



### Tips and Packing List For Your Safari

This is a very complete list of *suggestions* for hunters going on their safari. **Not everything in the list is necessary**, however most all of it is very good advice.

#### **If you read nothing else on this list PLEASE READ THIS PART : Two Important things**

1. **You MUST register your guns with U.S. Customs before leaving the country. Form 4457 "Certificate of Registration for Personal Effects Taken Abroad". You will need to locate the US Customs office closest to you and take your guns with you for the registration process. *Do this well in advance of your departure.* It is critical that you register your gun(s) US law requires you to have proof of ownership of your firearms when re-entering the country. Form 4457 will provide this proof.**
2. **Look at your Passport. When does it expire? If it expires within a year, get it renewed. Some countries will not allow entry with a passport with only 6 months left before expiration. I saw a guy turned back, in Africa, and made to return to the USA because his Passport would expire within 5 months! Don't be that guy! The sooner you get it renewed, the cheaper it is.**

Get in Shape. You will enjoy your safari more if you are physically fit. Even a plains game safari can involve long hikes on both flat and hilly country.

Practice shooting your rifle from various positions (shooting sticks, off hand, resting against a tree, kneeling, etc.). Practice off-hand follow-up shots. In many situations, you may have a chance at a quick follow-up shot depending on the terrain. You might consider getting a copy of the book *The Perfect Shot* by Kevin Robertson. This book will give you excellent advice regarding the anatomy and shot placement for all African game animals.

Vaccinations and anti-malaria pills (go to the Internet and copy the vaccination recommendations from the CDC, [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov), and take a copy with you to your doctor's office). Go to your doctor several months before your trip as some vaccinations take several weeks or months before immunity is developed. Also, have your doctor give you a prescription for antibiotics that you can take with you in case someone gets sick during safari, some travelers like to have a prescription for sleeping pills for use on the long overseas flights.

Ammunition limitations. Each passenger can take only 11lbs. (5kg.) of ammunition according to airline regulations. For most carriers, the ammunition has to be inside a locked box, inside your luggage (you can't carry it onboard). I use a small Pelican case and put a padlock on it. It does not need to be a TSA lock on the ammo box. Also, you can NOT carry any part of your firearm in your carry on luggage (e.g., rifle bolts, riflescopes). If you are traveling with a non-hunting companion, they also can declare 11 lbs. of ammunition

Luggage weight limitations. Airlines limit the weight of each piece of luggage. Check with the airlines or your travel agent for the current limits.

If you are taking a charter flight into camp, bring a soft gun case. You might have to leave your hard case at the air charter company. Keep this in mind when you are packing your gun case! If you are taking a charter, you will need to limit the weight of your baggage. It is not necessary to bring a lot of clothes on safari. Ideally, you should limit your baggage to your guns plus 35-40 lbs in baggage.

Insurance. Contact your health insurer to be certain your health insurance covers you while you are overseas. Since deposits are non-refundable, consider taking out Trip Cancellation Insurance. Also consider taking out Medical Evacuation Insurance, Global Rescue is the one I use and recommend. I would never consider leaving the country without a Global Rescue enrollment!

Leave a *copy* of your passport, travelers' checks, airline itinerary, Customs Form 4457 and safari contract with a family member. Be sure to bring two or three copies of your Customs 4457 form with you. You are not required to have the original 4457 to re-enter the country. Also give your family member copies of the credit card(s) you are taking and the contact information for the issuing bank (in case your credit card(s) are stolen). In addition, give your family member a copy of your itinerary (with phone and fax numbers) so they can contact you if there is an emergency. Don't forget to stop delivery of your mail and newspaper.

Take photos of all of your important documents, passport, credit cards, etc on your phone, and take photos with your camera. A photo of your passport could be helpful if you loose yours.

