



BOOKING CONDITIONS

HOLIDAY GUIDE

COUNTRY GUIDE

(October 2020)

HOLIDAY GUIDE & BOOKING CONDITIONS

When planning your travels it is easy to be swept away by the holiday spirit and overlook 'mundane' details which are not part of your holiday dream. However, the information on the following pages is very important as it forms the basis of your agreement with Somak Holidays and we ask you to read it carefully. In particular, the Booking Conditions detail our responsibilities to you and yours to us and provide guidelines to cover circumstances which may arise.

All holidays booked through Somak Holidays are subject to the following Booking Conditions.

Somak House, Harroviaan Village, Bessborough Road, Harrow on the Hill, MIDDX HA1 3EX
Reservations: 020 8423 3000 Admin: 020 8423 7857 Facsimile: 020 8423 7700
Email: holidays@somak.co.uk Website: www.somak.co.uk

Booking Conditions

Your contract is with Somak Travel Limited, of which Somak Holidays is a registered trading division, and is subject to our privacy policy which can be found at www.somak.co.uk/privacy-policy

1. Your holiday contract: When you make a booking you undertake that you have the authority to accept and do accept these booking conditions on behalf of yourself and your party. A contract will exist upon the issue of our Confirmation Invoice. These conditions in conjunction with the information set out in our brochure form the entire agreement between Somak Holidays and yourself. Any advice/information given to you by your travel agent which is inconsistent with our brochure and these conditions will not form part of your contract with ourselves.

2. Your financial protection: We are a member of ABTA (No V5319) and hold ATOL No 2550 issued by the Civil Aviation Authority. £2.50 per person is added to the cost of this air holiday package and is paid to the Civil Aviation Authority to provide ATOL Protection to you. When you buy an ATOL protected flight or flight inclusive holiday from us you will receive an ATOL Certificate. This lists what is financially protected, where you can get information on what this means for you and who to contact if things go wrong.

We, or the suppliers identified on your ATOL Certificate, will provide you with the services listed on the ATOL Certificate, or a suitable alternative. In some cases, where neither we nor the supplier are able to do so for reasons of insolvency, an alternative ATOL holder may provide you with the services you have bought or a suitable alternative, at no extra cost to you. You agree to accept that in those circumstances the alternative ATOL holder will perform those obligations and you agree to pay any money outstanding to be paid by you under your contract to that alternative ATOL holder. However, you also agree that in some cases it will not be possible to appoint an alternative ATOL holder, in which case you will be entitled to make a claim under the ATOL scheme, or your credit card issuer where applicable.

If we, or the suppliers identified on your ATOL Certificate, are unable to provide the services listed (or a suitable alternative, through an alternative ATOL holder or otherwise) for reasons of insolvency, the Trustees of the Air Travel Trust may make a payment to (or confer a benefit on) you under the ATOL scheme. You agree that in return for such a payment or benefit you assign absolutely to those Trustees any claims which you have or may have arising out of or relating to the non-provision of the services, including any claim against us, the travel agent (or your credit card issuer where applicable). You also agree that any such claims may be re-assigned to another body, if that other body has paid sums you have claimed under the ATOL scheme.

All money accepted from you by a travel agent acting as our agent is held by that agent on behalf of and for the benefit of the Trustees of the Air Travel Trust at all times, but subject to the agent's obligation to pay it to us for so long as we do not fail. If we do fail, any money held at that time by the agent, or subsequently accepted from you by the agent, is and continues to be held by that agent on behalf of and for the benefit of the Trustees of the Air Travel Trust without any obligation to pay that money to us.

3. Your holiday price: When you or your travel agent request a booking with Somak, if we are able to accept the booking, you must immediately pay a non-refundable deposit of £300 per person together with any applicable insurance premium. Occasionally you may be required to pay a non-refundable deposit greater than £300 (which will be advised at the time of booking), this is so that we can secure hotels, flights or products on your behalf that must be paid for by Somak at the time we book them for you. The balance of the price of your travel arrangements must be paid at least 8 weeks before your departure date. If your booking is made within 8 weeks of departure, full payment including any insurance premiums is required at the time of booking. If the deposit is not paid on time, we reserve the right to cancel your travel arrangements. If the balance is not paid on time we shall retain your deposit and reserve the right to cancel your travel arrangements and levy the cancellation charges set out in clause 5 below. All monies you pay to the travel agent are held by them on our behalf at all times. All prices in our brochures or on our website are in £ sterling, per person (based on 2 people sharing).

We reserve the right to change our prices at any time before you book, including any special offers which we may have from time-to-time, and which may or may not be the same as set out in our publicity material.

4. If you change your booking: If, after our confirmation invoice has been issued, you wish to change your travel arrangements in any way, for example, your chosen departure date or accommodation, we will do our utmost to make these changes but it may not always be possible.

Any request for changes MUST be in writing from the person who made the booking or your travel agent. You will be asked to pay an administration charge of £25 per person per change, together with any further charges and/or supplements and/or costs we incur in making this alteration. You should be aware that these costs will increase the closer to the departure date that changes are made and may include the cost of replacement air tickets, you should therefore contact us as soon as possible. We may not be able to make alterations to your holiday arrangements within 21 days of departure without you incurring cancellation charges.

5. If you cancel your holiday: You, or any member of your party, may cancel your travel arrangements at any time. WRITTEN notification from the person who made the booking or your travel agent must be received at our offices. The following scale of cancellation will be payable depending on when the notification of cancellation is received:

56 days or more	Deposit only
55 – 43 days	30% of total holiday price
42 – 29 days	50% of total holiday price
28 – 15 days	75% of total holiday price
Less than 14 days	100% of total holiday price

At the time of cancellation, if the deposit paid is greater than any of the cancellation bands above, the higher amount will apply as a cancellation charge. If some, but not all, party members cancel, additional charges may be payable by the remaining members (e.g. under occupancy charges).

Note: If the reason for your cancellation is covered under the terms of your insurance policy, you may be able to reclaim these charges.

6. If we change or cancel your holiday: It is unlikely that we will have to make any changes to your travel arrangements. However, we do plan the arrangements many months in advance and occasionally, therefore, it may be necessary to make changes and we reserve the right to do so at any time. Most of these changes will be minor and we will advise you or your travel agent of them if practicable and time permitting. Please note that carriers, timings and routings given in the brochure are for guidance only and may be subject to change. Such changes are deemed to be minor changes. Other examples of minor changes include alteration of your outward/return flights by less than 12 hours, changes to aircraft type, change of accommodation to another of the same standard, or change of airports within the London area.

We also reserve the right in any circumstances to cancel your travel arrangements. For example, if the minimum number of clients required for a particular travel arrangement is not reached, we may have to cancel it. However, we will not cancel your travel arrangements less than 8 weeks before your departure date, except for reasons of force majeure or failure by you to pay the final balance. If it is necessary for us to cancel your travel arrangements for reasons other than force majeure and non-payment of the final balance, we will pay compensation to you as set out in this clause.

If we make a major change to your holiday, we will inform you or your travel agent as soon as reasonably possible if there is time before your departure. You will have the choice of either accepting the change of arrangements, accepting an offer of alternative travel arrangements from us, if available (with no amendment fee although subject to any difference in brochure price), or cancelling your booked holiday and receiving a full refund of all monies paid except for insurance premiums and/or amendment charges. In all cases, except where the major change arises due to reasons of force majeure, we will pay compensation as detailed below for the period before your departure within which the notice of cancellation or major change is notified to you:

56 days or more	Nil
55 – 43 days	£10
42 – 29 days	£20
28 – 15 days	£30
Less than 15 days	£50

'Force Majeure': This means any situation outside our control such as war or threat of war, riot, industrial dispute, technical or maintenance problems with means of transportation, re-scheduling or cancellation of flights by an airline or main charterer, terrorist activity, natural or nuclear disaster, fire, adverse weather conditions or other unforeseen circumstances that amount to force majeure.

As we do not control the day-to-day management of your accommodation it is possible that the reserved accommodation may not be suitable or available to you once you have arrived in resort. If this happens we will endeavour to provide accommodation of at least the same standard in the same resort area. If only accommodation of a lower standard is available then we will refund the difference of the brochure price between

Booking Conditions

the accommodation booked and that available, together with compensation of £50 per person.

In February 2005 European law (EU261) introduced new consumer rights where you may suffer denied boarding, delays or cancellation of your flight. These rights are against the carrier concerned and not against us. In some situations you may be able to cancel your flight and receive a refund of the flight element however this will not entitle you to reimbursement of the cost of the holiday from us. Details of your rights are available at all EU airports and from the airlines concerned.

