

Safari Clothing: Dress for Success and Comfort

Description

Over the years I have assembled a wardrobe of trusted and proven clothing favorites that go with me on every safari and many of my other trips. These shirts, pants, and shorts are comfortable to walk and ride in and stand up to the thorns and hand washing. Some of the pieces were not cheap, but they last forever. Here I would like to present themes for you to keep in mind when assembling your safari and travel wardrobe.



Guests on Morning Game Drive in May

Go Neutral, not colorful Camo is not necessary, but neutrals are essential.

Pack clothing in neutral colors: khaki, light brown/green, tan.

It might look cliché, but neutrals serve an important function; bright colors and white will distract and alarm the game. We do not want the wildlife to see or react to us: nobody wants to face a curious leopard. White may not come clean after exposure to the red dirt. Dark colors usually blend into the bush, but they might start to feel too hot in the mid afternoon.

Embrace Modern Fabrics

Avoid cotton: there are so many good performance fabrics out there now that are better options. Modern fabrics will keep you warm when damp or after sweating, will come clean after a dusting in the red African dirt, keep you feeling dryer by wicking moisture, and will dry and recover from hand washing and air drying ten times faster than cotton. I still have some 100% cotton tee shirts for sleeping or during the heat of the day, but more and more these days, cotton is missing from my pack.

Many of these fabrics are not stretchy so you may have to size up to have good freedom of movement for climbing into our land rovers.

Pockets are Never Wasted

They may not flatter your figure, but a pocket is never wasted. Besides keeping personal items like sunglasses handy, they keep filters, grey cards and other photo equipment right where you can get them. You cannot always move and rustle around in the vehicle without disturbing the animals or other photographers, and small items may drop and roll all over when we hit bumps. It is easier to get something from a pocket than rummaging to the bottom of your bag.



Guests on morning game drive in September

Warmth in Layers – Just because it is called Africa doesn’t mean it can’t be chilly!

You should bring a light jacket that is windproof. Warmth can be enhanced by wearing layers underneath. We travel in the spring and fall so the mornings will be cool especially in the open and moving game vehicle. Good layering will start with polypropylene or light wool under layers, then middle layers like a light sweater over long sleeve t-shirts.

Beware! Typical fleece pullovers are not usually windproof and will not keep you warm unless you wear them under a windproof/waterproof shell jacket. They are also unnecessarily bulky. A better choice is the new improved lightweight (but just as warm) fleece replacement materials that are windproof. These products will often be called “soft shells” and have microfleece linings in them for warmth.

For afternoons a T- shirt and some light pants or shorts will be enough. Fishing style shirts are great because they keep out the sun but are fashioned to be breathable and have lots of pockets. Pants with zip off legs also work well if you need to strip layers in the bush.

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If you are like me, you will find yourself wearing many of your travel items at home as well as on a trip.

We also recommend:

A warm hat such as a knit cap

A sun hat with a wide brim

Light hiking boots or athletic shoes for stability and grip on natural dirt or rock paths or grass – also the thick soles keep the numerous thorns from poking through.

Sandals for around camp

Small waist packs or backpacks to carry extra gear and stay organized.

A good compact flashlight or headlamp – the stars and darkness are a treat, but you still need to walk around safely.

A refillable water bottle – there is little recycling of plastic bottles in Africa so help the environment you can see by reusing your drinking container

Flash drives for quick sharing of photos of each other

Sun glasses (maybe with a strap), sunscreen, eye drops & moisturizer for the dry and dusty conditions

Bugs are not a huge problem, but you may want a Deet insect spray to use on your ankles to ward off ticks and in case there are a few mosquitos.

Category

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Date Created

September 27, 2010

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