## Suggested Packing List

**This is largely a list of suggestions. In the form of {{ Item - and why you might need that item }}**

**I have an abridged version below this one to use as a check off list.**

1. Broad brimmed hat and a baseball cap.
2. Well worn boots and an extra pair of bootlaces.
3. Bring 20' or so of Paracord. Can be used as bootlaces or many things
4. Bring a small assortment of Carabiners. Handy to hang stuff in camp or hang your bag in the back of the cruiser. Also, wire wrap tie downs can be very handy.
5. Warm and windproof jacket, fleece vest, gloves and stocking cap. (Riding around in the back of the Land Cruiser in the morning and sitting around the fire at night can get pretty cold)
6. Boot socks - 5 pair. Buy GOOD SOCKS! I can not stress this enough. It is important to always wear a dry snug fitting pair of socks to avoid blisters. Personally, I like Underarmour's synthetic socks. They fit tight, minimizing the possibility of developing blisters.
7. Three or four shirts If you prefer, take long sleeve shirts-they offer protection from the sun and thorns. The sleeves can be rolled up if it gets hot.
8. Three or four pants and/or shorts Some may prefer pants as opposed to shorts I wear shorts and my legs sometimes get scratched up from all of the thorns and brush. All of your hunting clothing should be olive drab, dark khaki, dark tan or brown. Light khaki, stone or light tan colored clothing are sometimes too light for Africa.
9. Light Raincoat.
10. Underwear. I also like to take a pair of lightweight sweat pants and a long sleeve T-shirt to wear when I am relaxing in the tent. They can also be worn as pajamas if it is cold at night.
11. One outfit to wear at night around the fire, something casual and comfortable, and warm if hunting during the winter.
12. During the rainy season, usually December – April, or while hunting in rainy areas, remember that all of your clothes should be fast drying, synthetics or thin, cotton-no jeans because there are no electric clothes dryers in camp. If it is humid or raining, it is better to have fast drying clothes. Tell the PH to warn the camp staff that some of your clothes are synthetic or they might get ruined by an iron that is too hot when they do the laundry.
13. Pocket knife.
14. Flashlight and extra batteries. I like Petzl's headlamps.
15. Alarm clock and watch.
16. Camera, batteries/charger.
17. Electric adapter/converter if the camp has electricity and you need to recharge your camcorder batteries, or if your wife takes her hair dryer.
18. Toiletry items. Tooth brush, toothpaste, dental floss, deodorant, Q-tips, hair brush, comb, shampoo, bar of bath soap, small scissors, extra contact lenses, contact lens solution, contact lens case, cologne, razors, shaving cream, hand lotion, matches, tweezers and finger nail clippers.
19. Hanging toiletry kits are very handy, because most camps have limited shelf space in the bathroom, if any, I have found that a hanging toiletry kit works great. (I got mine from LL. Bean) You can always find a doorknob or hook to hang it on.
20. Packing cubes mesh front zippered nylon bags (I got mine from LL. Bean). Because you will be living out of your suitcase for a couple of weeks, I find it is easier to pack all of my pants in one cube, shirts in another, socks and underwear in another, etc. That way you have easy access to your clothes without having to dig through your duffel bag full of loose clothes.
21. A spare light weight duffel bag Ziploc and trash bags I take a few ziplocs of assorted sizes for miscellaneous stuff you pick up during trip and a couple of trash bags to separate my dirty clothes and hunting boots from my clean clothes at the end of the safari.
22. First aid kit. First aid booklet, anti-diarrhea pills (Imodium AD or similar, definitely something stronger than Pepto-Bismol), Pepto-Bismol, aspirin, Alleve or similar (for muscle aches), allergy pills, Benadryl can

literally be a life saver if you are allergic to insect bites, especially if anyone experiences anaphylactic shock. Band-Aids, antibiotic cream, cortisone or other anti-itch bug bite remedy, moleskin (for blisters), laxative, antihistamine tablets, anti-malaria pills, antibiotic pills, sleeping pills, non-drowsy cold tablets, cough drops, eye drops, dental kit (Ambesol or similar for toothache and crown/filling adhesive and filler) and prescription medicine.

