



Travel COMPANION

botswana
tourism board

KGALAGADI / CENTRAL



“Half the fun of the travel..

is the aesthetic of lostness”

Ray Bradbury





Welcome to Botswana

Botswana is widely regarded as having some of the best wilderness and wildlife areas on the African continent. With a full 38 percent of its total land area devoted to national parks, reserves and wildlife management areas - for the most part unfenced, allowing animals to roam wild and free - travel through many parts of the country has the feeling of moving through an immense Nature wonderland.

Botswana is a rarity in our over-populated, over-developed world. Untamed and untameable, it is one of the last great refuges for Nature's magnificent pageantry of life.

Experience here the stunning beauty of the world's largest intact inland Delta - the Okavango; the unimaginable vastness of the world's second largest game reserve - the Central Kalahari Game Reserve; the isolation and other-worldliness of the Makgadikgadi - uninhabited pans the size of Portugal; and the astoundingly prolific wildlife of the Chobe National Park.

Botswana is the last stronghold for a number of endangered bird and mammal species, including Wild

Dog, Cheetah, Brown Hyena, Cape Vulture, Wattled Crane, Kori Bustard, and Pel's Fishing Owl. This makes your safari experience even more memorable, and at times you will feel simply surrounded by wild animals.

The first - and most lasting impressions - will be of vast expanses of uninhabited wilderness stretching from horizon to horizon, the sensation of limitless space, astoundingly rich wildlife and bird viewing, night skies littered with stars and heavenly bodies of an unimaginable brilliance, and stunning sunsets of unearthly beauty.

As well, with more and more cultural tourism options on offer, you will be charmed by the people of Botswana, visiting their villages and experiencing first-hand their rich cultural heritage.

But perhaps most of all, Botswana's greatest gift is its ability to put us in touch with our natural selves. It offers that vital link so keenly felt by inhabitants of the developed world, a pervasive void we feel but often cannot name - our connectedness with Nature and the astonishing diversity of plants and animals to be explored. 🦁

About Us...

BOTSWANA TOURISM BOARD

The Botswana Tourism Board (BTB) was established by an Act of Parliament in 2003. Its mandate is to market and promote Botswana as a premier tourist destination of choice, to promote Botswana as a tourism investment venue, and to grade and classify accommodation facilities in the country. The Board commenced its operations in January 2006.

A Board of Directors, consisting of 15 members and appointed by the Minister of Wildlife, Environment and Tourism, governs the BTB. The Board is comprised of the Chairperson and the Vice Chairperson, a representative from the governing Ministry, and 12 members from the public and private sectors in the tourism industry.

BTB holds a broad portfolio that touches nearly all aspects of tourism development in the country, including:

TO plan, develop and implement tourism marketing and promotion strategies aimed at creating and sustaining a positive image of Botswana as a tourist and investor destination;

TO plan, formulate and implement strategies for promoting sustainable tourism development in collaboration with the tourism industry's private sector, local authorities, local communities and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs);

TO determine policies for giving effect to the objects and purposes of the Act that established the BTB;

TO advise Government to change, review or formulate policy and strategies where necessary;

TO implement Government policies and programmes aimed at facilitating the continued growth and development of the tourism sector;

TO set performance targets and to design programmes aimed at facilitating the continued growth and development of tourism;

TO develop and implement appropriate strategies for achieving annual work plan objectives and to set performance targets aimed at the promotion of tourism business in Botswana;

TO investigate any matter that has a negative effect on the tourism industry, and to make recommendations thereon to the Government;

TO manage and co-ordinate Botswana's tourism promotional and publicity programmes;

TO provide market research information and market intelligence on tourism;

TO promote the expansion of existing and new investment in Botswana's tourism sector;



LOCAL OFFICES

Headquarters
Private Bag 275
Gaborone, Botswana
Tel: 267 391-3111
Fax: 267 395-3220
board@botswanaturism.co.bw
www.botswanaturism.co.bw

Gaborone Mall Branch
Tel: 267 395-9455
Fax: 267 318-1373

Maun Office
Tel: 267 686-3093

Kasane Office
Tel: 267 625-2211

OFFICES AND AGENCIES ABROAD

Germany
c/o Interface International
Karl-Marx-Allee 91 A
10243 Berlin, Germany
botswanaturism@interface-net.de
www.botswanaturism.de
Contact: Frank Hoffmann
f.hoffmann@interface-net.de

United Kingdom
c/o Botswana High Commission
6 Stratford Place
London, W1C 1AY
Contact: Dawn Parr
dparr@govbw.com

United States of America
c/o Partner Concepts LLC
127 Lubrano Drive, Suite 203
Annapolis, MD 21401
Tel: 410-224-7688
Fax: 410-224-1499
Contact: Leslee Hall
leslee@partnerconcepts.com

TO establish and expand local as well as international travel trade networks to promote and sell Botswana;

TO market and promote the establishment of joint tourism business ventures between citizen and foreign investors;

TO grade and classify accommodation facilities in the tourism industry;

TO promote the improvement of tourism industry standards, in the areas of service standards and a code of ethics;

TO conduct tourism awareness campaigns within and outside Botswana; and

TO develop and improve existing tourism opportunities, and to diversify the sector to include other forms of tourism, such as cultural and heritage tourism, eco-tourism, entertainment,

recreational and leisure tourism, and to bring them to the required marketable standard.

The grading system serves as a means to protect the consumer and guarantee quality accommodation and services in Botswana. It also assists the accommodation establishment to benchmark its performance against set standards.

Additionally, the grading system is a useful tool to indicate to travel agents, tour operators and tourists the general quality of accommodation facilities in the country. This can serve as a guide for tourists planning their destinations in Botswana.

The system also provides a framework to industry investors so that they are able to design their facilities to attract the desired market segments.

BTB is funded through grants received from the Government.

Kgalagadi / Central Highlights

Experience the ultimate adventure – a self-drive safari through the Kgalagadi; see the unique birds of the desert.

Witness the magnificent zebra migrations of the Makgadikgadi. Explore the pans on walks with the San.

Traverse the vast Makgadikgadi on quad bikes. Experience the immense wilderness of the world's second largest game reserve.



TravelCOMPANION

KGALAGADI / CENTRAL

Indulge in arts and crafts shopping, including world-class basketry and San jewellery and artifacts.

See the rare black-maned Kalahari lions, and a host of other desert animals.



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Botswana	1
About Us	2
Highlights	4

DESTINATIONS

The Kgalagadi	6
Makgadikgadi Pans Game Reserve	9
Nxai Pan National Park	12
Central Kalahari Game Reserve	14
Khutse Game Reserve	16
Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park	18
Ghanzi	20
Khama Rhino Sanctuary	22
Serowe	23

REGIONAL MAPS

Makgadikgadi Pans	18-2
Central Kalahari Game Reserve	18-3
Botswana	fold out
Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park	18-4

INFORMATION

Botswana at a Glance	24
Visitor Information	25
Emergency Numbers	32
Distance Chart	33
Your Notes	34

Produced by:
Botswana Tourism Board, Gaborone
April 2009

© BTB

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or utilised in any form and by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, without the written permission of BTB.

Writer/Editor: Linda Pfothenhauer
Graphic Design: Sarah Banks, Kolobe Botswana
Cartography: Department of Surveys and Mapping

The Kgalagadi

Covering a full 84 percent of Botswana's land area, the semi-arid Kgalagadi terrain dominates most of the country.

Refuting the classical perception of desert as a barren, vegetation-less, useless land, the Kgalagadi (Kalahari) is rich in natural resources. These include its sweeping grasslands that feed not only its wildlife populations, but also its swelling cattle herds (numbering approximately 2 million), thus supporting the country's third largest industry - cattle ranching, and its mineral wealth, namely diamonds, which have fostered and sustained dramatic economic growth for the past 35 years.

