency. And the food you eat is not the food that the wildlife eats, so giving them some of your lunch 'out of kindness' can cause damage to their digestive system.

Leave everything as you found it

Never pick flowers or plants, never take souvenirs such as animal bones or eggs, or even rocks or fossils. The eco-structure is fragile, but irresponsible human intervention makes it worse. That bone might be useful to some animal, that egg will hatch or provide nutrition for a scavenger. Let Mother Nature take her course, by leaving everything untouched! (And remember that there are strict laws about taking such souvenirs out of Tanzania, with big fines for offenders.) Do not be tempted; your photographs will be the best souvenirs you can have, and they harm no-one!

Never try to scare, disturb or antagonize the wildlife

Keep your presence as low-key as you can, by making as little noise as possible. So, be aware that playing music is not permitted and you should never try to attract the attention of the wildlife by whistling, clapping, or banging on the side of the vehicle.

Take any litter back with you in the vehicle

Litter is dangerous. Not to you, so take it away with you. But it is dangerous to the wildlife, so make sure that every scrap goes back with you at the end of the day. At Gilmag Safaris, our driver-guides tidy the

safari vehicle every night, so there is never any excuse for littering. One piece of carelessly discarded litter could lead to the death of an animal.

Don't bring a drone!

These are not allowed in the National Parks and will most likely be confiscated if you attempt to bring them into Tanzania. If you must have an aerial view, book a hot air balloon trip!

Camping safety

Some of our intrepid visitors choose a camping safari with us, adding to the sense of adventure by getting closer to the wildlife and enjoying the unforgettable experience of sleeping beneath star-studded African skies. Our expert Gilmag Safaris guides will look after you but a few extra bits of guidance are important for our camping-safari guests:

Look after your welfare and that of your fellow travelers

Without hotel or lodge comforts, being aware of your own and others' welfare is very important while you are camping. Keep well-hydrated and keep well-fed. If someone falls ill, be prepared to abandon your trip: welfare always takes priority.

Be aware of local conditions

Without the protection of a roof and four walls, you need to stay alert to changing weather conditions which might affect your safety. You will be more exposed to heat (and sometimes the cold!) and potentially to thunderstorms, lightning, and flash floods. You should also be extra-alert to the wildlife which might be roaming around the camp.

Drink more water

Being outside requires you to keep very well-hydrated. The extra exposure to the extremes of climate demands that you drink more water – but never be tempted to drink tap water, as you can rely on it being free from contamination.

Use plenty of sunscreen

It's very easy to get badly sun-burnt, without even realizing that it's happening. Make sure you use a high-factor sunscreen and don't forget that you should also wear a hat that protects the neck as well, a decent pair of sunglasses and long-sleeve shirts when outside.

Use insect repellent (bug spray)

Mosquitoes and other biting/harmful insects are prevalent, so try not to get bitten in the first place. And use mosquito nets, where provided.

Use layers of clothing, to remain flexible

As temperatures can change, wearing layers of clothing allows you to 'take off' and 'put on' whenever conditions alter. Wear clothes that allow flexibility.

Wear appropriate footwear

A decent pair of boots will ensure good ankle support, protect you against stubbing your toes and against twisting your ankle when moving around camp.

Make sure there are no trip-hazards around the campsite

Keeping your campsite tidy, and clearing up as you go along, will minimize the chance of accidents.

Keep up-to-date with the weather forecast Your guide will be aware of changing weather conditions, so talk to him to ensure you are well-prepared for any difficult, incoming weather.

Keep food outside your tent

Food attracts wildlife, so keep it all outside your tent to avoid any unwelcome midnight visitors.

Use only official campsites

Any responsible operator will make sure that you only camp at the official campsites. Camping anywhere else is unsafe and illegal!

Stay alert

Because you are outdoors, you need to be vigilant: dozing off outside for an afternoon nap is inadvisable.

Never light fires

If a fire is to be lit at the campsite, leave it to your guide. He will be aware of wind conditions and other risks. All fires must be extinguished properly.

Keep your campsite clean and tidy

Food left lying around your camp attracts wildlife; empty cans or bottles, or indeed any other inedible litter can pose a hazard to animals, so tidy it all up before retiring for the night. Dispose of it all properly!

Safety on a canoe safari

A canoe safari represents a great and very different adventure, a relaxed manner in which to see wildlife from a different perspective, on lake or river. If taking one of these unforgettable trips, do read the few extra pieces of relevant guidance, as set out below:

All aboard! Getting into your canoe

Don't try and get into the canoe yourself. It's much better to have someone steady the canoe as you get in, to avoid falling in before you even start.

Stay low as you get in

Keeping your centre of gravity as low as possible is good advice, so bend your knees and keep hold of the canoe's sides as you get into your seat.