23. Binoculars. Some people prefer full size binoculars. Others like compact binoculars. Some people take both. My recommendation is a high quality optic like Zeiss, Leica or Swarovski, compact 10x25 or 8x32 or a full sized 10x42. Either will work well as long as it is from a quality manufacturer.
24. Bug Spray with DEET.
25. Sunscreen and lip balm. Very important in the hot dry African sun.
26. Taxidermy tags and shipping instructions.
27. Small day pack, duffel bag or waterproof bag I take a small bag in the hunting vehicle to carry my extra ammunition, sunscreen, gun cleaning kit, raincoat, etc.
28. Travel Kleenex and individual wet wipes in case Mother Nature calls while you are in the bush.
29. Screw driver and Allen (hex) wrenches to fit your rifles and scope mounts.
30. Gun cleaning kit.
31. Lenspen or lens cloth for cleaning camera, binocular and scope lenses.
32. Rifles and rifle slings.
33. Ear plugs and a couple of targets for sighting in your rifles. I keep these in my gun case.
34. Ammo pouch to wear on your belt.
35. Copies of passport, travelers' checks, airline tickets, Customs form and safari contract make several copies and put a copy of each in your luggage and in your rifle case. Also take a photo with your camera and your phone of all the important documents like your passport and 4457. Could save a world of trouble if you misplace them.
36. Copies of itinerary with dates and phone number of your safari company. Put a copy in an outside pocket of your luggage. If your luggage gets lost, they will know where to find you.
37. Travelers' checks, US cash, credit card(s) and local currency if desired. I usually tip the baggage handlers, game scout ph and camp staff in US currency. I have learned that the US dollar is readily accepted in every country I have ever hunted in. I rarely convert any money to local currency unless I am going to shop for curios. Even then, sometimes I will still use US\$. I also take additional money to pay for trophies that I shoot that weren't on my original list ... it happens!
38. Passport, airline tickets, driver's license and Customs Form 4457.
39. A zippered travel wallet that is large enough to hold your passport, airline tickets, travelers' checks and other papers. Check with your PH about the safest place to keep your travel wallet while hunting. I usually lock all my valuables in my gun case.
40. Sunglasses and neck strap.
41. Soft gun case. Protects your rifle from bumps and dust while on the gun rack in the back of the Land Cruiser.
42. Small spiral notepad and pen to record your experiences.
43. Paperback books.
44. Field guide to animals and birds.
45. Cotton bandanas.
46. Eyeglasses, reading glasses and eyeglass repair kit, if necessary.
47. Small sewing kit.
48. Duct tape.
49. If you are traveling with your wife or a hunting partner, pack half of your clothes and ammunition in your partner's bag and have them put half of their clothes in your bag. If the airline loses one of your bags, you will still have some of your ammunition and both of you will have clean clothes.

### **Packing List for Your Carry-On Bag.**

1. Drink lots of water on the long overseas flights, Airplane air is dry and the extra trips to the bathroom will help your circulation.
2. Gum, mints, candy and snacks (cheese crackers, peanuts, etc.).
3. Ink pen and small notepad.
4. Paperbacks.
5. Contact lens case, contact lens solution and an extra pair of contact lenses.
6. Eyeglasses and reading glasses.
7. Sunglasses.
8. Chapstick.
9. Aspirin, sleeping pills, Pepto-Bismol tablets etc
10. All prescription medicine! Do not check any prescriptions in your checked baggage!
11. Eyeshades, eye drops and ear plugs.
12. Phone numbers and addresses of the people you want to send postcards, or whom you would need to contact in case of an emergency.
13. Phone numbers and addresses of your safari company, booking agent and any hotels where you will be staying.
14. Travel Kleenex.
15. Tooth brush, toothpaste and dental floss.
16. Small hand lotion and small deodorant.
17. One clean shirt and underwear. (In the event your checked luggage is lost.)
18. Travel wallet with airline tickets, passport, Customs Form 4457, travelers' checks, credit card(s), driver's license and cash (remember to take some cash in small denominations for tips. I take \$50-\$100 in one dollar bills to tip the airport staff taxi drivers etc.)

