

MOZAMBIQUE PRE-DEPARTURE INFORMATION



Time Zone

GMT + 2 Hours

One hour ahead of Central European Winter Time

Seven hours ahead of Eastern Standard Winter Time, USA

Situation

Mozambique is located on the southeast coast of Africa. It is bound by Swaziland to the south, South Africa to the southwest, Zimbabwe to the west, Zambia and Malawi to the northwest, Tanzania to the north and the Indian Ocean to the east. The country is divided into two topographical regions by the Zambezi River. North of the Zambezi river, the narrow coastline moves inland to hills and low plateau, and further west to rugged highlands, which include the Livingstone-Nyasa Highlands, Namuli or Shire Highlands, Angonia Highlands, Tete Highlands and the Maconde Plateau. South of the Zambezi River, the lowlands are broader with the Mashonaland Plateau and Lebombo Mountains located in the deep south. The country is drained by five principal rivers and several smaller ones with the largest and most important being the Zambezi. The country has three lakes, Lake Nyasa or Malawi, Lake Chiuta and Lake Shirwa, all in the north.

Languages

The official language is Portuguese, which is used for government, education and commerce purposes. A variety of local tribal languages are widely spoken including Makua-Lomwe dialects, spoken in northern Mozambique, several Tsonga and Shona dialects – such as Sena – spoken in central Mozambique and more Tsonga dialects – such as Changane – are spoken in the south. English is often spoken at tourist destinations. Other European and Asian languages are rarely spoken.

Religion

Around 56.1% of the population are Christian, 17.9% Muslim (mainly Sunni) and the remainder follows local native tribal beliefs.

Climate

The climate in Mozambique is tropical in the north and sub-tropical in the south with average day time coastal temperatures between 24°C and 28°C in the dry season and up to 31°C in the rainy season. Temperatures and rainfall can vary greatly between the different regions – the northern areas receive almost twice as much rainfall as the southern provinces. The highest temperatures and humidity year-round can generally be found in the Pemba area and inland in the Zambezi valley. The mountainous interior tends to be wetter and cooler although still humid.

The summer rainy season, when the highest temperatures are experienced, runs from October to March in the south. It starts and also ends almost six weeks later in the north. February is traditionally windy, and this is the month cyclones may occur – it should be noted the Quirimbas Archipelago lies outside and to the north of the Indian Ocean’s cyclone belt. The dry winter season is from April to September and these are the best months for game viewing. The best birding months are November and December.

Maputo is wet, humid and hot during the summer months from October to April with temperatures averaging 88° F (31°C). The cooler, drier months between April and September are the best time to travel to Maputo, with warm and sunny days and cool nights.

Beira has a warm, tropical climate. Evenings are seldom cold, except for a few nights in June and July and the rainfall isn’t too high. In summer temperatures can soar and the humidity levels rise.

Maputo

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Temperature (Fahrenheit)												
High	86	86	85	82	80	76	75	77	78	79	82	85
Low	76	75	74	70	65	59	59	62	65	68	71	74
Temperature (Celsius)												
High	30	30	29	27	26	24	23	25	25	26	27	29
Low	24	23	23	21	18	15	15	16	18	20	21	23
Rainfall												
mm	150	130	90	50	20	10	10	10	30	50	70	90
in	6	5.3	3.9	2	1.1	0.7	0.6	0.5	1.2	2	3.1	3.7
Precipitation												
Days	12	10	9	6	3	3	3	3	5	9	10	10
Humidity												
Percent	89	90	90	89	88	86	88	87	87	87	87	88

Weather is increasingly difficult to predict - below is a guideline of what can be expected by visitors to the Bazaruto Archipelago (Vilanculos area)

- January: Hot. 28-35°C. Rainy season – short sharp showers
- February: Hot. 28-38°C. Rainy season, mostly storms in afternoon – cyclone season
- March: Cooling down. 25-30°C. Little rain.
- April: Weather settled. 25-30°C. Little rain.
- May: Lovely month, weather settled. 20-28°C. Little rain.
- June: Fine weather. 18-27°C. Little rain.
- July/August: Cooler winter months but still warm enough to swim 15-25°C. No rain.
- September: Warming up again. Pleasant month. 18-28°C. Rain unlikely.
- October: Getting hot again. 23-30°C. Rains unlikely.
- November: Hot. 22-33°C. Rains generally start at the end of November
- December: Hot. 23-36°C. Rain. Short sharp showers

Public Holidays

The dates of certain public holidays change from year to year. Generally, if a public holiday falls on a Sunday, the Monday is also declared a holiday.