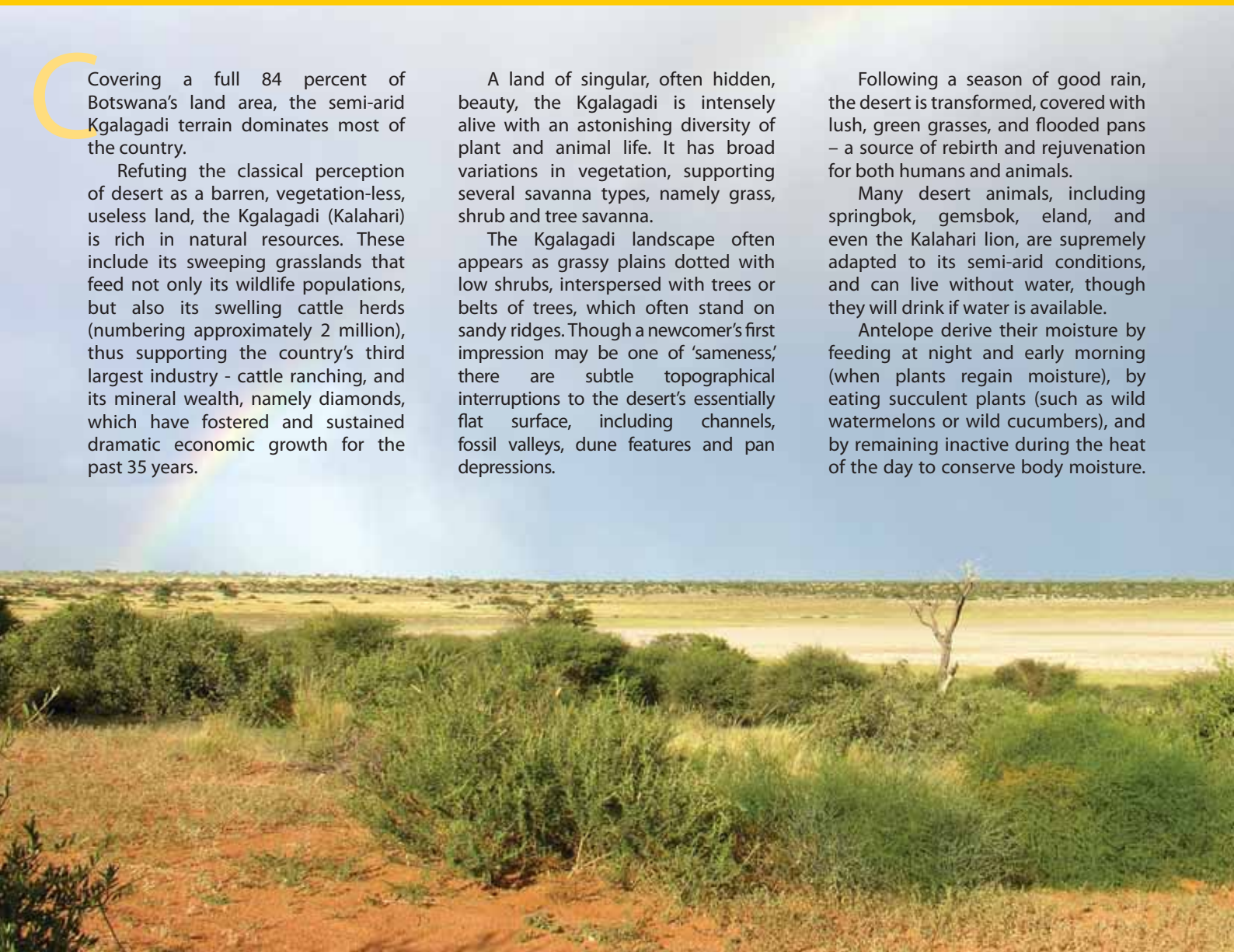
A land of singular, often hidden, beauty, the Kgalagadi is intensely alive with an astonishing diversity of plant and animal life. It has broad variations in vegetation, supporting several savanna types, namely grass, shrub and tree savanna.

The Kgalagadi landscape often appears as grassy plains dotted with low shrubs, interspersed with trees or belts of trees, which often stand on sandy ridges. Though a newcomer's first impression may be one of 'sameness', there are subtle topographical interruptions to the desert's essentially flat surface, including channels, fossil valleys, dune features and pan depressions.

Following a season of good rain, the desert is transformed, covered with lush, green grasses, and flooded pans – a source of rebirth and rejuvenation for both humans and animals.

Many desert animals, including springbok, gemsbok, eland, and even the Kalahari lion, are supremely adapted to its semi-arid conditions, and can live without water, though they will drink if water is available.

Antelope derive their moisture by feeding at night and early morning (when plants regain moisture), by eating succulent plants (such as wild watermelons or wild cucumbers), and by remaining inactive during the heat of the day to conserve body moisture.



Kalahari lions appear to gain their moisture from the body fluids of their prey.

Other common Kgalagadi animal species include wildebeest, zebra, kudu, red hartebeest, duiker, steenbok, and the predators, lion, cheetah, leopard, and both spotted and brown hyena.

The Kgalagadi is essentially a basin into which sediments have continually been deposited and covered with sand. It is a region of great ecological, vegetative, geomorphological and climatic diversity.

At its northern reaches (Gabon, Congo and Zaire), the Kgalagadi lies in the humid tropics and is dominated by parts of the Congo drainage system. At its core, in Botswana and neighbouring countries (South Africa, Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Angola), it is an arid to semi-arid region with little surface water.

The Kgalagadi is the largest continuous area of sand on earth, touching nine African countries. With an approximate area of 2.5 million sq kms, it extends through 30 degrees of latitude and embraces several ecological zones.

Within Botswana, the Kgalagadi embraces two unique geographical regions: the Makgadikgadi Pans, which research reveals to have been a huge prehistoric lake, suggesting that the Kgalagadi was at one time much wetter than it now is, and the wetland delta system of the Okavango.

Human occupation of the Kgalagadi goes as far back as the Early Stone Age. Its Middle Stone Age inhabitants, the San, developed survival strategies superbly adapted to – and in harmony with - their environment, masterfully extracting food resources from both the land and animals. Today, settlements, including cattle farms, dot many areas of the desert.

Five game reserves and national parks have been set aside in Botswana's vast share of the Kgalagadi. These are: Central Kalahari Game Reserve, Khutse Game Reserve, Makgadikgadi Pans Game Reserve, Nxai Pan National Park, and the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park.

All are remotely situated, separated by vast distances; and for many visitors, the sensation of unending space and pure isolation are the principle attractions; they are, in effect, the ultimate wilderness destinations. 🦁







Travel COMPANION to...

Makgadikgadi Pans Game Reserve

Imagine – if you will – an area the size of Portugal, largely uninhabited by humans. Its stark, flat, featureless terrain stretches – it would seem – to eternity, meeting and fusing with a milky-blue horizon. This is the Makgadikgadi – an area of 12 000 sq kms, part of the Kalahari Basin, yet unique to it – one of the largest salt pans in the world.

For much of the year, most of this desolate area remains waterless and extremely arid; and large mammals are thus absent. But during and following years of good rain, the two largest pans – Sowa to the east and Ntwetwe to the west – flood, attracting wildlife – zebra and wildebeest on the grassy plains – and most spectacularly

flamingos at Sowa and Nata Sanctuary. Flamingo numbers can run into the tens – and sometimes – hundreds of thousands, and the spectacle can be completely overwhelming.

The rainwater that pours down on the pans is supplemented by seasonal river flows – the Nata, Tutume, Semowane and Mosetse Rivers in the east, and in years of exceptional rains, the Okavango via the Boteti River in the west.

During this time, the pans can be transformed into a powder blue lake, the waters gently lapping the shorelines, and flowing over the pebble beaches – a clear indication of the gigantic, prehistoric lake the Makgadikgadi once was. Research

suggests that the Makgadikgadi is a relic of what was once one of the biggest inland lakes Africa has ever had.

Africa's most famous explorer, Dr. David Livingstone, crossed these pans in the 19th century, guided by a massive baobab, Chapman's Tree – believed to be 3 000 to 4 000 years old, and the only landmark for hundreds of miles around. Seeing this amazing tree today, you are given entry to an era when much of the continent was uncharted, and explorers often risked their lives navigating the wilderness on ox carts through rough and grueling terrain.

The Makgadikgadi is in fact a series of pans, the largest of which are



Sowa and Ntwetwe, both of which are surrounded by a myriad of smaller pans. North of these two pans are Kudiakam Pan, Nxai Pan and Kaucaca Pan. Interspersed between the pans are sand dunes, rocky islands and peninsulas, and desert terrain.