7. If you have a complaint: If you have a problem during your holiday, you must, whilst in resort, inform the relevant supplier (e.g. your hotelier) and your resort representative as soon as possible and they will endeavour to put things right. You must also complete a Customer Report Form whilst in resort. If your complaint is not resolved locally, please follow it up within 28 days of your return home by writing to our Customer Services Department giving your booking reference and all other relevant information. Please keep your letter concise, to the point and typed if possible. This will assist us to quickly identify your concerns and speed up our response to you.

If you fail to report any problems whilst in resort we will have been deprived of the opportunity to investigate and rectify your complaint whilst you were there, and this may affect any rights you may otherwise have had under this contract.

8. What happens to complaints: It is unlikely that you will have a complaint that cannot be settled amicably either whilst in resort or following your return home. However, disputes arising from this contract which cannot be settled amicably may, if you wish, be referred to the ABTA Arbitration scheme (see below) or to a court of law. The ABTA Arbitration scheme is arranged by The Association of British Travel Agents Ltd., but is administered quite independently by CEDR. The ABTA scheme provides a simple and inexpensive method of arbitration on documents alone, with restricted liability on you in respect of costs. The scheme does not apply to claims for any amount greater than £5,000 per person or £25,000 per booking form. If you choose to proceed to Arbitration under this scheme, you must send a written notice of your decision to ABTA within 18 months after your scheduled date of return. Full details of the scheme are available from The Association of British Travel Agents Ltd. at 30 Park Street, London SE1 9EQ, www.abta.com

9. Our liability to you: We are responsible for ensuring that your package holiday is of a reasonable standard and as described to you. If any part fails to reach this standard and affects the enjoyment of your holiday, we will offer reasonable compensation providing it is not due to events outside our control. Our liability in all these cases is limited to a maximum of twice the value of the services affected.

Somak Holidays accept responsibility for death, injury, or illness caused by the negligent acts and/or omissions of our employees or agents, together with our suppliers and sub-contractors, servants and/or agents of the same, whilst acting in the course of their employment in the provision of your package holiday. We will pay compensation equivalent to that which would be

awarded in an English Court, but will not offer compensation if the injury, illness or death is caused by your own fault or the fault of someone unconnected with the package, or an event that could not have been expected or avoided even with all due care. In respect of international carriage by air or sea our liability in all cases will be limited in the manner permitted by international conventions. You may ask for copies of these from our offices.

If you purchase excursions which do not form part of the package holiday, your contract will not be with Somak Holidays but with the supplier, we regret we are unable to accept any responsibility in these circumstances, however, we may be able to offer assistance as described below.

10. Personal injury unconnected with your booked travel arrangements: If you, or any member of your party, suffer death, illness or injury whilst overseas, arising out of an activity which does not form part of your package travel arrangements with ourselves, we shall, at our discretion, offer advice, guidance and assistance. Where legal action is contemplated and you want our assistance, you must obtain our written consent prior to commencement of any proceedings. Our consent will be given subject to you undertaking to assign any costs and/or benefits received under any relevant insurance policy to ourselves. We limit the cost of our assistance to you or any member of your party to £5,000 per booking form.

11. Behaviour: Please note that your holiday arrangements will be terminated by ourselves or the suppliers concerned (e.g. airlines, hotels, tour leaders etc.) if you are behaving in such a way as to cause, or be likely to cause, danger or distress to others or damage to property. In this situation, Somak will not be liable to make any refund, pay any compensation, or meet any costs or expenses you incur as a result of your behaviour. Please note that you are at all times subject to the laws of the country you are visiting and must respect local cultures and customs.

12. Conditions of carriage/accommodation: Each journey (whether undertaken or not) that you book by air, land or sea is governed by the conditions of the carrier which undertakes to provide that carriage. Some of these conditions limit or exclude liability and are often the subject of international agreements. Copies of applicable conditions are available for inspection at the offices of the carrier concerned or through ourselves. It is your own responsibility to reconfirm the onward or return sectors of any air journey with the carrier concerned or such carrier's duly authorised agents and according to such carrier's regulations. The outbound flight is reconfirmed by Somak Holidays prior to your departure. All accommodation booked by ourselves on your behalf is subject to the 'house rules' of the proprietor.

13. Insurance: It is imperative that you ensure that all of your party have adequate and appropriate insurance. You are free to choose your own policy but you must satisfy yourself that the policy is adequate for your needs, in particular for any activities you are contemplating during your holiday.

14. Documentation: Where travel and health documents are necessary to comply with the requirements of any country you may wish to visit, then it is your responsibility to procure them. If failure to obtain any such documents results in fines, surcharges or other financial penalty being imposed upon us then you shall reimburse us accordingly. You must be aware, by consulting your own doctor if necessary, of specific health precautions deemed prudent for the country/resort you intend to visit and obtain the appropriate medication/inoculations.

15. By making a booking with us you agree to the use and disclosure of the information you provide for the following purposes: to enable us to process your booking (when it may be transferred abroad), for market research and analysis, to prevent fraud and to enable us to contact you by letter, telephone or email. In order for you to travel abroad, it may be mandatory (as required by government authorities at the point(s) of departure and/or destination) to disclose and process your information for immigration, border control, security and anti-terrorism purposes, or any other purposes which they determine appropriate.

16. Surcharges: We reserve the right to increase the price after booking if any increase in price occurs in respect of:

- (i) Air fares or other transport costs,
- (ii) Taxes or duties payable, including new taxes introduced by any government or local authority
- (iii) Adverse changes to currency exchange rates

We will not pass on any increase equal to or less than 2% of the original package price and if the cost of your holiday increases by more than 8% you may decide to cancel the holiday and have a full refund or chose another one if we are able to offer one, except for the insurance premiums or amendment fees paid after booking. If you want to cancel you must tell us within 14 days of being advised of the increase. In return we will not change the cost of your holiday within eight weeks of departure. Equally, where our costs fall after the package has been bought, we will pass onto you any benefit and reduced costs to ourselves as a result of changes to the items listed above.

17. Law and jurisdiction: The contract between us, and these booking conditions, are governed by and construed in accordance with English law. All parties agree to submit to the exclusive jurisdiction of the English Courts.

Publication date: October 2020.

Somak Holidays is a division of Somak Travel Limited, Registered Office Somak House, Harrovia Village, Bessborough Road, Harrow on the Hill, Middlesex HA1 3EX. Registration No. 958261.

Holiday Guide

Please read the Holiday Guide and Booking Conditions carefully as these, together with other information contained in our brochure, form the terms and conditions of the contract between you and Somak Holidays ('Somak'). The Booking Conditions detail our responsibilities to you, and yours to us, and provide guidelines to cover circumstances which may arise.

We trust that you will thoroughly enjoy your holiday and sincerely hope that the experience will ensure that you will book with us again. The basis of a good holiday is the careful selection by you of your resort/hotel/itinerary. Space in our brochure is restricted, hence we strongly recommend you seek supplementary and independent information from the applicable tourist offices, libraries, guide books and the internet, rather than rely solely upon the necessarily limited presentation of brochure information. We are happy to advise you generally, but the ultimate choice of holiday destination is yours.

ACCOMMODATION

Unless otherwise stated, accommodation is in standard twin/double rooms, although twin or double beds cannot be guaranteed. Specific room requirements cannot be guaranteed as the allocation of rooms is at the discretion of the hotel proprietor. Rooms are generally available between noon and 3pm, and are to be vacated between 10am and noon, irrespective of your arrival or departure times. Dayrooms, subject to availability and extra cost, may be available. A triple room is usually a twin/double room, with an additional bed of a folding, pull-out design, hence conditions may be cramped. The standard and location of single rooms is not always as good as twin/double rooms (even if a twin/double room is booked for sole occupancy). A supplement is usually payable whether the room allocated is a single or a twin room. Superior and deluxe rooms (or similar) may have the same facilities and be the same size, it may only be the view or position of the room that is different. In the tropics, be prepared to encounter insects (e.g. cockroaches, mosquitoes, ants, etc.) in your hotel room, especially at beach resorts where they are a natural occurrence and do not reflect the standard of hygiene and cleanliness. The term 'sea view' or similar means the sea can be seen from your room but may be at an angle or partially obscured due to foliage.

AIRLINES

Airlines use a variety of aircraft for long haul flights, e.g. Boeing 747, 767, 777 and 787 Airbus A-300, A-310, A-330, A-340 or A-380. Many airlines featured by us operate a code-share system, whereby partner airlines may operate flights on the stated airlines behalf. It is not possible to cancel travel arrangements without cancellation charges being applied because of this. Domestic connections within the UK or to Europe are generally on narrow-bodied aircraft.

AIRPORT TAXES

UK Air Passenger Duty and all UK Airport departure taxes are included in your holiday price. Foreign departure/airport taxes vary and may be payable locally, in cash, for each departure. If departure taxes need to be paid locally we will provide this information with your travel documentation, although this information is subject to change. If you are travelling to more than one destination on your holiday, you may be required to pay a departure tax at each point.