Keep balanced, stay in the centre

It's important to keep your weight in the centre of the canoe as this stops the vessel from losing its balance or rocking from side to side.

And stay low while in the canoe

Once you are under way, do not try to stand up in the canoe, as this will unbalance the vessel.

Wear your life-jacket – all of the time

It is essential that you keep the life-jacket issued to you on at all times, as the canoe could tip over unexpectedly.

Move gently, avoiding any sudden movements

Sudden movements can unbalance the canoe, causing it to tip over. Move slowly and gently.

Use the seat to sit on, staying in the centre of the canoe Moving to the side, or too near to the front or rear, will cause the canoe to tip over.

Keep the canoe away from any low-hanging branches on the shore

Catching one of these can unbalance you, causing you to fall in.

Avoid canoeing in bad weather

Your guide will check the weather forecast before you set out, but if the weather deteriorates, then it's time to head for shore.

Don't let any big waves hit the side of your canoe

Keeping your canoe at right-angles to any significant waves, will avoid them pushing your canoe over.

Stay calm, if the canoe tips over or if you end up in the water

It's important to remember that your canoe is designed to stay afloat, even when it takes on water. So there is no need to panic, just stay calm and get your canoe to the shore where you can empty it, climb back in and continue on your adventure.

Don't forget to be prepared against the sun

Just because you are on the water, you are not out of reach of the Tanzanian sun. Remember to wear a decent hat, bring sunscreen, wear long trousers (pants) and a shirt with long sleeves.

Staying safe on a walking safari

Many of our visitors take advantage of one of our walking safaris, as these are slow-paced, wonderful opportunities to experience wildlife without being in a vehicle. Your guide can point out all sorts of fascinating details which escape your notice when you are doing a game drive in a vehicle. You can view animal footprints and droppings and be amazed what can be learned from these – with the help of your expert Gilmag Safaris guide, of course. Obviously, you are no longer inside a vehicle and so there are a few extra safety considerations to think about. Here's how to stay safe while on a walking safari:

Keep to the trails

The official trails are maintained by the National Park authorities, who spend both time and money ensuring that they are safe for use by visitors. It may not be obvious to visitors, but the terrain away from the paths can be unstable, rough and slippery; in short, it can be downright dangerous to stray from the trails.

Stay close to your armed ranger

All of our Gilmag Safaris walking safaris are accompanied by an armed ranger, an employee of the National Parks. Follow his instructions at all times, as he is experienced and can spot danger signs which will not be apparent to you, the visitor.

Drink plenty of water

Outside of the vehicle, it is even more important to keep yourself well-hydrated. So drink plenty of water on your walking safari.

Protect yourself from the sun

Wear a hat, wear long trousers (pants), a long-sleeved shirt and apply plenty of sunscreen.

Look after your feet: wear appropriate footwear

Good-quality hiking boots will protect your ankles, while decent walking socks will stop you getting blisters. Make sure you bring both!

Bring your own first-aid kit

Foot cream and blister plasters are useful items to include in your first-aid kit. Sanitizing hand-gel and wipes are also advisable.

Check the weather forecast and wear layered clothing

As in most countries, the weather in Tanzania can change very suddenly. Wearing the right clothes is important, and by choosing lightweight layers you give yourself the flexibility to adapt to variations on temperature. Long trousers and long-sleeved shirts will help you cover up against the sun, while also keeping insects away and protecting you against scratches.

Don't discard food!

After you've taken a snack or enjoyed your packed lunch, take a good look around to ensure you are not leaving any scraps of food or wrappers for the wildlife. Living off scraps left behind by human visitors can create dependency and make animals aggressive in the future. This can sometimes lead to the need to destroy them – a tragic consequence of your carelessness.

Use insect repellent

A good, DEET-based (or alternative) insect repellent helps to keep away mosquitoes, ticks and insects. Wearing long trousers (pants) and long-sleeved shirts also deters them, as does spraying your clothing with insect repellent.

Safety around waterfalls

Some of Gilmag Safaris excursions take you to spectacular waterfalls, fantastic places to cool yourself after a long walk or long day spent in the safari vehicle. While these are great places to enjoy, there are also a few safety guidelines which apply. Please note the following:

Keep behind the safety railings and barriers provided

These have been put there for a very good reason!

Beware of slippery rocks

Make sure you have a good grip on your footwear when you are around waterfalls, as paths and rocks can be treacherous!

Don't jump in!

It may be very tempting to jump or dive into the cool waterfalls at the base of a waterfall, but this is never advisable. There are often rocks just beneath the water level and you will not be aware of how deep the pool is. Lower yourself in gently and take a good look around.

Don't swim alone

For your safety's sake, swim with others in case you encounter difficulties.

Beware periods of drought

Waterfalls change according to rainfall, and drought periods can leave their pools too dry for swimming.