No vegetation can grow on the salty surface of the pans, but the fringes are covered with grasslands. Massive baobab trees populate some fringe areas – and their silhouettes create dramatic landscapes against a setting sun.

The Makgadikgadi Pans Game Reserve – with an area of 3 900 sq kms – incorporates the western end of Ntwetwe, extensive grasslands and acacia woodland. At its northern boundary, it meets the Nxai Pan National Park, separated only by the Nata-Maun Road.

In the wet season, this reserve can offer good wildlife viewing, particularly when large herds of zebra and wildebeest begin their westward migration to the Boteti region. Other species include gemsbok, eland and red hartebeest, as well as kudu, bushbuck, duiker, giraffe, springbok, steenbok, and even elephant, with all the accompanying predators, as well as the rare brown hyena.

Humans have inhabited areas of the pans since the Stone Age, and have adapted to geographical and climatic changes as they have occurred. Archaeological sites on the pans are rich with Early Man's tools, and the bones of the fish and animals he ate.

Human inhabitation has continued to the present day; and a number of villages, including Mopipi, Mmatshumo, Nata, Gweta and Rakops, are situated on the fringes of the pans.

KUBU ISLAND

One of the most popular destinations on the Makgadikgadi is Kubu Island, a rocky outcrop near the south-western shore of Sowa Pan.

This crescent-shaped island is about one kilometre long, and its slopes are littered with fossil beaches of rounded pebbles, an indication of the prehistoric lake's former water levels. Many rocks on the island are covered in fossilised guano, from the water birds that once perched here.



Fantastically shaped baobabs perch on the island, and they are surrounded by the white salt surface of the pan, making for a unique other-worldly atmosphere.

Apart from the eerie isolation of this remote area - and its awesome beauty, Kubu is rich in archaeological and historical remains that chronicle both early human inhabitation and more recent history.

Stone Age tools and arrowheads can still be found today along the shorelines of this tiny island; and a circular stone wall and stone cairns suggest that Kubu may have been part of the outer reaches of the Great Zimbabwe empire that was centred at Masvingo in modern-day Zimbabwe.

NATA SANCTUARY

Botswana's first community-based conservation project is managed and staffed by residents of four local

communities – Nata, Maphosa, Sepako and Manxotae. It is a good example of a non-consumptive means of wildlife utilisation that brings direct financial benefit to local communities. Proceeds from tourism activities in the sanctuary are shared by the four communities for whatever development projects they decide they want and need.

About 3 000 head of cattle belonging to members of these four communities were voluntarily moved out of the area for the establishment of the sanctuary. Nata Sanctuary opened its gates to the public in 1993, and in the same year was awarded the Tourism for Tomorrow award for the southern hemisphere.

Covering an area of 250 sq kms – comprising both grasslands and pans, in an important environmentally sensitive area – the sanctuary offers easy access to the pans, and pleasant, reasonably priced camping facilities.

In the peak season, birding, and even game viewing, can be good. When there is water in the pans, thousands of flamingos, pelicans, ducks and geese congregate, and the scene is indeed awe-inspiring. An elevated hide provides an unbeatable panorama of the pans. 🦩

ACTIVITIES

- Game drives
- Birding
- Walks with the San
- Walks with the meerkats
- Quad-biking the pans
- Historical sites
- Archaeological sites
- Village tour of Gweta



Travel COMPANION to...

Nxai Pan National Park

Part of the great Makgadikgadi complex, Nxai Pan National Park covers an area of 2 100 sq kms, and comprises several larger pans – Nxai Pan, Kgama-Kgama Pan and Kudiakam Pan, which were once ancient salt lakes. These larger pans are now grassed, and are scattered with islands of acacia trees, and smaller pans that fill with water during the rainy season – thus providing rich resources for wildlife.

Wildlife viewing is seasonal, and dependent on if and when the rains come, and when animals migrate. There are several artificial watering points. If the rains have been good, December to April is the best time to visit.

Common species to be sighted are zebra, wildebeest, springbok, impala, gemsbok, hartebeest, giraffe, lion, cheetah, wild dog, brown hyena, bat-eared fox, and sometimes elephant and buffalo.

The park is one of the more accessible areas of the Makgadikgadi, a mere 50 kms from the Nata-Maun Road.

BAINES' BAOBABS

Approximately 30 kms from the Nxai Pan National Park entrance, Baines' Baobabs are a highlight for any visitor travelling this area of Botswana.

Seven huge, gnarled baobab trees, named after the 19th century explorer

Thomas Baines, are situated on a promontory or island overlooking and surrounded by the white, crusty Kudiakam Pan.

Baines stood here over a hundred years ago and painted this other-worldly scene. It has essentially remained unchanged.

Thomas Baines was an explorer, artist, naturalist and cartographer. He and fellow explorer James Chapman travelled through this area during their two-year journey from Namibia to Victoria Falls (1861-63).

They travelled in horse-drawn wagons and on foot, accompanied and led at different times by Hottentots, Damaras (a tribe from Namibia) and San. They encountered numerous difficulties,

including the harshness of the desert, thirst, hunger, illness, and more than once, desertion by their guides, who made off with their supplies.

Despite all this, Baines' account of the journey is filled with appreciation of the beauty of Africa. 'I confess,' he wrote, 'I can never quite get over the feeling that the wonderful products of nature are objects to be admired rather than destroyed; and this, I am afraid, sometimes keeps me looking at a buck when I ought to be minding my hind-sights.'

Baines' painting of the small island of baobabs shows covered wagons, people tending their horses, and a huge baobab bursting with leaves. 'We walked forward to the big tree, the Mowana at Mamu ka Hoorie, and found the country much improved,' Baines wrote of the gloriously shaded area.

Baines' diaries, sketches, drawings and paintings provide fascinating first-hand documentation of that most decisive era in the history of southern Africa. 🦒





Travel COMPANION to...

Central Kalahari Game Reserve

Nothing prepares you for the immensity of this reserve, nor its wild, mysterious beauty. There is the immediate impression of unending space, and having the entire reserve to yourself.

Waist-high golden grasses seem to stretch interminably, punctuated by dwarfed trees and scrub bushes. Wide and empty pans appear as vast white stretches of saucer-flat earth, meeting a soft, blue-white sky. At night the stars utterly dominate the land; their brilliance and immediacy are totally arresting.

The Central Kalahari Game Reserve (CKGR) is the largest, most

remotely situated reserve in southern Africa, and the second largest wildlife reserve in the world, encompassing 52 800 sq kms.

During and shortly after good summer rains, the flat grasslands of the reserve's northern reaches teem with wildlife, which gather at the best grazing areas. These include large herds of springbok and gemsbok, as well as wildebeest, hartebeest, eland and giraffe.

At other times of the year, when the animals are more sparsely distributed, the experience of travelling through truly untouched wilderness, of seemingly unending dimensions, is

the draw.

The landscape is dominated by silver terminalia sandveldt, Kalahari sand acacias, and Kalahari appleleaf, interspersed with grasslands, and dotted with occasional sand dunes, pans and shallow fossil river valleys.

CKGR is unique in that it was originally established (in 1961) with the intention of serving as a place of sanctuary for the San, in the heart of the Kalahari (and Botswana), where they could live their traditional hunter/gatherer way of life, without intrusion, or influence, from the outside world.

The reserve was closed for about 30 years, until in the 1980s and

1990s, both self-drive and organised tours were allowed in, albeit in small, tightly controlled numbers.

The Botswana Government has initiated plans to develop tourism away from the Okavango and Chobe areas, and has allocated concessions for lodge construction, both at the peripheries of and inside the reserve, allowing for fly-in tourists.

The northern Deception Valley is one of the highlights, principally because of the dense concentrations of herbivores its sweet grasses attract during and after the rainy season (and of course the accompanying predators). It is also the most travelled area of the reserve, with a number of public campsites, and proximity to the eastern Matswera Gate. The other two gates are completely at the other side of the reserve, at Xade and Tsau, where public campsites are also available.

Other worthwhile areas to drive are Sunday and Leopard Pans, north of Deception Valley, Passarge Valley, and, further south, Piper's Pan.





Travel COMPANION to...

Khutse Game Reserve

Because of its proximity, and relative accessibility, to the nation's capital, Khutse Game Reserve is a favourite retreat for Gaborone visitors or residents. The 240 kms drive takes the traveller through a number of interesting Kalahari villages, including the 'Gateway to the Kalahari,' Molepolole.