BAGGAGE

Baggage allowances will be shown on your air tickets (infants do not get a baggage allowance). Excess baggage is carried at the airline's discretion and usually incurs charges, payable directly to the airline. Your personal effects and baggage are the responsibility of the airline from check-in to baggage recovery at your destination airport. In accordance with the International Conventions that apply to the air travel industry, compensation for delay, loss of, or damage to baggage, from the airline (on international, or on domestic sectors ticketed as part of an international journey), is limited to up to 1200 Euros. However, if travel insurance is effected, the actual value of any loss (subject to any deductibles, limitations or exclusions of the policy) is normally payable. In order to obtain any compensation, you must complete a 'Property Irregularity Report' before you leave the airport, with a representative of the airline within the time limits specified on your air ticket. For all transfers, it is your responsibility to ensure that all your belongings are loaded onto the correct transfer vehicle. Please ensure that you have adequate insurance cover for loss or damage to baggage.

BROCHURE ACCURACY

Every care has been taken to ensure that the information in this brochure is accurate at the time of printing. The facilities described at a hotel and of tour itineraries are those that are typically available. It is conceivable that hoteliers may, without notice,

decide to change facilities which may then be temporarily, or even permanently, unavailable for e.g. maintenance purposes or during periods of low occupancy. As a result of local conditions e.g. weather, time of year etc., safaris, tours or excursions may change from those advertised in our brochure/advised in your itinerary. Occasionally it is also necessary to change hotels/lodges/camps on tours. Such changes are beyond our control but when we are advised of any significant or long-term changes prior to your departure, we will try to notify you if practicable and time permitting.

BROCHURE PRICES

All prices in our brochures and on our website are in £ sterling per person, based on two people sharing. The prices detailed in this brochure should be used as a guideline only, as it is possible that some of the prices contained within the brochure may have changed since it was printed. You will be informed of the actual price at the time of booking. All prices are based on special contract rates with suppliers, and we will not make any adjustments should similar services be offered at a different price locally. Extra Night Prices: All per night prices shown are based on the actual dates that you occupy the accommodation, and not on the date that you leave the UK. Number of nights stated indicate the actual number of nights spent in resort. Please see Booking Conditions (clause 3).

CHILD PRICES

Children under 12, sharing a room with two full paying adults, may receive a discount on their holiday. Child prices are available on request. Children must be under 12 on the return date of your holiday to qualify for a child reduction.

CUSTOMERS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Less developed destinations may lack even the simplest facilities e.g. ramps or lifts etc. and we cannot guarantee that the correct apparatus and necessary modifications exist in any accommodation outlined in our brochure. However, we do wish to provide every possible assistance and request that you provide full details in writing at the time of booking, so that we may assist with the planning of your holiday.

COMPLAINTS WHILST ON HOLIDAY

Please see Booking Conditions (clause 7). If you have reason to lodge a complaint whilst on holiday, it must be reported in writing to the representative, or your driver if on safari, for action to be taken in resort. Please retain a copy of the report lodged with the representative. It is unreasonable to take no action whilst on holiday and complain on return when it is too late for us to rectify the situation.

CREDIT CARDS

Payments made by credit cards overseas, may be subject to a handling fee. Services paid for by credit card will be subject to the applicable rate of exchange at the time the voucher is presented to the credit card company, and may differ from the rate prevailing on the date that the service was provided. Certain local banks may levy an additional charge.

CURRENCY & EXCHANGE

Some countries have restrictions on the importation and exportation of local currency. Please check with the relevant Embassy or High Commission. Never exchange money on the black market. Please ensure you have sufficient monies to cover all expenses whilst on holiday, as our local representatives are unable to help in the event of having insufficient funds in resort.

ELECTRICITY AND WATER SUPPLY

At times, the demands on the local supplies of electricity and water may exceed the supply, with resultant power cuts, water shortages and/or problems with plumbing and drainage. Items usually affected include air-conditioning, running water (hot and cold), lighting and mini bars. Please note that occasionally these shortages may be for extended periods and may be distributed unevenly throughout the hotel/resort. Power and water rationing imposed by the local authorities may also take place at various resorts. Whilst electrical wiring standards do always meet local safety standards, on occasion they may be lower than those applicable in the UK. Tented accommodation on safari may utilise gas lighting and have basic bathrooms.

EXCURSIONS

Any excursions booked and paid for at your resort are operated by the local handling company and subject to their booking conditions/cancellation charges. Refunds cannot be claimed from ourselves once you have returned to the UK as we are not party to the provision of the services. Local prices may vary. We strongly advise you to only book excursions from reputable and licensed local tour operators. Others may not be able to offer the same level of safety and security, and are often not adequately insured, or licensed. It should also be noted that some types of travel insurance do not cover claims arising from excursions and tours purchased in resort (in particular cancellation of such excursions and tours and losses suffered as a result of partaking in hazardous activities for which an additional premium was not paid).

FLIGHTS

All flights are subject to government approval and may be withdrawn or amended at any time, without Somak incurring liability. All travel information including aircraft types, timings, days of operation and carriers are shown for guidance purposes only and are subject to change. We reserve the right to substitute alternative airlines. Any such change will not entitle you to cancel without penalty. Flights are often full, so your choice of seats may not be available, and it may not be possible to obtain seats together. We recommend that you check-in at least 3 hours prior to the scheduled departure. Check-in desks close well before the scheduled departure time for your flight, and the carrier reserves the right to deny boarding to passengers not checking-in by the time specified. If you fail to check-in on time and miss your flight, we have no liability to you. We have no control over the allocation of seats and provision of specific meal requirements as this is the responsibility of the airline. Disabled and less mobile passengers and children, for safety reasons, will not be allocated emergency exit seats. Almost all airlines operate a total ban on smoking on their flights. The Captain in command of your aircraft by law retains all rights pertaining to the carriage of passengers, cargo, flight routing, etc. Should the Captain of the aircraft refuse to carry you, or your baggage, we will not be liable for any inconvenience suffered, costs incurred, or loss of enjoyment but would assist wherever possible in such circumstances. Flights that are described as direct are those that require no change of aircraft during the journey. Stops may, however, be made en route for refuelling or to embark/disembark passengers. Many airlines operate a 'code share' system whereby partner airlines may operate flights on the stated airlines behalf. Flight times are approximate and, unless otherwise stated, are from London.

FLIGHT DELAYS

Whilst these are regrettable, delays unfortunately may occur due to technical problems, inclement weather or air-traffic control delays. Where long flight delays result in lost holiday time, no refunds are given by hotels/suppliers for unused accommodation/services, as these are held for delayed arrivals. If your flight is cancelled or delayed and boarding is denied by the airline, you must claim compensation under the Denied Boarding Regulations 2004 from the airline itself. Any payments received constitute your only rights of compensation arising from the cancellation, delay or denied boarding. Consequently Somak is not liable for any inconvenience suffered, costs incurred, or loss of enjoyment suffered as a result of any such delay. We will, however, endeavour to assist in these circumstances. During any flight delay, the airline concerned may, at their entire discretion, be able to provide refreshments and other services and, in extreme conditions, overnight hotel accommodation. We, however, do not undertake to make any such arrangements. Recompense for such delays may be claimed through certain types of holiday insurance – please check to make sure your holiday insurance policy covers such losses.

HEALTH, SAFETY & SECURITY ABROAD

Whilst we only contract with reputable suppliers abroad, it is important to note that some countries and/or suppliers do not match British health and safety standards. The applicable safety standards and regulations which apply overseas are those of the country concerned and as a result, general standards of safety, hygiene, fire precautions etc. can be different to those we take for granted in the UK. You are therefore advised to take great care when first venturing into unfamiliar buildings or surroundings. Upset stomachs are a common occurrence whilst abroad and can often be attributed to, for example, the change in climate or ice-

cold drinks. Local hygiene and food preparation standards are not to blame as a mere change in diet and water can upset the stomach. Sensible precautions need to be taken especially with regard to raw food, drinking water and ice in drinks. We take your safety very seriously. Should the Foreign & Commonwealth Office advise that people should not visit a particular country, we will act upon this advice as appropriate. However, as media coverage indicates, many countries we feature are subject to political and economic instability. Crime against people and property are a fact of life throughout the world and hence it is important to be extra vigilant when visiting strange countries. You have the same responsibility for your personal safety and possessions abroad as you do at home. Avoid drawing attention to yourself by wearing expensive jewellery, carrying expensive camera equipment, publicly displaying large amounts of money etc. Do not leave valuables unattended, and, where possible, store them in a safe. Always respect local customs, standards and sensibilities especially in areas of cultural and religious importance, as failure to do so may offend local inhabitants.