Beware of heavy rain

A waterfall pool may look safe to swim in, but after heavy rains there may be significant volumes of water on their way down from the mountains. A sudden rush of water after rain can make a waterfall very dangerous indeed.

Don't drink the water

Take bottled drinking water with you on your trip to the waterfall, as you will not know if the water from the waterfall is suitable for drinking (it may look crystal clear, but looks can deceive: it may be contaminated by animal droppings deposited at a higher altitude).

Waterfall pools can contain currents

When swimming in waterfall pools, beware of currents and under currents, which can be strong – especially after periods of rain.

Mountain climbing safety

Climbing a mountain, such as Kilimanjaro for example, is a very special experience, but it carries its own dangers. Thankfully, a reputable company like Gilmag Safaris has all the staff, experience, procedures and equipment to reduce any risks and make it a safe and enjoyable adventure. And there are a number of things you can do to make it even safer and more comfortable:

Make your climb with a reputable mountain operator

There are many operators offering mountain climbs, but some of the less expensive companies compromise on safety. Choose an experienced, reputable company, to give yourself the best chance of reaching the summit – safely. At Gilmag Safaris, we have years of successful experience, with only properly certified guides and experienced support staff.

Your guide is an expert, so follow his advice. Now that you have hired an expert guide to take you to the summit; you need to follow his advice. Some of our mountain guides have climbed Kilimanjaro several hundred times (yes, really!) – they certainly know what they are doing!

If you are unsure – just ask

All of our mountain team members will be monitoring you as you walk and their experience allows them to spot warning signs, for example the signs of altitude sickness. But if you are feeling unwell or have any doubts about any matter relating to your climb, just ask. You can be sure that our mountain team members will have the answer.

Don't rush - take it easy

All of our mountain climbs are carefully designed to get you to the top. It is never a race and pacing yourself will increase your chances of a successful ascent. Our mountain teams know very well the importance of climbing slowly, so listen to them.

Keep your body well-fueled

Your appetite may diminish as you climb, but it is vital that you feed yourself well. Our meals up on the mountain are expertly designed and prepared, but you may wish to supplement them with some high-energy snacks. On a strenuous climb, you need more calories.

Drink more water

A key factor in your wellbeing is keeping yourself well-hydrated. As well as the physical benefits of drinking more water, there are also benefits to maintaining your mental sharpness, too. And most important, drinking water regularly is key to reducing the chances of getting altitude sickness. Water-purifying tablets are a must, so bring these to ensure that what you drink is safe. Some climbers also bring energy drinks to boost electrolytes.

Do not take alcohol during your climb

It is well known that consuming alcohol on a mountain climb simply makes the symptoms of altitude sickness much, much worse. Alcohol also dehydrates the body, the last thing you want at altitude. Similarly, smoking tobacco or taking sleeping tablets will hamper you.

Sleep lower than your daily highpoint

Wherever possible, our mountain trips are designed to ensure that you sleep at a lower altitude than the highest point you reach during the day's climb. (Sometimes, we will organize a short climb after the day's walk, to reach a higher altitude before returning to camp to spend the night. This is a worthwhile 'extra.')

Medication for your climb

Some of our climbers take Diamox, a medicine designed to combat altitude sickness. This is usually a prescription-only medicine, so you will need to consult your doctor before your trip. Diamox is taken a couple of days before the climb, but please note that taking it after symptoms develop will not alleviate the symptoms. The standard 'treatment' for altitude sickness is to get the ill person down to a lower altitude.

Wear the correct clothing

Proper clothing is an essential part of any mountain climb, so give careful consideration to your clothing choices. Lightweight garments which give you the freedom to move, and layers which can be taken off or put on according to conditions should be your preferences. Wind- and waterproof outer clothing are essentials.

Wear the appropriate footwear

Footwear is a very important subject. You need good-quality boots for a mountain climb, waterproof, lightweight boots that give ankle support and great grip.

Use walking poles

Some walkers find that using a pair of walking poles makes their walking more efficient, while also improving stability and easing the pressure that ascending and descending can place on knees, ankles and the back.

Keep safe from the Tanzanian sun

Although temperatures can vary significantly during the climb, the Tanzanian sun is a constant presence in many months of the year. Good-quality sunglasses are a 'must' as the sun reflects brightly at high altitudes. Snow-glare can be an issue at the summit. Protect your head and neck with a proper hat and use sunscreen to look after any exposed areas of skin. Don't forget to reapply your sunscreen throughout the day.

Check the weather forecast

Your Gilmag Safaris mountain guide will always keep one eye on the weather forecast. Safety is everything, so any threat of bad weather could lead to a rearrangement of plans. For your part, you need to make sure you have all the right clothing to cope with all sorts of weather conditions, from the heat on the lower slopes to the snowy, icy temperatures on the summit.