### **On Safari**

1. First day - site in rifles - If your rifle is prone to throwing the first shot out of a clean barrel, take a fouling shot. Then, take time to make a couple of good shots on the target to show your PH that you can shoot.
2. First day -- have a talk with your PH about your expectations of trophy size, your comfort level with long shots and the schedule/routine for your safari. Remember, if you don't feel comfortable with the shot-- DON'T TAKE IT. Your PH would much rather try to get you closer or get you a better rest to shoot from than to track a wounded animal.
3. You should treat all of the staff with respect. Take time to learn a few words of the local dialect such as "thank you" and the name of the animals you are hunting.
4. Gun safety is extremely important while on safari. Talk with your PH about when he wants you to load a round in the chamber. The usual rule is that you should never hand the gun bearer a loaded gun and never put a loaded gun in the Land Cruiser. Always double check to make sure your rifle is unloaded and the safety is on.
5. When taking pictures of your trophies, be sure and take a couple of pictures of each trophy while using the camera flash (even in broad daylight). You will be surprised how much this improves the pictures. Take **a lot** of pictures from different angles. You will be surprised that only one or two out of fifty pictures you took actually look good.

## Abridged Version of packing list

Before your hunt, (Now! Do not put this off.)

1. **register your guns with U.S. Customs before leaving the country. Form 4457**
2. Get in Shape
3. Practice shooting your rifle.
4. Get Vaccinations and anti-malaria pills
5. Get Med Evac Insurance. Ripcord or Global Rescue
6. Leave a *copy* of your passport, travelers' checks, airline itinerary, Customs Form 4457 and safari contract with a family member
7. bring two or three copies of your Customs 4457 form with you.
8. Give your family member a copy of your itinerary
9. Take photos of all of your important documents, passport, credit cards, etc on your phone, and your camera

## Suggested Packing List Short Version

1. Hat.
2. Boots
3. Boot Laces
4. Paracord, 20' or so.
5. assortment of Carabiners
6. Jacket, gloves and stocking cap
7. Very Good Socks
8. Shirts
9. Pants/Shorts
10. Rain coat?
11. Underwear.
12. Campfire outfit
13. Pocket knife.
14. Flashlight/headlamp batteries.
15. Alarm clock and watch.
16. Camera, batteries/charger cards.
17. Electric adapter/converter.
18. Toiletry items.
19. Hanging toiletry kit
20. Packing cubes mesh front zippered nylon/plastic bags.
21. A spare light weight duffel bag
22. Ziploc and trash bags
23. First aid kit.
24. Binoculars
25. Bug Spray with DEET.
26. Sunscreen
27. Lip balm.
28. Taxidermy tags and shipping instructions.
29. Small day pack, duffel bag
30. Travel Kleenex/wet wipes.
31. Screw driver and Allen (hex) wrenches.
32. Gun cleaning kit.
33. Lenspen
34. Rifles
35. Rifle slings.
36. Ear plugs/targets
37. Ammo pouch
38. Copies of passport, travelers' checks, airline tickets 4457.
39. Copies of itinerary
40. Travelers' checks, US cash, credit card(s)
41. Passport, driver's license, Customs Form 4457.

42. A zippered travel wallet
43. Sunglasses with neck strap.
44. Soft gun case
45. Small spiral notepad/pen.
46. Paperback books.
47. Field guide to animals and birds.
48. Cotton bandanas.
49. Eyeglasses, reading glasses/eyeglass repair kit.
50. Small sewing kit.
51. Duct tape.