HOLIDAY AND FLIGHT CHANGES IN RESORT

Any changes that you might wish to make to your flight details or accommodation in resort are subject to availability and must be paid for locally. Should you decide to change your accommodation to another featured in our brochure, you will be charged the local rate and not as shown in our brochure. In addition, the original hotel may charge cancellation charges if you leave. Flights usually cannot be changed in resort except by buying new tickets (the cost may be recoverable from your insurers if there is a medical reason which necessitates the change).

HOTEL FACILITIES

Please note that charges may be made for the use of hotel facilities such as golf, tennis, spa, water sports, children's clubs, etc. Please contact us prior to booking if you have specific queries regarding facilities.

INSURANCE

It is imperative that you ensure that all of your party have adequate and appropriate insurance. You are free to choose your own policy but you must satisfy yourself that the policy is adequate for your needs, in particular for any activities you are contemplating during your holiday. Certain activities are considered hazardous, check that you are fully insured.

LUGGAGE ALLOWANCE

For economy-class passengers, many airlines have a strict limit of 20kg baggage allowance, plus 3kg for hand luggage.

MAINTENANCE WORK

Necessary renovation and maintenance work may be carried out at any time, although this work is kept away from guests as far as possible, to minimise any disturbance or inconvenience. (Also see 'resort development').

MEDICAL INFORMATION

You should ALWAYS consult your doctor before travelling for confirmation of inoculations and/or medication recommended for travel in your chosen destination. Practical advice is available from the Hospital for Tropical Diseases Healthline: telephone 020 7950 7799 (calls cost 50p per minute and last 7-8 minutes on average). A safari is a physically strenuous undertaking across often-remote locations; any relevant pre-existing medical conditions or previous medical history should be declared to Somak and your travel agent (if used).

MEALS

The standard of meals and services varies immensely, usually in line with the standard of accommodation booked. Meals that are included in your meal plan are usually taken in the main restaurant and will be a buffet or set menu. 'A la carte' meals and speciality restaurants are at additional cost. Breakfast is usually simple English or continental style. 'Half Board' is normally breakfast and buffet/set menu dinner. Some hotels offer a buffet dinner up to a certain voucher value which is at the discretion of the hotel and can be topped-up locally. 'Full Board' means breakfast, buffet/set menu lunch and buffet/set menu dinner. 'All Inclusive' – sometimes not all bars and restaurants are included and supplements may be charged for certain brands of drinks, speciality meals/ restaurants. Meal supplements at peak seasons are obligatory, whether meals are taken or not.

MINIMUM/INSUFFICIENT NUMBERS

Tours may be subject to minimum numbers, and may be cancelled in the event that these are not met. You will then have the choice of booking an alternative holiday with us, though if the alternative

is at additional cost the difference will be payable by you, or have a refund of monies paid. Such cancellations will usually be advised a minimum of 8 weeks before departure.

PHOTOGRAPHY

In many cultures it is polite to ask permission before taking a photograph of a person and you may be asked to pay to photograph people. Do not take photographs of airports, bridges, government offices or military buildings. Always check with your guide/representative/ driver. Some countries may require you to register or bond your video equipment with customs on entry.

PREGNANCY

Most airlines will refuse permission for women to fly who will be 28 or more weeks pregnant on the date of return travel. Failure to comply with airline regulations may result in cancellation and denial of boarding, and we cannot be held liable for any such occurrence.

PUBLIC AND RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

Please note that services may be curtailed or limited during public holidays, and certain religious holidays. Such public or religious holidays can be called at very little or no prior notice.

REPRESENTATIVES

We employ the services of highly experienced local ground handling companies to oversee all aspects of your holiday as booked in the UK. They will be your first point of contact should you experience any difficulties whilst on holiday and will endeavour to help. You will be met by an airport representative on arrival in your chosen destination, who will provide you with local contact details.

RESORT DEVELOPMENT

Construction work can cause discomfort, vibration and noise at certain times in resorts. We have no control over building work and we are unable to anticipate the speed or extent to which such development may occur. Should we learn of specific developments at or close to your accommodation that are likely to affect the enjoyment of your holiday, we will do our best to contact you before departure. If we are of the opinion that the building works may reasonably be considered to seriously impair the enjoyment of your holiday, we shall offer you the opportunity to transfer to an alternative holiday of comparable type. If the alternative offered is at additional cost, the difference will be payable by you, or we will give you the option to cancel with a full refund of all monies paid.

ROADS

Conditions can be rough and journeys may be long and uncomfortable with infrequent breaks. We strongly recommend that you conduct further research to satisfy yourself that you and your party will be able to withstand the physical rigours involved. All distances and travelling times quoted are approximate and may vary for operational reasons. Driving times may take a lot longer than you would expect.

SCUBA DIVING

We strongly recommend that you only partake in this activity with a registered company that is affiliated to P.A.D.I., or a similar such organisation. It is dangerous to fly, or proceed to altitude, less than 48 hours after you have dived or diving within 48 hours of a flight. Please ensure that you have adequate insurance cover.

SWIMMING

Swimming along many coasts can be dangerous due to strong undercurrents and other elements. Please seek the advice of the local representative before venturing into the sea and avoid swimming in deserted areas. Do not let non-swimmers or children jump into a swimming pool without first checking the depth and means of exit.

TICKETS & TIMINGS

Having received your payment, you will be sent your tickets and other documentation approximately two weeks prior to departure. Check all details including names and initials carefully. Please note that flight timings may have been adjusted since your confirmation invoice was issued. Your itinerary will be sent with your tickets. Once issued, tickets are non-transferable, non-changeable and non-refundable. Some tickets (eg for light aircraft flights) are issued in resort and handed to you on arrival at your destination.

TIPPING

Tipping is customary in many parts of Africa, but please note that it is entirely discretionary and we recommend that you only tip if you feel that you have received good service.

TOURS – SINGLE SUPPLEMENTS

The supplements are applicable for single occupancy if travelling with at least one other person. All tours can be taken by a single person travelling alone, but will incur a higher supplement, details of which are available on request.

TRAVEL ADVICE

We are working with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to do all that we can to help British travellers stay safe overseas. Before you travel, we recommend that you visit the FCDO website at www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice for up-to-date travel advice.

VALUE ADDED OFFERS

All offers are available for holidays started and completed within the periods specified and all nights must be consecutive.

VISAS AND PASSPORTS

Visa information in this brochure is provided for British passport holders who are citizens and residents of the United Kingdom. Non-UK passport holders should consult the relevant Embassy, High Commission or Consulate for visa details. It is the responsibility of all passengers to ensure that they hold the correct and valid travel documents, including visas for all countries to be visited. Failure to do so may result in your intended travel being curtailed or terminated, and we will not accept liability for your loss in such circumstances. All UK passport holders travelling to any country featured in this brochure require a 10-year passport, valid for at least 6 months on the date of your intended return to the United Kingdom. All passengers must carry their own travel documentation. All children travelling must be in possession of their own passport. If you are travelling to more than one country on your holiday you may be required to hold multiple entry visas. The time taken to process a visa varies tremendously, however, you should allow at least four weeks by post and two weeks if using a visa service. Note: False declarations on your visa form may result in you being denied entry to the country you intend visiting. Visas may be obtained via The Visaservice www.cibtvisas.co.uk/somak, Tel: 0207 593 6223, email info@cibtvisas.co.uk. Please note that the passport/visa requirements are for guidance only and are subject to change. Please check there have been no amendments.

CHOOSING A HOTEL

To assist you in selecting the accommodation that is most suitable for you, we have devised a ratings system based on our opinions and those of our customers, rather than local or international ratings.

CONNOISSEUR COLLECTION

The Somak Connoisseur Collection is a selection of the finest hotels and tours featured in our portfolio. The holidays within this brochure bearing the Connoisseur Collection logo, offer high levels of quality and exclusivity.

Sun Ratings

Somak's 'Sun' ratings give an overall view of a property and take account of factors such as accommodation, food, facilities and service.

5☺

First-class standards of accommodation and service, usually with an excellent range of facilities.

4☺

Good standards of accommodation and a range of facilities.

3☺

Comfortable accommodation offering medium-class facilities.

As standards of accommodation vary from country to country, Somak's 'Sun' ratings reflect the standards to be expected within one particular country or region. It is generally not appropriate to compare ratings from one country to another.

Somak Holidays also produce an ESSENTIAL HOLIDAY INFORMATION BOOKLET which is sent out with your travel documents. This contains important information that relates to your holiday, and we would strongly recommend that you read this carefully before departure. A copy of this booklet is available on request, if required earlier.