Adjoining the Central Kalahari Game Reserve to the north, and with no fences separating the two, the terrain of the 2 500 sq kms reserve combines most types of Kalahari habitat – rolling grasslands, river beds, fossil dunes and grassed and bare pans.

The reserve is part of an ancient river system that once flowed

northeast to fill the prehistoric Lake Makgadikgadi. Khutse's pans and dry river valleys are remnants of this river system.

Officially declared a protected area in 1971, Khutse (meaning 'place where you can kneel down and drink') was the second game reserve in Botswana to be established on tribal land (Moremi Game Reserve in the Okavango was the first).

There is a series of rather picturesque pans (signposted) where wildlife often congregate, particularly during and following good rains; and indeed game drives are focused around the pans. These include the Motailane, Moreswa and Molose Pans. Sometimes water is pumped

at artificial waterholes at Moreswa and Molose, making for good game viewing year round.

Animals commonly sighted include springbok (often in abundance), gemsbok (often common), giraffe, wildebeest, hartebeest, kudu, black-backed jackal, steenbok, duiker, and the accompanying predators lion, leopard, cheetah, smaller cats, and the endangered brown hyena.

There are several delightful loops worth driving through the reserve. The shorter drive is the northern loop around Sekhushwe and Mohurusile Pans, approximately 24 kms from the reserve headquarters. The longer drive is to Moreswa Pan, about 64 kms from the headquarters, or a 120 kms loop.



The San and Bakgalagadi peoples – the Kgalagadi's original inhabitants – live in small villages on the periphery of the reserve. Their traditional arts and crafts can usually be purchased here; and walks with the San can be arranged at the Khutse Kalahari Lodge, about 10 kms before the reserve entrance. 🦁

ACTIVITIES

Game drives
Camping
Bush walks with the San
Arts and crafts shopping





Travel COMPANION to...

Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park

History was made when Botswana and a newly liberated, democratic South Africa signed in 1999 a treaty to form the first transfrontier peace park in Africa.

Plans to formalise the joint management and development of South Africa's Kalahari Gemsbok National Park and Botswana's Gemsbok National Park were proposed as early as 1989, but no such partnership was possible during South Africa's dark years of apartheid. Following South Africa's independence in 1994, and with the support and encouragement of the Peace Parks Foundation, negotiations concretised; and in May 2002, the park was officially opened.

This immense wilderness (37 000 sq kms) is now shared by both countries as a protected area, and is jointly managed. The entire park is completely unfenced, allowing for wildlife to move freely along the ancient migration routes so necessary for their survival in the desert.

Situated in the extreme southwest corner of Botswana, and adjacent to South Africa's Northern Cape Province, the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park (KTP) is run as a single ecological unit, and gate receipts are shared. Tourist facilities, however, are still run autonomously.

Immigration and customs facilities have been designed to allow travellers to enter the park in one country and

depart in the other. The main entry and departure point between the two countries is at the Two Rivers/ Twee Rivieren gate, which also has camping facilities, chalets, shops and a restaurant.

The national boundary with South Africa is along the dry Nossop River bed; and three quarters of the park lies within Botswana territory. Currently, KTP is mainly visited by self-drive campers, with a few operators offering mobile tours.

At the time of going to print, the Botswana government had allocated five fixed lodge sites for development by the private sector.

There are three main areas to explore: the Nossop River valley,

along the South Africa/Botswana border, the wilderness trails on the Botswana side, and what was once the Mabuasehube Game Reserve, now incorporated into KTP at its most northeastern reaches.

To maintain KTP's pure wilderness experience, there are strict limits as to the number of vehicles that can travel the wilderness trails, how many nights a camping party can stay at a campsite (usually limited to one night), and how many people can camp at each campsite. Hence booking well in advance is essential.

Self-drive campers must comprise at least two vehicles; well-equipped 4x4s are required for the rough, sandy roads.

KTP's very beautiful terrain comprises fossil river valleys dotted with dwarfed trees and bushes, grasslands and different coloured sand dunes. Wildlife is abundant, and the animals are attracted to waterholes along the otherwise dry riverbed.

Several species of antelope, including the ubiquitous springbok and gemsbok, hartebeest, and eland can be seen, as well as the famous black-maned Kalahari lion, jackal, brown hyena, and wild cats.

Rich birding is always part of the experience. Over 170 species of birds have been recorded here, and it is not uncommon to see over 30 bird species within a few kilometres of the campsite.

At Mabuasehube, the terrain is a mixture of typical Kgalagadi tree and shrub savanna with patches of wide open grass savanna.

This area of KTP comprises a series of exceptionally large pans, which are the principle focus of the



reserve. Campsites dot the various pans, and many are situated on slight promontories, giving almost unimpeded vision, thus making for good game viewing right from your camp-side chair.

Three of the largest pans lie along the main road; these are Bosobogolo, Mpayathutlwa and Mabuasehube. Others, like Leshologago, Khiding and the fossil valley complex called Monamodi, are linked to the larger pans by sand tracks.

Each pan is different. The floor of Mabuasehube Pan is bare clay that is rich in salts, and this attracts animals that come to lick the surface, deriving essential minerals from it. The floor of Bosobogolo Pan is short, shrubby grassland, which antelope frequent to graze, accompanied, of course, by predators.

All of the major predators can be seen at Mabuasehube, including the Kalahari black-maned lion, cheetah, leopard, brown hyena, bat-eared fox, lynx, and silver fox. Small mammals, like the Cape fox, aardwolf and black-footed cat can be seen at the pans in the evening. 🐾





Travel COMPANION to...

Ghanzi

Ghanzi is the centre of the cattle farming industry in Botswana. Over 200 cattle farms, comprising approximately six percent of the national land, are backed one against the other in largely fenced holdings.

This part of Botswana is regarded as one of the best cattle ranging areas in the world, renowned for the high quality, free roaming beef it produces. In fact, Ghanzi farmers provide 75 percent of the beef that the Botswana Meat Commission (BMC) exports, primarily to the United Kingdom and the European Union (EU). Beef is the third largest industry in the country.

The Ghanzi community is a conglomeration of ethnic groups – the San and Bakgalagadi (the original

inhabitants), the Herero, the Batawana, and the Afrikaans who first settled in the area in the late 1800s. Afrikaans is the lingua franca, and you might feel that you are in a tiny South African dorp in the northern Cape.

East of this extensive area of farms lies the vast Central Kalahari Game Reserve (CKGR); and in between lies a 58 kms 'no man's land,' a buffer zone between wildlife and the farms, and between Kalahari predators and livestock.

Several cattle farmers have developed game ranches and wildlife concessions – land allocated near their farms – and tourists come for wildlife viewing, excursions to CKGR, and desert walks with the San people,

who share their ancient way of life that masterfully and respectfully exploited the food and water resources of the desert.

Some lodges offer up-market accommodation in rondavels or chalets, whilst others give tourists the opportunity to experience the traditional way of life of Kalahari hunter/gatherers – sleeping in grass huts, albeit with amenities.

The Kuru Dance Festival, held every year in August, features the traditional song and dance of Kalahari dwellers, and brings visitors from all over the world.

The festival is organised by the Kuru D'Kar Trust, part of the Kuru Family of Organisations (KFO, seven



in all) which state their goal as the promotion of San culture.

This trust also sponsors and promotes the paintings of very gifted San artists, many of whom have exhibited and sold overseas. Nature, and humans' relationship to it, is an over-riding theme in these wildly colourful and imaginative oil paintings. An elderly woman named Dada, recently deceased, was the group's most internationally acclaimed painter.

Another Kuru Family organisation, Gantsicraft, aims to create income generation opportunities for rural dwellers in the district by promoting and marketing (locally and internationally) their arts and crafts. It houses a shop in the centre of Ghanzi and offers quality, authentic San arts and crafts, including ostrich eggshell jewellery and belts, hunting sets, fire sticks, leather items, carvings, and traditional musical instruments. 🐘



Travel COMPANION to...

Khama Rhino Sanctuary

Affording the opportunity to see both black and white rhino - as well as an abundance of other wildlife species - the Khama Rhino Sanctuary (KRS) is a delightful stopover for tourists travelling by road to Botswana's northern reserves, or an ideal weekend getaway for Gaborone or Francistown visitors or residents.

