

Important information for your self drive safari.

Please read carefully. Check your rental vehicle before use and also regularly (on a daily base) during your self drive safari in Africa. We strongly recommend taking this document with you on your self drive safari. Checking your rental 4x4 in advance will help to detect small problems and possible delays during the trip. It is important to know that 4x4 car hire in Africa cannot be compared to renting a car in Europe. In Europe a car can often be used during the entire rental period without any kind of maintenance. In Africa you can expect that during the trip (small or larger) maintenance may be required to the 4x4 (and/or camping equipment). This might cause a delay and / or the scheduled itinerary cannot be met due to a delay.

Self drive travelers should be aware.

Additional Maintenance requirements to be carried out by the hirer

- Check oil, water and tire pressure at all stops.
- Check all roof tent load bars and roof rack fasteners regularly.
- Retighten wheel nuts or check well secured at first stop and when using on gravel roads
- Check for leaks under the vehicle when the vehicle has been standing in one area for a period, this is a simple
- check and takes no time but can warn you of a developing problem.
- Check radiator and grill area for clogging by grass seed, stalks, and mud. Please use grass seed net if necessary.
- Also carefully monitor the temperature gauge, particularly in thick sand in warmer conditions or under loaded open road driving. Do not continue driving without investigation if the temperature gauge increases above normal.
- When operating in very muddy conditions, please wherever possible wash the vehicle and wheels afterwards as the mud dries and becomes abrasive which can affect the brakes and other important components. The mud can also affect wheel balance and handling of the vehicle.
- Mud and deep water crossing can also clog the radiator and affect the cooling of the vehicle. Another reason to monitor the temperature gauge during and after off road use.
- Check for grass stalks which can be caught up in the prop-shaft or drive-train, this can lead to a fire hazard.
- If the vehicle reaches 10000-Km's during the hire period, then the vehicle must be taken to an approved workshop for the routine service.
- Always stop the vehicle and engine if you hear any "out of the ordinary" noises and or smells, smoke or other symptoms of problems. It is very important to be far more aware in remote areas or before entering them, preventative maintenance is far cheaper and less inconvenient than breakdowns in remote areas.
- Check the batteries are secured and the terminals still well fastened.

Be aware of the following when driving an equipped 4 x 4 vehicle

- The higher centre of gravity on these vehicles necessitates for far more cautious and slower driving speeds. Be extremely cautious when traveling on sand or gravel roads with a loaded 4WD vehicle, it is not advisable to travel in excess of 60km/h on these road surfaces and far less in thick sand or on bad road surfaces. Treat gravel roads with caution and respect, many accidents and rollovers occur on these roads. Stay well below speed limits and drive slowly through bends. There is far less traction on these roads and the surface can be bumpy which can lead to the rear kicking out if driven to fast. Areas are remote and emergency services not within close proximity.
- Obey speed limitations at all times. The additional weight on the roof will cause increased body roll and the hirer needs to be aware of this and cautious when negotiating corners and bends in the road.
- Do not overload the roof rack, it can cause structural damage and negatively affect road holding.

- Avoid driving at night wherever possible and where one has to the travel speed must be reduced substantially, there are many animals on the roads.
- It is very important to remember that the vehicles DO NOT fit into automated car wash machines or underground parking lot.
- Be cautious when taking any '4 x 4 obstacles' if you are not comfortable doing through an obstacle either wait for another vehicle or try and find an alternative route.
- When negotiating a water course or river crossing be extremely cautious. It is best to walk into the water to establish the depth of the water and the type of riverbed surface or tractability. In larger pools and rivers where crocodiles may be present be very cautious and try to examine the crossing as best possible from dry land. Once again it is often wise to observe or follow another vehicle. Once you have entered the water it is important to maintain forward motion, which will create a bow wave and reduce the possibility of getting stuck in the mud. Maximum water depth is below the intake pick up to the vehicles air cleaner (+700mm). It is not advisable to cross any water crossing unless there are fresh tracks of other vehicles indicating the road is still open and currently in use. The hirer is liable for any damages to the vehicle or engine caused by water, this is NOT covered by insurance.

4x4 driving will be addressed at handover as the different vehicles have different 4wd systems

Roof tents

- Bedding can be left in the roof tents when folded up and while traveling, this is recommended mainly under slower driving conditions like in the National Parks.
- Most importantly remember the vehicles additional height when negotiating low obstacles.
- Be aware of the 'slide out' ladder systems which have the habit of trapping fingers if not held correctly.
- When folding up tents make sure that you tuck in all material neatly so the tent packs away correctly.
- Check the tent fasteners regularly particularly when on poor roads.
- The flysheet poles and ladder extension is placed under the mattress
- Operation of the tent will be explained in detail on arrival
- Do not pull the zips open by pulling at the cover or mosquito net, use the tag on the zip provided.
- During the raining season the tents may leak water due to extreme weather conditions and the canvas construction of the tent.