Country Guide

Kenya

From the vivid aquamarine shades of the Indian Ocean to the enchanting lakes, fringed pink by flamingos on the Rift Valley floor, Kenya is a startlingly beautiful land.

Famed for its striking wildlife bounding across the acacia-studded savannah of game parks, such as Amboseli, the Masai Mara, Samburu and Tsavo, Kenya is a safari-lover's dream; vast national parks and reserves encompass one-tenth of Kenya's surface, spanning desert, grasslands and dense mountain forest.

Kenya's human population is equally as fascinating: around 40 different ethnic groups live in Kenya, including the Kikuyu, the Luo and the proud and beautiful red-clad Masai, who still lead a semi-nomadic lifestyle of cattle-herding along the southern border.

An efficient flight network connects most regions in Kenya, making flying safaris a superb option.

Jomo Kenyatta International Airport in Nairobi is the entry point for most visitors, and along with Wilson domestic airport they form the hub for regional flights. As a consequence many visitors spend some time in Nairobi, where there is a wide selection of hotels. Explore Nairobi with caution as levels of street crime can be high; do not wander about at night and always seek advice from your representative or guide.

Flying time: Non-stop flights from London to Nairobi take approximately 9 hours.

Time difference: Three hours ahead of GMT.

Currency: Kenyan Shilling.

Passports: Your passport should be valid for a minimum period of 6 months after your date of return and have at least two blank pages.

Visas: British passport holders require a visa for Kenya which can be arranged before departure or on arrival. Multiple-entry visas cannot be issued at the point of entry, and must be obtained in advance through the Kenyan embassy. Other passport holders should check with the Kenyan Embassy.

Vaccinations: Vaccinations are recommended, please consult your doctor.

For the latest information click on the 'country information' tab at <http://www.somak.com/africa/kenya>

NAIROBI, Kenya – Average Temperature (°C) Average Rainfall (mm)												
JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	
25°	26°	25°	24°	22°	21°	21°	21°	21°	24°	23°	23°	
25	51	127	203	152	51	25	25	25	51	102	76	

MOMBASA, Kenya – Average Temperature (°C) Average Rainfall (mm)												
JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	
31°	31°	32°	32°	29°	28°	28°	28°	29°	30°	31°	31°	
25	25	51	203	330	152	102	51	51	76	102	51	

Tanzania

This vast East African country is home to Africa's highest mountain, its most famous national park and its largest game reserve.

The plains and savannahs of the Serengeti National Park are considered the premier spot on the continent to see wildlife roam unheeded across vast plains. Nearby, within the steep walls of the Ngorongoro Crater lies one of the most densely concentrated populations of African animals on earth.

Both flying safaris and road safaris (conducted in 4x4 vehicles) are available.

The exotic palm-fringed beaches on the spice islands of Zanzibar are an excellent choice for relaxing after a safari.

Flying time: Flights from London to Dar es Salaam, via Nairobi, take approximately 9 hours 45 minutes.

Time difference: Three hours ahead of GMT.

Currency: Tanzanian Shilling.

Passports: Your passport should be valid for a minimum period of 6 months after your date of return and have at least two blank pages.

Visas: British passport holders require a visa for Tanzania which can be arranged before departure or on arrival. Multiple-entry visas cannot be issued at the point of entry, and must be obtained in advance through the Tanzanian embassy. Other passport holders should check with the Tanzanian Embassy.

Vaccinations: Vaccinations are recommended, please consult your doctor.

For the latest information click on the 'country information' tab at

<http://www.somak.com/africa/tanzania>

ARUSHA, Tanzania – Average Temperature (°C) Average Rainfall (mm)												
JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	
33°	33°	32°	29°	27°	26°	26°	27°	29°	31°	32°	32°	
25	51	127	356	254	25	25	25	25	25	51	51	

ZANZIBAR, Tanzania – Average Temperature (°C) Average Rainfall (mm)												
JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	
27°	27°	27°	26°	26°	25°	24°	25°	25°	26°	26°	28°	
76	76	127	381	254	51	51	51	51	76	76	152	

Rwanda

Known as the land of 1,000 hills, this country couldn't be further from the clichéd African image of arid deserts and dry bush. Winding roads hug verdant slopes, every inch carved into fields with crops ranging from banana trees to maize. In the valleys are great sweeping tea plantations, rice fields and coffee groves.

The bamboo and mid-altitude forests of the Volcanoes National Park in the north are home to the rare mountain gorillas and the high-altitude Nyungwe Forest in the south, one of the largest remaining rainforests in Africa, is home to 13 primates, including chimpanzees and colobus monkeys, rare orchids and nearly 300 different species of birds.

A landlocked country, Rwanda makes up for this with the stunning Lake Kivu, with beaches at Gisenyi and inlets and coves at Kibuye. Out in a kayak, you can paddle around forested islands and nod hello to the fishermen in dug-out canoes.

Flying time: Flights from London to Kigale, via Nairobi, take approximately 10 hours.

Time difference: Three hours ahead of GMT.

Currency: Rwanda Franc.

Passports: Your passport should be valid for a minimum period of 6 months after your date of return and have at least two blank pages.

Visas: British passport holders do not require a visa for stays of up to 3 months. Other passport holders should check with the Rwandan Embassy.

Vaccinations: Vaccinations are recommended, please consult your doctor.

For the latest information click on the 'country information' tab at

<http://www.somak.com/africa/rwanda>

KIGALE, Rwanda – Average Temperature (°C) Average Rainfall (mm)												
JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	
19°	19°	19°	18°	18°	18°	18°	18°	19°	19°	19°	18°	
105	110	170	170	120	25	20	40	100	130	160	125	

Uganda

Uganda, 'the Pearl of Africa' offers a unique safari experience. Where else would you search for the 'big 5', follow a troupe of chimpanzees and track mountain gorillas in just a few days. Add to this over 1,000 bird species, the majestic River Nile, the glorious 'Mountains of the Moon' and Lake Victoria, so it's not surprising that this small country is up at the top of many travellers' wish list.

Flying time: Flights from London to Entebbe, via Nairobi, take approximately 9 hours 30 minutes.

Time difference: Three hours ahead of GMT.

Currency: Uganda Shilling.

Passports: Your passport should be valid for a minimum period of 6 months after your date of return and have at least two blank pages.

Visas: British passport holders require a visa for Uganda which can be arranged before departure or on arrival. Other passport holders should check with the Ugandan Embassy.

Vaccinations: Vaccinations are recommended, please consult your doctor.

For the latest information click on the 'country information' tab at

<http://www.somak.com/africa/uganda>

ENTEebbe, Uganda – Average Temperature (°C) Average Rainfall (mm)												
JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	
22°	22°	23°	21°	21°	21°	20°	20°	21°	22°	22°	22°	
100	80	140	275	260	95	60	78	76	110	140	125	

Ethiopia

Ethiopia features some of the highest and most stunning places on the African continent and is famed for its rock-hewn churches, monolithic obelisks and ancient monasteries.

Ethiopia is also a marvellous wildlife destination, with many endemic mammals including the unique Simien wolf.

With flights to Zanzibar and Mombasa it is simple to combine a fascinating tour of Ethiopia with a relaxing break on an exotic beach.

Flying time: Flights from London to Addis Ababa take approximately 8 hours.

Time difference: Three hours ahead of GMT.

Currency: Ethiopian Birr.

Passports: Your passport should be valid for a minimum period of 6 months after your date of return and have at least two blank pages.

Visas: British passport holders require a visa for Ethiopia which can be arranged before departure or on arrival. Other passport holders should check with the Ethiopian Embassy.

Vaccinations: Vaccinations are recommended, please consult your doctor.

For the latest information click on the 'country information' tab at www.somak.com/africa/ethiopia

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia – Average Temperature (°C) Average Rainfall (mm)												
JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	
24°	24°	25°	25°	25°	23°	21°	21°	22°	23°	23°	23°	
15	35	65	85	75	120	235	245	140	30	0	0	

EAST AFRICA SAFARI GUIDE

A safari is an incredible adventure that will introduce you to the wonders of Africa – friendly people, diverse and beautiful landscapes, and if you are lucky, many different animals and birds. However, this is not something that should be undertaken lightly as often the distances covered are vast and journeys may be uncomfortable at times. We offer different types of safari, so please read the following information to enable you to choose the most appropriate one.

SHARED SAFARIS BY ROAD – These have fixed itineraries with set departure days. They are shared with a small group of travellers in a Somak 4-wheel drive vehicle in Kenya and Tanzania. All guests are guaranteed a window seat and access to the game viewing hatch. We hold generous allocations of rooms on these set itineraries, so they are easy to book and confirm, although we would strongly recommend that you book early for the peak periods such as during the migration in the Masai Mara and the Serengeti, as these periods are very popular.