A mere 20 kms from the historically important village of Serowe, the accessibility of KRS is also a draw. This community tourism project, managed and staffed by local village residents, offers game drives, birding, bush walks, and arts and crafts shopping. It also has an education centre where many young children from all over Botswana come for environmental education, as well as a fun time in the bush.

KRS was established in 1989 due to growing concern over the then escalating rhino poaching situation in Botswana. Both black and white rhino - once abundant in Botswana - were during the early 1980s on the brink of local extinction, despite their having been granted protected status as far back as 1922.

Led by the Bangwato Paramount Chief, the then Lt. Gen. Seretse Khama Ian Khama, and other conservationists, the people of Serowe conceived the idea to form a sanctuary to protect the remaining rhinos in Botswana, and hopefully give them safe haven to reproduce and gain numbers.

The first four white rhinos were re-introduced into the sanctuary from the Chobe National Park in 1992. Eight

more rhinos came from the North West National Parks in South Africa.

The highly endangered black rhino was re-introduced in 2002.

The gamble paid off, and both species are doing well, under the watchful eye of sanctuary staff as well as the Botswana Defence Force (BDF), who assist with the constant patrolling of the sanctuary's borders.

To date, KRS has 35 white rhino, and is serving as a source for their re-introduction back to the Moremi Game Reserve, the Makgadikgadi, the Northern Tuli Game Reserve, and elsewhere. And - much to the credit of KRS staff - the male and female black rhinos have mated, and the sanctuary's first baby black rhino was born in 2008! 🐘



Travel COMPANION to...

Serowe

In many ways, the sprawling village/town of Serowe is an important custodian of Botswana's contemporary history.

During the days of the Bechuanaland protectorate (1885 onwards), it was a point of settlement for European missionaries and traders. Two giant leadwood trees – still standing near the dirt trail once used by early travellers – were road markers.

Serowe was a place of refuge for the Ngwato nation, who migrated from Old Palapye in 1902 to the green and fertile region that was surrounded – and thus protected – by hills. It grew to such a size that for years it was called the largest village in sub-Saharan Africa.

Today you can visit the then London Missionary Society (LMS) church, its tall steeple still an important landmark for the town, as it was for missionaries, prospectors and explorers who came from far and wide. The massive church was reconstructed with the original stones it had first been built with in Old Palapye.

Serowe is the birthplace of the country's founding father – and first President – Sir Seretse Khama. And much of the drama of his controversial marriage to an Englishwoman, Ruth Williams, was played out in this village. Today their graves are situated near the Ngwato totem, the duiker (phuti in Setswana) in the royal cemetery. (You must obtain permission to visit these sites).

At the kgotla – the traditional meeting place and customary court, situated below Serowe Hill, there stands an impressive statue of Sir Seretse Khama, erected to mark the tenth anniversary of his death.

The Khama III Memorial Museum – named after Seretse's father, who died when Seretse was young – is housed in a red Victorian building, recently restored, and containing a fascinating collection of furniture, uniforms, correspondence and photographs that chronicle the legacy of the Khama family, and the history of Serowe.

For arts and crafts lovers, there are shopping opportunities at the Boithselo Project where the Bakgalagadi and San peoples manufacture attractive and unique products.



Botswana at a Glance

LOCATION:	Botswana is a land-locked country situated in southern Africa. It borders South Africa, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Approximately two-thirds of the country lies within the Tropics.
COUNTRY SIZE:	Botswana covers an area of 581 730 square kilometres – about the size of France or Kenya.
TOPOGRAPHY:	Most of the country is flat, with some small hills in the eastern areas. Kalahari sands cover 84 percent of the surface area. With the exception of the northern areas, most of Botswana is without perennial surface water.
CAPITAL:	Gaborone
URBAN CENTRES:	Francistown, Lobatse, Selebi-Phikwe
TOURISM CENTRES:	Maun, Kasane
INDEPENDENCE DAY:	30 September 1966
GOVERNMENT:	Multi-party democracy
HEAD OF STATE:	His Excellency Lt. Gen. Seretse Khama Ian Khama
POPULATION:	1.85 million, with an average annual growth rate of 2.4 % (2006 statistics)
NATIONAL LANGUAGE:	Setswana
OFFICIAL LANGUAGE:	English
CURRENCY:	Pula
MAIN EXPORTS:	Diamonds, copper nickel, beef, soda ash, tourism
MAJOR CROPS:	Maize, sorghum, millet



Visitor Information

Accommodation	30	Firewood	32	National Parks – Central Botswana	31
Banks and Banking Hours	29	Fishing	32	National Parks – Northern Botswana	31
Boats (importing)	27	Gaborone Game Reserve	31	National Parks – Southern Botswana	31
Central Kalahari Game Reserve	31	Gazetted Border Posts	26	National Parks – Western Botswana	31
Chobe National Park	31	Getting Around in Towns	26	Nxai Pan National Park	31
Communications	28	Getting There	26	Office Hours	29
Consumer Goods (importing)	28	Health	29	Pets (importing)	27
Credit cards	29	HIV/AIDS	30	Plants (importing)	28
Crime	30	Importation of Goods	28	Restricted Goods (importing)	28
Currency	29	Khutse Game Reserve	31	Safety	30
Customs	27	Luggage Restrictions	27	Self Drive Camping	32
Diamond Purchase	29	Makgadikgadi Pans Game Reserve	31	Shopping	30
Distance Chart	33	Malaria	30	Sun and Heat-Related Problems	30
Drinking Water	30	Mannyelanong Game Reserve	31	Time	29
Drivers' Licenses	27	Maun Educational Park	31	Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park	31
Duty Free Allowances	27	Meat / Dairy Products (importing)	28	Travel Insurance	29
Electrical Supply	29	Money	29	Vaccinations	27
Emergency Numbers	32	Moremi Game Reserve	31	Value Added Tax	30
Entry Formalities	26	Motor Vehicles (importing)	27	What to Bring	28
Firearms & Ammunition	29	National Parks & Reserves	31	What to Wear	28



GETTING THERE

BY AIR

Air Botswana, Botswana’s national and only airline, provides international flights to Johannesburg, and Harare and domestic flights to Francistown, Maun and Kasane.

Air Namibia flies to Maun everyday of the week except Tuesday and Thursday. Air Charter services are also available.

Both Air Botswana and South African Express have daily flights to Gaborone. Air Botswana has daily flights from Johannesburg to Maun. South African Express will begin Johannesburg to Maun flights in 2009.

Most major international airlines from Europe, the United States, Asia and Australia fly into Johannesburg, South Africa, where connecting flights can be booked to Sir Seretse Khama International Airport in Gaborone or to Maun.

For flight details contact:
Air Botswana Central Reservations
Tel: 267 395-1921
Web: www.airbotswana.bw



GAZETTED BORDER POSTS

BOTSWANA / NAMIBIA

Mamuno	07h00–00h00
Ngoma	07h00–18h00
Mohembo	06h00–18h00

BOTSWANA / SOUTH AFRICA

Pont Drift (Tuli)	08h00–16h00
Martin’s Drift	06h00–22h00
Tlokweng Gate	06h00–00h00
Ramotswa (Bridge)	07h00–19h00

South African Express
Tel: 267 397-2397
Web: www.flysax.com

BY ROAD

Botswana is accessible by tarred road from South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia and Namibia. Vehicles are driven on the left hand side of the road. A valid international driver’s license, along with vehicle registration documents, are required to drive in Botswana, and drivers should always carry them.

Most major roads in Botswana are tarred and driving conditions are generally good. The main roads to established areas are regularly graded. Four-wheel drive is required when travelling in the national parks and reserves, as well as in remote areas.

Car and four-wheel drive rental services are widely available in major tourist centres, airports and hotels.

BY BUS

There are scheduled bus services across borders between Botswana and South Africa, Zimbabwe, Namibia and Zambia, as well as good internal bus services linking major and minor towns and villages across the country.