01 January	New Year's Day
03 February	Mozambican Heroes Day
Varies	Good Friday
Varies	Easter Monday
07 April	Mozambican Women's Day
01 May	Labour Day
25 June	National Independence Day
07 September	Victory day
25 September	Armed Forces Day
04 October	Peace and Reconciliation Day
25 December	Christmas Day

IMPORTANT – PASSPORT REQUIREMENT

Please note visitors travelling to Africa must have a MINIMUM of two blank/empty (non-endorsement) VISA pages in your passport per each country visited. Passports must be valid for six months after intended departure. Foreign passport holders who do not comply with these requirements will either be stopped from boarding the aircraft at point of departure or risk deportation on arrival in Africa.



Visas

This information is intended as a guide only and Journey Beyond cannot be held liable for any incorrect information regarding visa requirements. As visa requirements vary from country to country, we recommend you check with your nearest Mozambican consulate, embassy or diplomatic mission for up to date information as requirements tend to change without warning.

Border visas will only be issued to people travelling for purposes of tourism who are coming from countries where there is no Mozambican consular representation. Travellers from countries that have a Mozambique consulate will need to apply for a tourism visa before travelling.

The Mozambican government doubled the cost of the entry visas with immediate effect in July 2019. All visas applied for in foreign countries of origin, will be affected by the fee increases. Visitors applying for a visa in advance in their home country, may purchase the visas at the new tariffs.

Border visas – obtained on entry to Mozambique by land, sea or air – allow dual entry within a 30-day period and is unaffected by the price increase. Border visas are only for bona fide tourists. Valid proof of accommodation and onward travel must be given. Visas must be paid for in US Dollars. It is important to carry small denominations of dollars, as officials are not in a position to give change. A Mozambique visa takes up a full passport page which must be blank.

Please ensure your passport is valid for at least six months from your departure date and has at least four blank visa pages as Mozambique immigration requires two blank pages and for entrance back into South Africa a further two blank visa pages are required.

Drones in Africa

In many African countries, a drone permit as well as approval to operate the drone from the local Aviation Authority is required for recreational drone use.

The use of drones or camera drones are strictly prohibited in the following areas:

- within 3km of airports or in areas where aircraft are operating,
- over wildlife reserves or national parks,
- hotels, lodges and campsites,
- over people or large crowds,
- roads and moving traffic,
- any sensitive areas including government or military facilities.



Currency

Mozambique's local currency is the Metical however the US Dollar and the South African Rand are widely accepted. When using US Dollars, there must be no markings on the notes and only USD notes printed in 2006 or later are accepted.

Credit Cards and Debit Cards

MasterCard and Visa are accepted in most tourist hotels and lodges. The cards need to have raised credit card numbers so that an imprint may be taken. American Express and Diners Club are not accepted by the banks and therefore rarely at any of the camps / lodges. Cultural sites and community art and craft outlets usually only accept cash. Credit card payments will be processed in Meticaís even though prices are quoted in US Dollars.

IMPORTANT! In remote locations, major hotels are frequently unable to complete credit card transactions due to communication limitations. It is advisable to plan cash payments for expenses incurred during your stay.

Please note that credit card transactions could take anything up to a few months to go through on guests' cards, especially from more remote areas.

Debit cards are not accepted as a form of payment.

Banks

Banks and foreign exchange bureaus are available at all international airports and main towns. Officials may not always be able to issue large amounts of change, so please carry small denominations of cash where possible.

Banking hours:

08h30 to 15h30 Monday to Friday

Many banks in smaller towns and most cambios (exchange offices) close during the lunch hour, except those in shopping centres.

Value Added Tax

Mozambique has value added taxes of 17%

Shopping

Special purchases include basketwork, reed mats, woodcarvings, masks, printed cloth and leather articles.

Electricity

Current is 220/240 volts at 50 cycles per second. Type C (European 2-pin) and Type F (German 2-pin, side clip earth). Adapter plugs should be brought for your electrical appliances. Such adapters are also available at the major airports or at the lodges.