For all these safaris there is the option to pay for the exclusive use of a safari vehicle. You can also choose to fly from the Masai Mara to Nairobi or Mombasa at the conclusion of your safari. Please see below for further information.

We have also showcased a number of suggested itineraries to help you choose your perfect safari. These can operate on any day of the week and can be tweaked to suit your requirements with extra days in any lodge or camp. We therefore do not hold allocations and each element has to be confirmed separately. Some suggested itineraries are detailed within this brochure. Further suggestions can be found on our website www.somak.co.uk

If you cannot find your perfect safari in the pages of this brochure or on our website, we can tailor-make a personalised itinerary just for you, to create your dream holiday. This could be an adaptation of one of our classic or suggested itineraries, flying or by road, or a combination of both. You are limited only by practical considerations such as travelling times and flight networks, the availability of your chosen lodges or camps, and your budget. A selection of camps and lodges throughout Kenya and Tanzania can be found on our website www.somak.co.uk

A higher deposit may be required at the time of booking for some lodges and camps.

YOUR SAFARI VEHICLE ON A SAFARI BY ROAD – Our safari vehicles are driven by expert driver-guides who accompany you throughout your safari.

Our shared safaris by road in Kenya use a maximum of six seats, thus guaranteeing you a window seat and access to the game viewing hatch.

On a shared safari by road you can book a vehicle and driver-guide for the exclusive use of your party. This affords you greater flexibility with game viewing as you may have favourite animals that you would like to see or particular areas within a game park that you want to visit – although please bear in mind that no sighting of animals in the wild can be guaranteed! The applicable supplements to book an exclusive vehicle on a shared safari by road are available on request.

ON THE ROAD – Safaris often cover long distances on rough and uneven roads and may be dusty or muddy. Drives between game parks and lodges are made at a relatively high speed in order to make the journeys as comfortable as possible. Occasionally vehicles may become stuck in mud or even break down, but help is normally available nearby. Safari vehicles are not air-conditioned. On long journeys comfort breaks will be taken, often at curio shops, but the facilities will be basic in nature.

Approximate distances and/or travelling times are shown between points on each itinerary. These should be used as a guideline only, as travel may take a lot longer than

expected due to poor road conditions or stops to view game. Changes to itineraries, routings and camps or lodges are sometimes unavoidable, e.g. due to rainfall, and it may be necessary to drive greater distances. Local conditions may lead to last minute changes en route.

A number of our itineraries include flights or the option to take one or more flights – please see the 'Flying Safaris' section below for further information.

Please note that at present the road into the Masai Mara is in a very bad condition in places and the final section can be an uncomfortable journey taking a considerable time. On our shared safaris by road we do offer the option to fly out of the Mara at the conclusion of your safari to Nairobi for a supplement of from £170 or to Mombasa for a supplement of from £370 (prices only valid when pre-booked in the UK). Baggage allowance is restricted to 15 kg on light aircraft and should be in soft bags. If flying from the Masai Mara to Mombasa, beach luggage cannot be stored at Somak House in Nairobi, so your luggage would be restricted to 15 kg for your entire holiday.

FLYING SAFARIS – Choosing a flying safari offers you complete flexibility, from which day you depart the UK to the combinations of destinations, game parks and lodges and camps you choose. Flying between each destination allows you to cover more ground in a shorter period of time. Flying safaris are fully flexible and the number of days at each location can be increased or decreased, therefore no allocation is held and all services are subject to availability (if any element is not available we will suggest the best alternative).

Flights are in light aircraft and the baggage allowance is strictly 15 kg per person and should be in soft bags. Where possible, additional luggage can be left at your hotel or at the Somak Lounge and retrieved after the safari. Depending on your routing, a change of aircraft may be required as well as additional stops to pick up/drop off passengers en route to your final destination. Transfers and game drives will be provided by the lodge or camp in their vehicles and will be shared with other guests. A window seat in safari vehicles is not guaranteed at some lodges and camps, although there is usually the option to pay for exclusive use of a safari vehicle (subject to availability). For total flexibility and exclusivity the internal light aircraft flights can be arranged on an exclusive charter basis for your party at a supplement. A higher deposit may be required at time of booking.

GAME DRIVES – A safari promises both excitement and the unexpected – close encounters with wild animals, bumpy roads and helping out when the odds are down. Every day on a Somak Safari is different with amazing experiences, but don't expect lazy days. Game viewing activities, when taken from your lodge or camp, occur in the early morning (so book an early morning wake-up call!) and late afternoon, and usually last between one and two hours. Some game drives take place whilst driving from one lodge or camp to the next. Please note that game viewing is not an exact science and sightings of particular species cannot be guaranteed. At some lake lodges game drives are not provided, but optional excursions may be purchased locally. Game drives are not included at tree lodges, as they overlook waterholes and salt licks.

MEALS ON SAFARI – Guests booked on a shared safari by road are often referred to as a group when travelling in the same vehicle or convoy of vehicles. Lodges and camps prefer to reserve tables in their dining areas to ensure that space is available, but unfortunately it is often not practical to allocate individual tables for every couple or family and so they usually assign tables to guests that are travelling together, even if they have not booked together.

CHILDREN – Children are welcome on selected safaris. On road safaris, we recommend that families with children book their own safari vehicle, to avoid concerns about disturbing fellow passengers. Children under the age of seven are not permitted at some lodges. Please contact us regarding restrictions for children on safaris.

WHAT TO TAKE ON SAFARI? A soft bag is best as there is limited space and luggage allowance is 15 kg. We recommend neutral colours, comfortable shoes, and warm clothing for early morning and evening game drives. Additional items to take include sunscreen, camera, binoculars, strong insect repellent and a hat.

BALLOONING – Instead of an early morning game drive you can enjoy an optional hot-air balloon flight over the Masai Mara or the Serengeti. Please ensure that your holiday insurance covers activities such as ballooning as many insurance policies require the payment of an additional premium to cover 'hazardous activities'. In the event of your ballooning being cancelled, we are unable to refund any such insurance premiums. Balloon flights will only operate in the event that your pilot judges the conditions to be safe and appropriate for your flight. Adverse weather conditions or other factors may lead to the cancellation of the balloon flight. As on any aircraft, the pilot reserves all rights in respect of the carriage of passengers and their luggage/equipment. A full refund of the cost of your balloon flight, if appropriate, will be provided in the event of cancellation as a result of matters beyond our control, but Somak will not pay any compensation for disappointment as a result of the cancellation of your balloon flight. Should an additional ballooning excursion be booked that coincides with a pre-arranged game drive or bush breakfast, no refund for either will be available. Height and age restrictions apply – children under the age of 7 are usually not allowed; the minimum height restriction is 1.2 metres. Prices displayed are only valid when pre-booked in the UK.

SOMAK SAFARI LOUNGE – Guests can relax and recuperate in the comfortable Safari Lounge, the first one of its kind in East Africa. This is available to all Somak guests passing through Nairobi (time permitting), and is the perfect place to enjoy refreshments, an air-conditioned rest area and showers. Many guests consider this a huge benefit and comment on the welcome hot food and refreshing drinks. You can store your luggage here if you wish.

GORILLA TREKKING

Observing gorillas in the wild is a very special experience and it is important to preserve these fantastic, endangered animals, so only a limited number of permits are available in each park. Every visitor must obtain a permit before they can embark on a trek, so it is essential to book well in advance. Permits need to be paid for at the initial booking stage and are non-refundable.

Anyone that embarks on a gorilla trek must be fit and in good health, as reaching the gorillas in their natural habitat can be tough, arduous and wet. To reach the gorillas requires trekking through thick forest at heights of up to 3,000m over sometimes difficult terrain. If on the day of your trek you are sick with a cold, flu or other contagious illness, visiting the gorillas will not be permitted and you may not be refunded the cost of the trek.

It is generally quite cool, particularly in the evening, so warm clothing is advised. Recommended clothing is long trousers and shirts when in the forest to avoid nettle stings. Sturdy walking shoes or hiking boots are essential. It often rains so take waterproof clothing and protection for your cameras.

Only one hour is allowed with the gorillas, at a distance of at least 7 metres. Flash photography is not allowed. Throughout the trek you will be accompanied by a ranger who will explain the rules and take you to the gorillas.

Of course there is no guarantee of seeing a gorilla as they are in their natural habitat.

Country Guide

South Africa

Cape Town experiences hot, sunny and dry weather during November to March and is a great time for touring. April to August is cooler and can be rainy with the rainfall peaking in June and July however this is the best time to see the Southern Right Whales in breeding off the coast at Hermanus. September and October start to see the temperature getting warmer again with more sunshine.