Ramatlabama	06h00–22h00
Pioneer Gate	06h00–00h00
McCarthy Rest	08h00–16h00

BOTSWANA/ ZIMBABWE

Kazungula	06h00–18h00
Pandamatenga	08h00–17h00
Ramokgwebana	06h00–22h00

BOTSWANA / ZAMBIA

Kazungula (Ferry)	06h00–18h00
-------------------	-------------

BY RAIL

From South Africa or Zimbabwe, Botswana can be reached via a railway line that runs along the eastern part of the country, passing through Lobatse, Gaborone and Francistown. Tickets for various classes of passenger travel can be purchased at any of the station offices or on the train. Reservations can be made at the railway station in Gaborone 267 395-1401 and Francistown 267 241-3444.

For more information consult:
The Botswana Railways website:
www.botswanarailways.co.bw

GETTING AROUND IN TOWNS

Taxis are normally a convenient way to get around in towns and are reasonably priced. They are easily identified in designated stations or can be contacted by telephone. Taxis to Gaborone are also available from Sir Seretse Khama International Airport.



ENTRY FORMALITIES

VISAS

Citizens of most European and Commonwealth countries do not require a visa for entry into Botswana.

Visitors should check with Botswana embassies or consulates, or their travel agents, before departure.

It is vital for visitors to carry a valid passport and sufficient funds to facilitate their stay.

Note: For countries with whom Botswana has no diplomatic representation, visa information and processing is available through British Embassies and High Commissions.

LUGGAGE RESTRICTIONS

It is advisable to adhere to the luggage restrictions for both scheduled international, domestic and charter flights: 20kgs (44lbs) on domestic flights, 12kgs (26lbs) on light aircraft (including Okavango Delta charter flights), and 20kgs (44lbs) on international flights.

VACCINATIONS

If you are travelling to Botswana from areas infected with Yellow Fever, you must have a valid Yellow Fever vaccination certificate. Otherwise, no other immunisations are required.



CUSTOMS OFFICES

HEADQUARTERS

Private Bag 0041, Gaborone
Tel: 267 363-8000 / 363-9999
Fax: 267 392-2781

REGIONAL OFFICES

SOUTH REGION
P.O. Box 263, Lobatse
Tel: 267 533-0566,
Fax: 267 533-2477

SOUTH CENTRAL REGION
Private Bag 00102, Gaborone
Tel: 267 363-8000 / 363-9999
Fax: 267 392-2781

CENTRAL REGION
P.O. Box 129, Selebi Phikwe
Tel: 267 261-3699 / 261-0627
Fax: 267 261-5367

NORTH REGION
P.O. Box 457, Francistown
Tel: 267 241-3635
Fax: 267 241-3114

NORTH WEST REGION
P.O. Box 219, Maun
Tel: 267 686-1312
Fax: 267 686-0194

However, it would be wise to have an updated TPD (tetanus, polio, diphtheria) vaccine, and a Hepatitis A vaccine.

CUSTOMS

All goods acquired outside Botswana must be declared when you enter the country.

BOATS

No boat, mokoro or aquatic apparatus may be imported into Botswana, unless the owner is in possession of an import permit issued by the Department of Water Affairs.

For more information contact:
Department of Water Affairs
P/Bag 0029, Gaborone
Tel: 267 360-7100

PETS

The importation of animals is closely regulated for public health reasons and also for the well being of the animals. Domestic pets and livestock may be imported subject to animal health restrictions.

For more information contact:
Director of Animal Health & Production
P/Bag 0032, Gaborone
Tel: 267 395-0500

Note: A valid certificate of identity, rabies vaccination and movement permit issued in Lesotho, Malawi, South Africa, Swaziland, Namibia or Zimbabwe will be accepted at the time of importation into Botswana.

DRIVERS' LICENSES

Drivers are required to carry their licenses at all times. Licenses from neighbouring countries are accepted in Botswana. If not written in English, a certified written translation is required. International drivers' licenses are accepted in Botswana.



DUTY FREE ALLOWANCES

Customs duties are not charged on the following goods imported as accompanied or unaccompanied passengers' baggage:

Wines	2 litres
Spirituos*.....	1 litre
Cigarettes	200
Cigars	20
Tobacco**	250 gms
Perfume	50 ml
Toilet water.....	250 ml

* Includes all other alcoholic beverages

** Includes cigarette and pipe tobacco

Note: Duty will be payable at the applicable rates where travellers import goods exceeding the above allowances. Travellers importing goods for business or commercial purpose will not qualify for the above allowances.

IMPORTATION OF MOTOR VEHICLES

Non-residents visiting Botswana and coming from a country outside the Southern African Common Customs Area for a limited period are normally required to produce a carnet or bill of entry (any duty liability thereon being secured by bond or cash deposit) in respect of their motor vehicles. For further information, please contact Department of Customs.

Note: The Southern African Common Customs Area comprises Botswana, Lesotho, South Africa, Swaziland and Namibia.



WHAT TO BRING

Binoculars, torch, insect repellent, lip salve, sunscreen, sunglasses. Cosmetics, medications, and cigarettes are all available in the major towns, but if specific brand names are needed, it is best to bring enough to last your stay.

However, care needs to be taken to comply with international aviation security regulations for items in carry on luggage. Contact your airline for details.



WHAT TO WEAR

In summer, lightweight, light-coloured cottons are preferable. Garments of neutral colours that blend with the bush and forest are advisable for safaris and game viewing. Avoid synthetic materials and black clothing, as they increase perspiration and discomfort. Bring a lightweight jacket and/or jersey for unexpected temperature changes or rain.

In winter, wear trousers, long-sleeved shirts and blouses and jerseys. From May – August, night temperatures can fall below zero degrees celsius, so warm jerseys and jackets are vital, especially on early morning and evening game drives.

Closed, comfortable walking shoes or gym shoes are a must in all seasons.

Special attention should be given to protection from the sun. Bring a sunhat, good quality sunscreen, sun lotion and polarised sunglasses.

Wide brimmed hats are preferable to baseball caps.



IMPORTATION OF GOODS

CONSUMER GOODS

The following consumer goods may be imported for private use without an import permit, provided they do not exceed the maximum allowable quantities.

Key: PP-per person. PF-per family

PRODUCT TYPE	MAX QUANTITY
MEAT	
Red meat, goat/lamb	25 kg PF
Poultry meat	5 kg PP
Tinned poultry meat	20 kg PP
DAIRY	
Eggs	36 eggs PP
Fresh milk	2 litres PP
OTHERS	
Maize / maize products	25 kg PP
Wheat	25 kg PP
Pulses (beans, peas, lentils)	25 kg PP
Sorghum / sorghum products	25 kg PP
Cabbage, Onions	1 bag PP
Potatoes, Oranges, Tomatoes, Chimolia, Rape, Spinach	
Bread loaves	6 per week

PLANTS

Plants may be imported subject to plant health restrictions, and South African transit permits may also be required in respect of plants shipped through South Africa.

For more information contact:
Ministry of Agriculture, Enquiries
P/Bag 003, Gaborone
Tel 267 395-0500

MEAT / DAIRY PRODUCTS

The regulations on importing meat products change frequently, because they are based on disease outbreaks in different countries. Always ask customs officials upon arrival what are the specific regulations.

For more information contact:
Ministry of Agriculture, Enquiries
P/Bag 003, Gaborone
Tel 267 395-0500

RESTRICTED GOODS

These are goods that can only be imported with a license or permit.

- Narcotic, habit forming drugs and related substances in any form;
- Firearms, ammunition and explosives;
- Indecent and obscene material such as pornographic books, magazines, films, videos, DVDs and software.



COMMUNICATIONS

Most of Botswana is networked by automatic telephone exchanges, with public telephones in even the most remote places.

The International access code in Botswana is 00. When calling international to Botswana, dial + 267.

Cellular phone coverage is provided by three mobile networks in Botswana: Mascom, Orange and be Mobile. Mobile Sim cards are available in most supermarkets and service stations. All major towns in Botswana are network covered, as well as portions of the national highway.

Mobile networks in Botswana offer various services to their subscribers, including Internet access, fax, and International Roaming. It is always important to seek advice about network services so as to choose one that will work for you.

Using a cellular phone whilst driving is against the law in Botswana, and liable to a P300 fine. Earphones or hands-free devices are recommended.