Many lodges are situated in remote areas, and some operate on either solar lighting (backed up by batteries) or on generators. Depending on the choice of lodge / camp, plug points can be found in the rooms. The plug points can be used to charge batteries and sleep apnoea machines, however are not suitable for hairdryers. Where there are no plug points in the rooms, facilities for charging batteries are available in the main area of the lodge / camp. It is advisable to always bring a spare battery.

Customs

Duty Free: The following goods may be imported into Mozambique, by persons irrespective of age, without incurring customs duty: 400 cigarettes or 250g of tobacco; 1l of spirits; 2.25l of wine

Prohibited/restricted items: Narcotics are prohibited. Firearms require a permit.

Mobile Phones/Telecommunications

Mobile phones do not operate in the remote areas of Mozambique. Mobile reception is available in the main centres only. Wi-Fi is becoming popular in the camps / lodges. Depending on the accommodation chosen, Wi-Fi can sometimes be found either in the rooms or in designated areas. Bandwidth is limited by satellite connection.

Tipping

Service staff in Africa depends on tips as part of their livelihood. However, we recommend that tipping be based on the quality of service provided. As a guideline, hotel porters get about USD 1.00 per bag carried each way. Restaurant staff and bar waiters might be tipped at 10% - 15% of the value of the meals or beverages purchased.

A guideline to voluntary tipping in Mozambique is as follows:

Butler: USD 7.00 to USD 13.00 per guest per night

General staff: USD 10.00 per guest per day, and this should be handed into the communal tipping box, usually found in the Reception area.

Private Touring: USD 13.00 per guest per tour

Safety Precautions/Drinking Water

Mozambique has a low crime rate relative to other African destinations. It is a safe place to live, work and visit. However, pick-pocketing and purse snatching does happen, just like large cities and tourist centres, especially in crowded places like markets and public beaches. As in most countries in the world, travellers are advised to take the necessary safety precautions. Do not walk alone in unpopulated streets after dark or draw unnecessary attention to money or jewellery on your person.

Bottled water is available in most tourist centres. Filtered water is available at most camps / lodges and shops offer bottled water. We would like to stress the importance of drinking at least 2 to 3 litres of water per day whilst on safari as dehydration can occur quickly, especially in the summer months.

Health Precautions

Malaria is endemic in Mozambique. The islands are generally healthy, though the usual vaccines (typhoid, polio and tetanus) are sensible. Please consult your physician or travel advisory centre for information and advice on the use of anti-malaria medication. There are many types of prophylactics available on the market and your Medical

Practitioner will assist in finding one that is right for you. Remember to complete your prophylactic course – especially after leaving a malaria area

Mozambique requires no inoculations other than for visitors from Yellow Fever areas. Yellow Fever certificates are required for entry into Mozambique if you have travelled through the yellow fever belt.

Medical Care

Medical facilities are rudimentary and most medical providers do not speak fluent English. Medications are not always available. Public and private medical facilities exist in the city of Maputo and most provincial capitals. For advanced care most guests often choose to travel to South Africa.

Insurance

All guests must take out comprehensive travel insurance covering them for personal effects, accident, medical and emergency travel expenses, cancellation and curtailment. As most lodges have only a handful of rooms, cancellation fees are strictly applied, and you need to be covered for cancellation and possible curtailment.

Driving in Mozambique

Despite official safety regulations, the ability to move forward without being pushed or towed determines the roadworthiness of Mozambican vehicles. Additionally, many drivers exhibit levels of carelessness that will amaze you. Local mini-bus or chapas are not well maintained and you really should think twice before getting into one.

Driving is on the left side of the road. The driver or any authorised co-driver must produce a valid driver's license. The license needs to be in English with a photograph. If not, an International driver's license will be required. Be ready to politely present the originals of your car documentation, driver's license, and compulsory third-party insurance policy as well as your passport when requested by the police.



All vehicles on Mozambican roads must carry two reflective triangles and a reflective vest at all times.

In rural areas, most Mozambicans walk on the roads, since there are no sidewalks. Children and livestock regularly stray on the roads. Be on the lookout; pedestrians do unpredictable things in Mozambique. Do not drive after dark outside of major cities and adhere to the speed limits, especially near villages and settlements.

HAVE A SAFE JOURNEY!!