The area around Kruger National Park may experience rainfall from December to March, this is a popular time to visit if you want to see fewer tourists, but can be rather wet. In April and May the weather is becoming drier and night time temperatures begin to drop. June to August can see cooler temperatures and by September and October you will experience much hotter weather and see concentrations of animals around watering holes as the grasses recede. November is an unpredictable month with hot dry weather and maybe the first rains of the season.

Flying time: Non-stop flights to Cape Town take approximately 12 hours and Johannesburg 11 hours.

Time difference: South Africa is two hours ahead of GMT.

Currency: South African Rand.

Passports: Your passport should be valid for a minimum period of 30 days from the date of exit from South Africa and have at least two blank pages.

Visas: British passport holders do not currently require a visa for holidays up to 90 days. Other passport holders should check with the South Africa Embassy.

Vaccinations: Vaccinations are recommended, please consult your doctor.

Yellow fever: Visitors require a valid yellow fever certificate if coming from or transiting through a yellow fever risk area.

For the latest information click on the 'country information' tab at <http://www.somak.com/africa/southafrica>

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
26°	26°	25°	25°	19°	18°	17°	18°	18°	21°	23°	24°
0	0	25	51	76	76	76	76	51	25	25	25

Zambia

Zambia has three different seasons: December to April which is warm and wet, May to August which is cool and dry and September to November which is hot and dry.

The area around Victoria Falls is a year round destination. Between March and May you will see the towering spray as the mighty waters cascade over the basalt rock. During dry season it is possible to get closer to the Falls. When the water is at its highest, the clearest views are from the Zambian side as there is not as much spray. The lower levels during dry season change the views completely and at this time the Zimbabwean side offers better viewing as the gorges here take the majority of the flow.

The remote parts of the South Luangwa are only accessible during the dry season from May to October and many properties offer the choice between walking safaris and game drives. From November to April the Lower Zambezi area is a better choice as you can do game viewing by boat.

Flying time: Non-stop flights to Livingstone (Victoria Falls) take approximately 1 hour 45 minutes from Johannesburg.

Time difference: Zambia is two hours ahead of GMT.

Currency: Kwacha.

Passports: Your passport should be valid for a minimum period of 6 months from the date of entry into Zambia and have at least two blank pages.

Visas: British passport holders require a visa which can be obtained from Zambian High Commission in London before travel. Single and double entry visit visas are available at all ports of entry, but multi-entry visas are not. Carry the correct amount of cash as change may not be available. Other passport holders should check with the Zambian Embassy.

Vaccinations: Vaccinations are recommended, please consult your doctor.

Yellow fever: Visitors require a valid yellow fever certificate if coming from or transiting through a yellow fever risk area and/or if travelling between South Africa and Zambia (including transit passengers).

For the latest information click on the 'country information' tab at <http://www.somak.com/africa/zambia>

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
21°	21°	21°	18°	17°	16°	18°	22°	24°	23°	22°	22°
229	203	152	25	10	0	0	0	11	25	102	152

Malawi

Lightweight clothing, sandals, hats and, sun screen are recommended. Mosquitoes are most active in the early mornings and evenings, so pack repellent and long-sleeved clothing to protect your wrists and ankles at these times.

Flying time: Non-stop flights to Blantyre take approximately 2 hours 15 minutes from Johannesburg.

Time difference: Malawi is two hours ahead of GMT.

Currency: Kwacha.

Passports: Your passport should be valid for a minimum period of 6 months from the date of entry into Malawi and have at least three blank pages.

Visas: British passport holders will be issued a 30-day visa on arrival, free of charge. Other passport holders should check with the Malawi Embassy.

Vaccinations: Vaccinations are recommended, please consult your doctor.

For the latest information click on the 'country information' tab at www.somak.com/africa/malawi

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
22°	23°	22°	21°	19°	16°	16°	17°	20°	23°	24°	23°
231	196	143	53	12	1	3	1	2	11	56	190

Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe has a sub-tropical climate that is influenced by altitude. There are 4 distinct seasons – warm wet season from November to March; transitional season from April to May; cool dry winter from May to August; and a warm dry season from August to October. Rainfall is highest on the High Veld with an average of up to 1,020 mm while the Middle Veld receives 410 mm to 610 mm and the Low Veld receives less than 400 mm. Average temperature ranges in Harare are from 7 to 21°C in June or July to 16 to 27°C in November.

Flying time: Non-stop flights to Victoria Falls take approximately 1 hour 40 minutes from Johannesburg.

Time difference: Zimbabwe is two hours ahead of GMT.

Currency: US Dollar and South African Rand.

Passports: Your passport should be valid for a minimum period of 6 months from the date of entry into Zimbabwe and have at least three blank pages.

Visas: British passport holders require a visa which can be arranged before departure or on arrival. Other passport holders should check with the Zimbabwean Embassy.

Vaccinations: Vaccinations are recommended, please consult your doctor.

For the latest information click on the 'country information' tab at www.somak.com/africa/zimbabwe

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
20°	20°	20°	19°	16°	14°	14°	16°	19°	21°	21°	20°
190	177	107	32	10	3	1	2	7	32	93	173

Botswana

Most rainfall is between November and March. April and May have warm days and cool nights but is a good time to visit the Kalahari and Okavango Delta as the parks have dried out allowing greater access. From June to August it is colder but is the most popular time to visit Botswana as the Okavango flood waters have arrived attracting large numbers of game to the area. September and October is very hot and the best time for the big game safaris as the landscape is dried out so concentrating the game. November can either be hot like October or you will see the start of the rains bring cooler temperatures.

Private concessions in Botswana are more exclusive and allow you to partake in walking safaris, off road game drive and night game drives. In the national park itself you have to be back at your accommodation by sunset so there is no night game drives. In the national parks you cannot do walking safaris or off road game drives.

Game drives in Savute are all conducted in safari vehicles. Game activities in Chobe are conducted in game vehicles or on water depending on what property you stay at. Game drives in the Okavango Delta are all conducted on water by mokoro. Game drives in Makgadikgadi Pans are conducted in safari vehicles.

Flying time: Non-stop flights to Maun take approximately two hours from Johannesburg or 1 hour from Windhoek.

Time difference: Botswana is two hours ahead of GMT.

Currency: Pula.

Passports: Your passport should be valid for a minimum period of 6 months from the date of entry into Botswana.

Visas: British passport holders do not currently require a visa for holidays up to 90 days. Other passport holders should check with the Botswana Embassy.

Vaccinations: Vaccinations are recommended, please consult your doctor.

Yellow fever: Visitors require a valid yellow fever certificate if coming from or transiting through a yellow fever risk area.

For the latest information click on the 'country information' tab at <http://www.somak.com/africa/botswana>

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
30°	30°	29°	27°	25°	24°	24°	26°	30°	33°	32°	31°
102	76	76	25	15	0	0	0	10	25	51	76

Namibia

The climate in Namibia is very dry and good to visit all year round. December to March the weather is humid with minimal localised rainfall. April and May are very dry and fresh months. From June to August the temperature cools down with night time becoming very cold. November can be either hot and dry, or you could encounter some rainfall. June to September is the best time for the game viewing as the game gravitates to the watering holes although as it is dry, there can be a lot of dust and the vegetation is not so vibrant.

All year round is an excellent time to experience the delights of Namibia's deserts and it is best to do excursions into the deserts early in the morning prior to sunrise before the temperatures become too hot.

Flying time: Non-stop flights to Windhoek take approximately 2 hours from Johannesburg.

Time difference: Namibia is two hours ahead of GMT.

Currency: The official currency is the Namibian Dollar although the South African Rand is also legal currency.

Passports: Your passport should be valid for a minimum period of 6 months from the date of entry into Namibia and have at least three blank pages.

Visas: British passport holders do not currently require a visa for holidays up to 90 days. Other passport holders should check with the Namibia Embassy.

Vaccinations: Vaccinations are recommended, please consult your doctor.

Yellow fever: Visitors require a valid yellow fever certificate if coming from or transiting through a yellow fever risk area.

For the latest information click on the 'country information' tab at <http://www.somak.com/africa/namibia>

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
29°	28°	27°	25°	22°	20°	20°	25°	29°	29°	29°	30°
76	76	76	51	51	15	0	0	0	10	15	51

Mozambique

Climate varies according to area. Inland is cooler than the coast and rainfall higher as the land rises, with most rain between January and March. Hottest and wettest season is October to March. From April to September the coast has warm, mainly dry weather tempered by sea breezes. Tropical lightweights, with warmer clothing for evenings. Rainwear advisable all year round.

Flying time: Non-stop flights to Vilanculos take approximately 1 hour 50 minutes from Johannesburg.

Time difference: Mozambique is two hours ahead of GMT.

Currency: US Dollar and South African Rand.

Passports: Your passport should be valid for a minimum period of 6 months from the date of entry into Mozambique and have at least 3 blank pages.