For further information on the network providers in Botswana, consult the following services:

MASCOM www.mascom.co.bw
ORANGE www.orange-botswana.co.bw
BTC www.btc.co.bw
be Mobile www.be-mobile.co.bw



OFFICE HOURS

Government Offices / Departments
7:30 - 12:45 and 13:45 - 16:30
Business 8:00 - 13:00 and 14:00 - 17:00
Shops 9:00 - 18:00 Monday to Friday,
9:00 - 15:00 Saturday
9:00 - 13:00 Sunday



MONEY

CURRENCY

The Botswana currency is the Pula (meaning 'rain' in Setswana). It is divided into 100 thebe (meaning 'shield' in Setswana).

Travellers' cheques and foreign currency may be changed at banks, bureaux de change, and authorised hotels.

The US dollar, Euros, British Pound and the South African Rand are the most easily convertible currencies.

Automatic teller machines accept foreign visa cards, but are mostly found in larger towns and cities. Cultural sites and community art and craft outlets usually only accept cash.

BANKS

Seven main commercial banks, as well as a number of foreign exchange bureaux, operate in Botswana.

BANKING HOURS:

Monday to Friday 8:30-15:30
Saturday 8:30 to 10:45.

CREDIT CARDS

Major credit cards, such as MasterCard and Visa, are accepted throughout the country, in most hotels, restaurants, retail outlets and safari companies. However, shops in remote areas and service stations may only accept cash.



TIME

GMT plus 2 hours



ELECTRICAL SUPPLY

Electricity is supplied at 220/240v. Both square and round wall plugs are used.



FIREARMS & AMMUNITION

The issue of firearms licenses in Botswana is strictly controlled, and all firearms imported under the authority

of an import permit must be licensed immediately upon arrival in Botswana. The importation of firearms that do not have the manufacturer's serial number or other number by which they can be identified, stamped or engraved on a metal part of the weapon is totally prohibited.

It should also be noted that police permits for firearms are issued on a limited quota basis, and there can be a considerable delay in obtaining a permit, particularly on first importation. It is advisable for intending importers to make applications well in advance of dispatch, so that unnecessary inconvenience and expenses can be avoided.

Police permits for firearms are issued by:
Central Arms, The Registry
P O Box 334, Gaborone.
Tel: + 267 391-4202, +267 391-4106



DIAMOND PURCHASE

Visitors to Botswana have the opportunity to purchase diamond jewellery from authorised dealers. A strict certification system is in place to inform the buyer of the origin of the diamond, and the stated value and quality is verified.



HEALTH

Botswana is one of the healthiest countries in sub-Saharan Africa, with good primary health care facilities available throughout the country. However, the following health precautions are advised.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

It is essential for visitors to remote areas of Botswana to have a comprehensive

medical insurance policy, to provide coverage for the treatment of serious illnesses/accidents, and if required, medical evacuation. Personal effects insurance is also advisable.

Check that your insurance policy will be accepted by service providers in Botswana. Ensure that you are treated by licensed medical personnel to enable you to provide your insurance company with appropriate documentation and receipts.

Reasonably priced medical services are available at government clinics and hospitals throughout the country. Private medical practitioners are available in the cities and major towns, such as Gaborone, Francistown and Maun. Gaborone Private Hospital is the largest private hospital in Botswana. The hospital requires medical coverage, or cash payment in advance where medical coverage is not available.

DRINKING WATER

Tap water throughout the country is safe to drink. Bottled mineral water is readily available in most shops and supermarkets, and at camps and lodges. Tourists travelling by road are advised to carry sufficient water at all times.

HIV/AIDS

Visitors are advised to take the necessary precautions against HIV/AIDS and other Sexually Transmitted Diseases.

MALARIA

Malaria, including cerebral malaria, is common in northern Botswana, in the Okavango and Chobe areas, particularly during and immediately following the rainy season, from November to April.

As the strains of malaria, and the drugs used to combat them, frequently change,

and as certain strains can become drug resistant, it is best to seek medical advice before your departure and take any medication prescribed. Pregnant or very young children are not advised to travel to malarial areas.

Other precautions are: to wear long sleeves, socks, closed shoes, and generally keep the body covered, to sleep with a mosquito net and to use mosquito coils and repellent.

SUN AND HEAT-RELATED PROBLEMS

Always take preventive measures that include wearing a wide-brimmed sunhat and sunglasses, liberally applying sunscreen every three or four hours, regularly taking rehydration mixes, drinking plenty of water and fruit juices (at least three litres of liquid daily), avoiding prolonged exposure to the sun, and avoiding excessive amounts of alcohol, which causes dehydration.



SHOPPING

All major towns in Botswana, including Maun and Kasane, have shopping centres and supermarkets, and all basic commodities can easily be purchased. Many regional chain stores operate in Botswana. In addition, there are 24-hour convenience shops at most fuel service stations.

There is an increasing range of local arts and crafts on sale in Gaborone, Maun and Kasane and other tourist areas; they include Botswana's renowned world-class baskets, woodcarvings, jewellery, pottery, tapestries, fabrics and clothing, glassware, and San crafts.

VALUE ADDED TAX

To claim 10% VAT refund for total value of goods purchased, the amount spent

should be more than P5 000. In such cases, the following is required: a tax invoice stating VAT paid, your passport number and your bank account details.

It is always advisable to keep a copy of the VAT form as a record for any follow-up on the transaction.

VAT claims usually can be made at all major border posts and airports.



SAFETY

The self-drive camper driving the open roads in Botswana should always drive at a reasonable speed, and avoid over-taking, except when absolutely necessary.

CRIME

Botswana remains a relatively safe place to visit or live. Take the normal precautions you would take anywhere else:

- Always lock car doors;
- Always lock hotel rooms;
- Don't leave valuables in cars or hotel rooms;
- Take care with your bags in shopping centres and other crowded places, and after coming out of banks or ATM kiosks;
- Avoid walking alone at night.



ACCOMMODATION

All major towns and villages in the country have hotels, lodges, motels and guesthouses, catering to a range of budgets, and some have camping facilities. In and around parks and reserves, there are a variety of lodges, as well as camps in private concessions.

Camping facilities are widely available around the country, both at private

lodges and/or hotels, and within the government parks and reserves.

Visit www.botswanaturism.co.bw for graded accommodation facilities.



NATIONAL PARKS & RESERVES

Botswana's extensive system of national parks and game reserves comprises approximately 17% of national land area. A further 18% of national land is allocated as Wildlife Management Areas which act as buffer zones around the parks and reserves.

The parks are primarily unfenced, allowing wildlife to freely roam, are situated in a variety of habitats and for the most part are well managed.

Camping facilities are available in all national parks and reserves. Campsites typically have standpipes and ablution blocks, with toilets and showers.

All camping in the national parks and reserves is in designated campsites, and campers are not allowed to camp elsewhere in the parks.

Reservations for camping in national parks and reserves should be made prior to departure.

For park camping reservations, contact:
Department of Wildlife & National Parks
Gaborone Office: P.O. Box 131, Gaborone
Tel: 267 318-0774, Fax: 267 391-2354
Maun Office: P.O. Box 11, Maun
Tel: 267 686-1265, Fax: 267 686-1264

Offices can be emailed on dwnp@gov.bw

Note: If you cannot honour your reservations, please cancel well in advance to give others a chance.

NORTHERN BOTSWANA

CHOBE NATIONAL PARK

A park abundant in wildlife, offering a safari experience of a lifetime.

Size: 11 700 km²

When to visit: all year round

Rainfall: 600mm per annum

Altitude: 930m to 1000m above sea level

MOREMI GAME RESERVE

Described as one of the most beautiful wildlife reserves in Africa.

Size: 5 000 km²

When to Visit: all year round

Climate: Temperatures range from about 14° Celsius (July) to 24° Celsius (January)

Rainfall: 525mm per annum, varying

Altitude: 930m to 1000m above sea level

NXAI PAN NATIONAL PARK

Once part of a prehistoric lake that covered central Botswana, this park is now transformed into fossil pans covered with grassland that attract an abundance of game.

Size: 2 578 km²

When to visit: all year round

Climate: Hot, extreme daytime conditions

MAKGADIKGADI PANS GAME RESERVE

Part of one of the world's largest salt pans and prehistoric lakes.

Size: 12 000 km²

When to visit: all year round

Climate: Hot, extreme daytime conditions

Rainfall: 500mm per annum

Altitude: 930m to 1000m above sea level

MAUN EDUCATIONAL PARK

Situated on the eastern banks of the Thamalakane River, the park is an education centre for schoolchildren; it has a variety of wildlife species that can be viewed from game hides.