Fridges

- The fridges run off 12v and 220v and will run off their own battery as two batteries or a dual battery system is fitted to the vehicles.
- The fridge temperature is presently set at approximately zero degrees Celsius (approximately number 2 on the dial). This allows that the frozen goods in the lower compartments will not freeze but remain partially frozen for up to 4 days. Drinks in the upper compartment will not freeze but remain very cold.
- Depending on the requirements you may choose to adjust the temperature lower or higher.
- The fridges are expensive pieces of equipment and it is important to check that the fridge is securely positioned and won't be damaged on bumpy roads.
- If there is an malfunction with the fridge, check the following:
The fuse is not blown. One fuse is fitted at the rear of the fridge close to where the power cable enters and another at the dual battery system.
The 12V cable connections from battery to rear of vehicle and from the output at the rear of vehicle to the fridge are all secured and not damaged or causing a short. If plugs fitted check that they are making a good connection. The connection from the fridge to the vehicle 12 V output accounts for 90% of the fridge problems.
- Often if the connection is not good and the voltage slightly low the light may display and the fan may even run but the compressor will not run and the fridge will not cool. This indicates a voltage drop along the wire somewhere.

- When traveling short distances or doing minimal driving the dual battery may not charge completely, to avoid running the dual battery low, either lower the fridge temperature overnight or let the vehicle run for a while every day to ensure the batteries are recharged.

Dual battery system and monitor

- The dual batteries system has a monitor and control display for easy use. The power of each battery is indicated by two columns of lights. On either side are two buttons, one for an alarm which will sound if a battery is low and another which can connect the batteries into parallel.
- **Under normal circumstances do not change settings on the dual battery system as it manages itself, the following information is supplied only if it needs to be used to check the batteries or to jump start the vehicle.**
- The left hand button controls the alarm and we recommend leaving this off for normal use.
- The right button controls the battery connections. For normal use the switch must be off (light not displaying) which will allow the vehicles alternator to charge both batteries but the system will not allow the fridge to lower the main battery of the vehicle, the batteries are isolated from each other.
- When starting the vehicle and monitoring the display unit you will notice only one battery gets charge from the alternator, this is the main battery. Only after 4 minutes will the second battery receive charge.
- To jump start the vehicle off the second battery (main battery is low for some reason) the switch can be held down until the light engages to indicate the override is on. If the switch is on then the batteries are connected in parallel which will allow the vehicle to start off the fridge (2nd) battery. The button should be switched off again to avoid the fridge running both batteries flat.
- Should the dual battery system appear to be faulty and the second battery is not receiving charge from the alternator the whole system can be overridden by connecting a cable between the two positive terminals of the two batteries which will allow both to charge. This should only be done where a workshop cannot be reached timeously and as a temporary measure.

Tire pressure

- Reducing tire pressures will improve tractability in thick sand. It will however increase the chance of sidewall damage and therefore should be done only where conditions really necessitate it or as suggested below.
- Heavy sand roads - To reduce the chance of sidewall damage it is best not to lower the pressure below 1.0 bar but for most sandy roads a pressure of 1.5 bar will be more than adequate to allow improved traction. Where necessary you can drop the pressure to 1.0 bar.
- On bitumen (tar) road use manufacturer's maximum specification (2.5 to 3.6 bar). On gravel roads or general off road use drop the pressure to 1.8 bar to reduce jolt and improve ride handling and comfort.
- Do not run the tires on tarred road with pressure below 2.5 bar as this will make the tires run hot which can cause damage to the tire and/or blow-outs.

Trailers

- Always check that the trailer hitch and chain are in place and secured before driving.
- Routinely check that the trailer bolts or fasteners are secured and have not loosened when on rougher roads.
- Check that the dolly wheel is secured with good ground clearance before driving off or remove completely on bad roads.
- The additional battery in the trailer only charges when coupled to the vehicle and while the vehicle is running therefore when standing for a while the battery may run flat and it is best not to run the fridge at a very low temperature.
- Reduce travel speeds, increase following distances and be more cautious when driving with a trailer.
- Reversing a trailer is always a challenge, proceed slowly.

Driving in National Parks – Animal Behavior

- Always obey park rules such as gate and driving time. Only exit the vehicle where allowed, do not leave the demarcated roads and tracks.
- Animals may seem tame and relaxed when you are in the vehicle. This is because they do not recognize the human figure or scent. If you exit the vehicle their behavior will change to “flight” or “fight”.
- In most areas you are not allowed to drive at night. This is to minimize disturbances to the wildlife. If using spot lights, do not shine the light directly into the animals eyes, particularly diurnal animals like the antelope species who can be blinded for up to 3 days.
- Elephants are the only animals that really pose danger while in a closed vehicle. It is always important to respect these animals and keep a safe distance away.
- Keep the engine running in case of charge. Elephant bulls in musk and cows with young are the most aggressive.
- Do not litter.
- Do not feed the animals.
- Be cautious in unfenced lodges and camps at night, do not walk far from vehicle or buildings

Vehicle accidents and procedures

- In the unfortunate event of an accident, follow the general points
- In the case of injuries contact emergency services and your rental company, record your position and have a contact number available.
- Do not admit liability or fault.
- Make sure you record all details of the other party including vehicle registration number, full name and identification/passport number, contact phone number, copy all details of driver’s license.
- Record any details of witnesses who may have observed the accident. Provide all your details to the other party.

General Safety tips

- Avoid driving at night wherever possible, particularly in Botswana, Zambia, Namibia and Mozambique.
- The higher crime areas are around the cities and towns, be cautious when traveling through or staying overnight in these areas.
- Do not walk in towns displaying jewelry, watches or other expensive items and don’t carry a lot of cash.
- Where possible exchanges cash at banks and foreign exchange offices.
- **Use your own discretion and initiative while traveling through Africa. This is only a brief guide so be vigilant at all times.**