Visas: British passport holders require a visa which should be arranged before departure. Other passport holders should check with the Mozambique Embassy.

Vaccinations: Vaccinations are recommended, please consult your doctor.

For the latest information click on the 'country information' tab at www.somak.com/africa/mozambique

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
26°	26°	25°	23°	21°	19°	18°	20°	21°	23°	24°	25°
153	134	99	52	28	18	15	13	32	51	78	94

Mauritius

May to October sees the highest temperatures which vary between 20°C and 26°C in the coastal regions. In summer, November to April it's slightly higher, 26°C to 32°C.

Flying time: Flights from London to Mauritius take approximately 12 hours.

Time difference: Mauritius is four hours ahead of GMT.

Currency: Mauritius Rupee.

Passports: Your passport should be valid for a minimum period of 6 months from the date of entry into Mauritius and have at least one blank page.

Visas: British passport holders require a visa which is issued on arrival. Other passport holders should check with the Mauritius Embassy.

Vaccinations: Vaccinations are recommended, please consult your doctor.

PORT LOUIS, Mauritius – Average Temperature (°C) Average Rainfall (mm)											
JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
27°	26°	26°	25°	23°	21°	21°	21°	21°	23°	25°	26°
165	183	91	87	41	24	20	24	31	18	33	91

Seychelles

The Seychelles enjoys a tropical climate and rain falls throughout the year, with the heaviest rainfall between October and March. It is hot and humid with cooler evenings. Light and cool clothing is best throughout the year, with a pullover handy during the winter evenings.

Flying time: Flights from London to Mahe via Dubai, take approximately 12 hours.

Time difference: Seychelles is four hours ahead of GMT.

Currency: Seychelles Rupees, Sterling, US dollars, Euros.

Passports: Your passport should be valid for a minimum period of 6 months from the date of entry into the Seychelles and have at least 1 blank page.

Visas: British passport holders do not require a visa. Other passport holders should check with the Seychelles Embassy.

Vaccinations: Vaccinations are recommended, please consult your doctor.

MAHE, Seychelles – Average Temperature (°C) Average Rainfall (mm)											
JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
27°	27°	28°	28°	28°	27°	26°	26°	27°	27°	27°	27°
310	300	180	190	100	50	65	110	125	220	320	305

India

India is home to a variety of climatic regions, from tropical in the south to temperate and alpine in the north, to arid desert in the west. It is impossible to generalise the climate of such a vast country.

Flying time: Flights from London to Delhi, take approximately 8.5 hours.

Time difference: Delhi is 4.5 hours ahead of GMT.

Currency: Indian Rupee.

Passports: Your passport should be valid for a minimum period of 6 months from the date of entry into India and have at least 2 blank pages.

Visas: British passport holders require a visa which should be arranged before departure. Other passport holders should check with the Indian Embassy.

Vaccinations: Vaccinations are recommended, please consult your doctor.

NEW DELHI, India – Average Temperature (°C) Average Rainfall (mm)											
JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
13°	17°	22°	29°	33°	32°	31°	30°	29°	25°	20°	15°
23	18	13	8	13	74	180	173	117	10	3	10

Car Hire

South Africa and Namibia are vast, and the ultimate way to experience both these countries is by self-drive, in your own time. Whilst South Africa has an established and comprehensive network of good roads, Namibia has many towns and attractions widely spread on less well served roads. It is important that wherever you plan to self-drive you take time to read our helpful tips and advice to avoid discomfort. We recommend that guests hire a sat-nav or bring their own with the most up-to-date maps.

South Africa

Helpful Hints:

Speed limits of 120 km/h (75mph) on major roads.

Speed limits of 100 km/h (60mph) on secondary roads.

Speed limit of 60 km/h (37.5mph) in urban areas.

Attendants will fuel your car and will clean your windows (for a small gratuity).

Plan your trip carefully (or let us do the hard work for you) as distances can be long.

Be careful in wilderness areas as animals also use the roads.

Inclusions:

Additional driver fee

Claim administration fee in the event of damage and/or theft

General public liability insurance

Location surcharge

Maximum collision damage waiver (CDW)

Maximum theft loss waiver (TLW)

Personal accident insurance (PAI)

Sandblasting damage

Third party liability insurance

Tourism levy

Tyre, rim and hubcap damage

Unlimited kilometres

Value added tax @ 14% (VAT)

Water and under-carriage damage to vehicles

Windscreen damage/repair

Exclusions:

Child safety seat

Collection and delivery fee

Contract fee

Cross border fee

Frequent flyer miles

Fuel

One-way cross border fee

One-way drop off fee within country

Refundable rental deposit

Traffic fine handling fee

Valet charged when applicable

Terms and conditions

Renters must carry a drivers' licence or a valid unendorsed drivers licence with English translation and photograph.

International Drivers licence

The minimum rental age is 18 years and the driver must have been in possession of a valid driver's licence for a minimum of 1 year.

There is no maximum rental age, however, Personal Accident Insurance is not included for persons over the age of 75 years.

It is a legal requirement in Southern Africa to be in possession of your driver's licence at all times whilst driving a vehicle.

Over border rentals must be requested on reservation.

Renters wishing to enter a country other than the country of rental, must be in possession of a letter of authority from Avis, obtainable from Avis when you pick up your vehicle. No entry is allowed into Zambia, Zimbabwe, Angola, Malawi and Mozambique.

The minimum rental period is 1 day and calculated on a 24 hour cycle, which starts from the time of collection. Should a vehicle be returned late, the renter will be charged for an additional day at the extension rates which will have to be settled direct with Avis on return of the vehicle.

The renter's credit card is required on collection of the vehicle. Authorisation is obtained for the rental deposit, additional charges and the liability amount when booking standard cover.

Namibia

International drivers' licence is required to hire a car in Namibia.

Seat belts must be used at all times.

Road signs are international.

Credit card details are compulsory for every car hire.

Take a cooler box with you as temperatures are exceptionally high and refreshment stores are spread over vast distances, so you will need to buy plenty of water and snacks for your trip.

Carry supplies of toiletries. Although fuel stations on main routes are generally well equipped and clean, there is frequently a scarcity of ablution facilities when leaving main highways.

Always fill up at every opportunity even if you have more than half a tank. You never know when you will find another filling station. Fuel stations outside Windhoek and Swakopmund are not open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Most hired vehicles run on unleaded fuel which is not readily available, especially in the desert.

Fuel stations do not accept credit card payment, only cash. Most shops and facilities in the outlying areas do not have access to credit card machines and will only accept cash. Make certain you always have sufficient local currency in cash, either ZAR – South African Rand or NAD – Namibian Dollars.

Drive cautiously as only 11% of Namibia's roads are tarred. The majority of the roads are good gravel or salt roads. The speed limit is 80km/h on gravel roads and 120 km/h on open tarred roads and 60 km/h in villages/towns. Remember to drive on the left hand side. If at all possible, avoid driving at night. This is when game tends to frequent the roads.

Ensure that you take basic medical supplies with you. Pharmacies are few and far between, once you have left the major cities.

Most tourist routes can easily be negotiated in normal sedan cars. We suggest that you hire a car with air-conditioning, as the temperatures can be particularly high in summer. It is recommended to book a 4x4 vehicle during the rainy season of November to April.

It is best to check-in to most lodges and hotels around about 1–4pm which means you will always arrive at your destination several hours before dusk. Driving on unlit roads after dark is not safe, and should be avoided if possible. If you are delayed, and do not expect to arrive at your destination until after 6pm, then, if possible, phone the lodges in advance.

Zimbabwe

International drivers licence is required to hire a car in Zimbabwe and must be carried whilst driving.

Drivers must have obtained their licence at least two years prior to renting a vehicle and be over the age of 22 years.

Credit card details are compulsory for every car hire.

Take a cooler box with you as temperatures can be high and refreshment stores maybe spread over distances, take plenty of water and snacks for your trip.

Carry supplies of toiletries. Ablution facilities maybe scarce when leaving main highways.

Always fill up at every opportunity even if you have more than half a tank. You never know when you will find another filling station.

Fuel stations may not accept credit card payment, only cash. Most shops and facilities in the outlying areas do not have access to credit card machines and will only accept cash. Make certain you always have sufficient local currency.

Drive cautiously and follow traffic regulations at all times.

Ensure that you take basic medical supplies with you. Pharmacies are few and far between, once you have left the major cities.

We suggest that you hire a car with air-conditioning, as the temperatures can be high.

It is best to check-in to most lodges and hotels around about 1–4pm which means you will always arrive at your destination several hours before dusk. Driving on unlit roads after dark is not safe, and should be avoided if possible. If you are delayed, and do not expect to arrive at your destination until after 6pm, then, if possible, phone the lodges in advance.