Be prepared for minor accidents

Gilmag Safaris philosophy puts safety as the number 1 priority, always. But accidents can happen anywhere, and while our teams are trained in medical and recovery procedures, it is always advisable to carry your own basic first aid kit for minor problems.

***Note that children under the age of 10 years are not allowed on our mountain climbing trips.**

Safety on chimpanzee trekking trips

We all know that chimpanzees are often said to be our 'closest cousins' but even closest cousins can be dangerous sometimes. Visitors are enchanted by the habits of these wonderful creatures, but it is important to remember that chimpanzees are indeed wild animals and must be treated accordingly. For their own safety and the safety of the chimps, a few safety rules must be followed by those on a chimpanzee trekking trip:

Follow your guide's instructions

Any chimpanzee trekking group will have the services of a specialist guide, an expert who is familiar with quirks and habits of the champs and who can read the signs of the animals. He knows how to keep you and the chimps safe, the best places to stand and how close you can get to them. Your guide will always be with you and his instructions must always be followed.

Stay at a safe distance

The standard rule states that trekkers must always be at least seven metres away from the chimpanzees. Approaching any closer can be dangerous, as a frightened chimp can attack a trekker as a form of defense. On occasions, the chimps may come closer (they do not know the rules!) but on such occasions any trekker is advised to retreat to maintain the 'seven metre' rule.

Do not eat or drink in the presence of the chimpanzees

Chimpanzees are always on the lookout for food, but human food is not necessarily appropriate for their diet and eating near to them is provocative.

Never use flash photography

The chimps can be easily scared by the bright light.

Keep to the time limit

A maximum of one hour may be spent with a chimpanzee group.

Do not make them feel trapped

Like humans, chimpanzees like their own space and freedom to move around. Do not make them feel trapped or cornered.

If you are unwell, do not undertake a chimpanzee trek

As chimpanzees are similar to humans in many ways, so they are also prone to catching human diseases. Transmittable diseases such as influenza (flu) or the common cold can easily be passed on to them, unwittingly. So if you are under the weather, you should not undertake a trek to see chimpanzees. You should also think twice if you have a weak immune system, as diseases can also pass the other way, ie from chimp to human.

Adults only

You must be 15 years or older to join a chimpanzee trek.

Stay within your allocated group

To undertake a chimpanzee trek, trekkers are formed into groups of eight and one chimpanzee family is allocated to the group. Once the trek begins, the members of the group will be led on the trek by an armed park ranger and must stay together for safety. The environment in which the treks take place is also home to many other animals, some of which are very dangerous.

Your armed park rangers

An armed park ranger is obligatory for anyone undertaking a chimpanzee trek. In the very rare event of an animal threatening the trekking group, the armed ranger is trained to fire his gun into the air to scare the animal away. Trekkers can be comfortable while on their trek, secure in the knowledge that they have the protection of the trained armed ranger.

Stay calm; don't look directly into the chimpanzees' eyes

All trekkers should observe a few basic rules when the chimpanzees are close by. First, trekkers should act calmly and peacefully when in the presence of the chimps. Loud

voices and excited chatter are likely to scare the chimps away. Secondly, trekkers should not look directly into the chimps' eyes as this can be perceived as threatening and even lead to the chimps charging at the trekkers. Baby chimpanzees can be less inhibited than adults, which means that they sometimes approach trekkers: if this happens, trekkers should avoid any temptation to pick up or touch the baby chimp, as this can be misinterpreted as a threat to harm it. Adults may become protective in such circumstances and charge the trekkers.

Wear the correct clothing

Trekking trips to see chimpanzees can be a hot, sweaty and sometimes muddy business. Terrain can be rough, slippery and your trek may involve a bit of climb and descent. A good pair of (preferably) lightweight hiking boots is the best footwear. Long trousers and long-sleeved shirts are also advisable, as is a pair of gloves. Additional items required are a hat and sunglasses to guard against potential sunburn and a waterproof jacket as the forest environment can be wet, with rain showers. An additional layer of clothing should be brought to put on if the temperature dips.

Don't smoke

It almost seems unnecessary to say it but smoking while in the presence of the chimpanzees is strictly prohibited.

Flash photography

Use of flash photography is not allowed, as this causes the chimpanzees distress and can scare them away.

The forest has no toilets!

Trekkers who need to relieve themselves should leave the trail to do so, burying their waste at a depth of 30cm.

Talk quietly

Keeping your voice down will let you hear the chimpanzees better – don't spoil the opportunity of a lifetime!

Bring some insect repellent

As your chimpanzee trek will be largely in a forest environment, insect repellent is advisable as this is an environment where insects – as well as the chimps – thrive.

Wishing you Safe Travels!!!