When to visit: all year round

CENTRAL BOTSWANA

CENTRAL KALAHARI GAME RESERVE

The world's second largest reserve, holding vast open plains, scrub bush, salt pans, ancient riverbeds, and sand dunes.

Size: 52 800 km²

When to visit: all year round

Climate: Hot, dry conditions

Rainfall: 150mm per annum

Altitude: 600m to 1600m above sea level

KHUTSE GAME RESERVE

Characterised by undulating plains and dry Kalahari bush savannah, with an extensive mineral pan system in the reserve, which attracts animals.

Size: 2,500 km²

When to visit: all year round

WESTERN BOTSWANA

KGALAGADI TRANSFRONTIER PARK

Famous for its large antelope herds, this is Africa's first peace park, where animals roam freely across the national borders of Botswana and South Africa.

Size: 36 000 km²

When to visit: all year round

Climate: Hot, dry conditions

Rainfall: 200mm per annum, varying

Altitude: 900m to 1100m above sea level

SOUTHERN BOTSWANA

GABORONE GAME RESERVE

Nestled in the city and a popular spot for city residents, the park offers game and bird viewing, picnic sites and an education centre.

Size: 500 Hectares

When to visit: all year round

Rainfall: 510mm per annum

Altitude: 970m above sea level

MANNYELANONG GAME RESERVE

The name of the park derives from the Cape Vulture, an endangered bird that is protected; the area is fenced and the birds can only be viewed from afar.

When to visit: all year round



SELF DRIVE CAMPING

Embarking on a camping trip in Botswana requires a good deal of planning and preparation. You will be going to remote areas, accessible only by four-wheel drive, where water, petrol or food may not be available. You may often be driving on rough terrain, and through heavy sand, in conditions very different from those you are used to.

As a general rule, take all food requirements to last your stay. Take at least 20 litres of water per person, preferably more; for desert destinations, carry between 50 and 100 litres. Carry at least 100 litres of petrol in long-range tanks or in metal jerry tins. Take spare vehicle parts for breakdowns.

As campsites within game reserves and national parks are usually not fenced, it is important for campers to take necessary precautionary measures to ensure their safety, and to abide by the information provided by wildlife officers.

The following basic camping rules should be strictly heeded:

- Only camp in designated campsites.
- Always sleep in your tent, roof tent or vehicle. Make sure your tent zips up well.
- Don't sleep with legs or arms protruding from the tent.
- Use rubbish receptacles at the campsites; if there are none, carry

away all rubbish until you get to the next town.

- Cigarette butts should be well extinguished and placed in a rubbish bag, not thrown on the ground.
- Make sure the campfire is well extinguished at the end of the evening, or after use, and cover it with sand.
- Don't sleep on bridges or animal paths, particularly those of elephants and hippos.
- Bury all faecal matter and burn all toilet paper.
- Don't bathe or drink from still bodies of water; there is the danger of bilharzia.
- In the Okavango, don't swim in lagoons or streams; there is the danger of crocodiles and/or hippos.
- Children must be constantly supervised. Never leave them alone in the campsite. Never allow children to nap on the ground or in the open.
- Don't stray far from the campsite, or walk in the bush, unless with a qualified guide.

The general rule of thumb for camping in Botswana is - take only memories, leave only footprints.

FISHING

In the Panhandle area of the Okavango, there are a number of camps and lodges that specialise in fishing excursions. Fishing can also be done on the Chobe River, outside the park. Fishing is only

allowed in designated areas of the national parks, and only with an official permit.

For fishing permit enquiries, contact:
 Department of Wildlife & National Parks
 Gaborone Office: P.O. Box 131, Gaborone
 Tel: 267 397-1405
 Fax: 267 391-2354 / 393-2205
 Maun Office: P.O. Box 11, Maun
 Tel: 267 686-0368, Fax: 267 686-0053
 Kasane Office: P.O. Box 17, Kasane
 Tel: 267 625-0486, Fax: 267 625-1623
 Note: Permits must be applied for in person. Both monthly and annual permits are issued.

FIREWOOD

Firewood is defined as wood that is both dead and fallen and which can be removed without the use of tools. Self-drive campers should use firewood sparingly and only when necessary.



EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Ambulance	997 (toll free)
Police	999 (toll free)
Fire Brigade	998 (toll free)
Medical Rescue	911 (toll free)
Medical Air Rescue	390-1601
Mascom	122
Orange	112
be mobile	1333

CREDITS:

Cover photo montage:

"Kalahari Lion" & "San Bushman", courtesy of Grassland Safari Lodge; "Meercat", Fabio Chironi.

Inside front cover: Jan Broekhuis.

Inside back cover: David Luck.

Pages 2-3: Gert Stephan.

Pages 4-5: Top left to right: Gert Stephan; Greg Hughes; Greg Hughes; Fabio Chironi; Gert Stephan; Bottom left to right: Gert Stephan; Fabio Chironi; Gert Stephan.

Page 6: Jan Broekhuis.

Page 7: Top to bottom: Gert Stephan; Fabio Chironi; Jan Broekhuis.

Page 8: Gert Stephan.

Page 9: Clifford Ferreira.

Page 10: Top to Bottom: Lee Whittam; Greg Hughes; Moamogedi Monwela.

Page 11: Left: Graham McCulloch; Right: June Liversedge.

Page 12: Fabio Chironi.

Page 13: Fabio Chironi.

Page 14: Gert Stephan.

Page 15: Gert Stephan.

Page 16: Gert Stephan.

Page 17: Left: Gert Stephan; Right: Sarah Banks.

Page 18: Ignatio de las Cuevas.

Page 18-1: Jan Broekhuis.

Page 19: Jan Broekhuis.

Page 20: Fabio Chironi.

Page 21: Top left: Fabio Chironi; Top right: David Clift. Bottom: Fabio Chironi.

Page 22: Fabio Chironi.

Page 23: Caroline Banks.

Page 24: Jan Broekhuis.

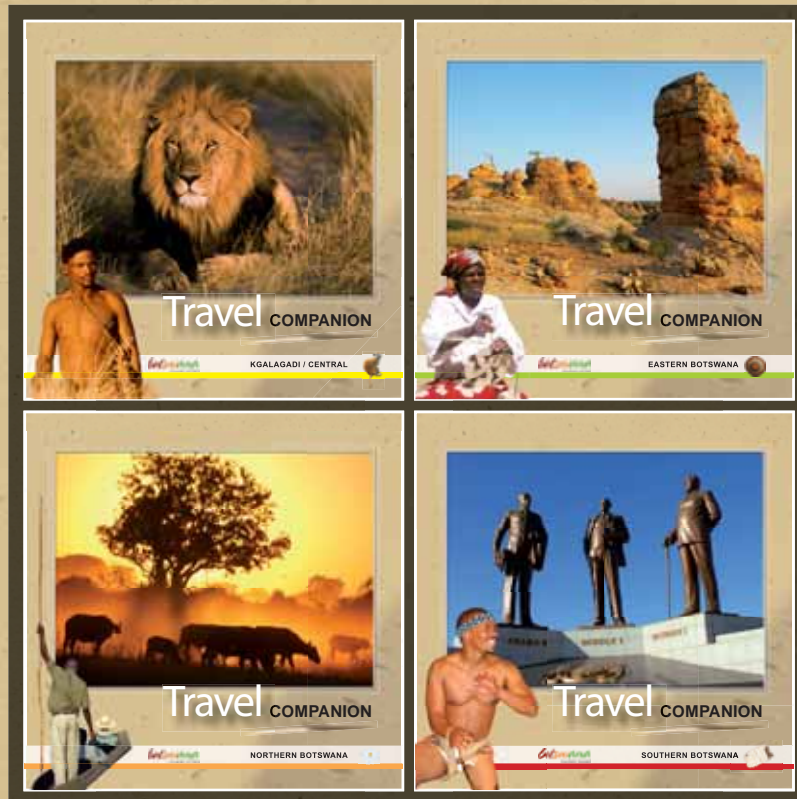
Page 25: Greg Hughes.

All Maps produced by Department of Surveys and Mapping, Gaborone, 2009. © Republic of Botswana.





Travel COMPANION



The definitive travel guides to Botswana

botswana
tourism board