

Travel

COMPANION

botswana
tourism board

SOUTHERN BOTSWANA




"Half the fun of the travel . . .

is the aesthetic of lostness"

Ray Bradbury



Welcome to Botswana



Botswana is well known for having some of the best wilderness and wildlife areas on the African continent. With a full 38 percent of its total land area devoted to national parks, reserves and wildlife management areas – for the most part unfenced, allowing animals to roam wild and free – travel through many parts of the country has the feeling of moving through an immense Nature wonderland.

Botswana is a rarity in our over-populated, over-developed world. Untamed and untameable, it is one of the last great refuges for Nature's magnificent pageantry of life.

Experience here the stunning beauty of the world's largest intact inland Delta – the Okavango; the unimaginable vastness of the world's second largest game reserve – the Central Kalahari Game Reserve; the isolation and other-worldliness of the Makgadikgadi – uninhabited pans the size of Portugal; and the astoundingly prolific wildlife of the Chobe National Park.

Botswana is the last stronghold for a number of endangered bird and mammal species, including Wild

Dog, Cheetah, Brown Hyena, Cape Vulture, Wattled Crane, Kori Bustard, and Pel's Fishing Owl. This makes your safari experience even more memorable, and at times you will feel simply surrounded by wild animals.

The first – and most lasting impressions – will be of vast expanses of uninhabited wilderness stretching from horizon to horizon, the sensation of limitless space, astoundingly rich wildlife and bird viewing, night skies littered with stars and heavenly bodies of an unimaginable brilliance, and stunning sunsets of unearthly beauty.

As well, with more and more cultural tourism options on offer, you will be charmed by the people of Botswana, visiting their villages and experiencing first-hand their rich cultural heritage.

But perhaps most of all, Botswana's greatest gift is its ability to put us in touch with our natural selves. It offers that vital link so keenly felt by inhabitants of the developed world, a pervasive void we feel but often cannot name – our connectedness with Nature and the astonishing diversity of plants and animals to be explored. 🌿

A bout U s . . .



The Botswana Tourism Board (BTB) was established by an Act of Parliament in 2003. Its mandate is to market and promote Botswana as a premier tourist destination of choice, to promote Botswana as a tourism investment venue, and to grade and classify accommodation facilities in the country. The Board commenced its operations in January 2006.

A Board of Directors, consisting of 15 members and appointed by the Minister of Wildlife, Environment and Tourism, governs the BTB. The Board is comprised of the Chairperson and the Vice Chairperson, a representative from the governing Ministry, and 12 members from the public and private sectors in the tourism industry.

BTB holds a broad portfolio that touches nearly all aspects of tourism development in the country, including:

TO plan, develop and implement tourism marketing and promotion strategies aimed at creating and sustaining a positive image of Botswana as a tourist and investor destination;

TO plan, formulate and implement strategies for promoting sustainable tourism development in collaboration with the tourism industry's private sector, local authorities, local communities and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs);

TO determine policies for giving effect to the objects and purposes of the Act that established the BTB;

TO advise Government to change, review or formulate policy and strategies where necessary;

TO implement Government policies and programmes aimed at facilitating the continued growth and development of the tourism sector;

TO set performance targets and to design programmes aimed at facilitating the continued growth and development of tourism;

TO develop and implement appropriate strategies for achieving annual work plan objectives and to set performance targets aimed at the promotion of tourism business in Botswana;

TO investigate any matter that has a negative effect on the tourism industry, and to make recommendations thereon to the Government;

TO manage and co-ordinate Botswana's tourism promotional and publicity programmes;

TO provide market research information and market intelligence on tourism;

TO promote the expansion of existing and new investment in Botswana's tourism sector;



TO establish and expand local as well as international travel trade networks to promote and sell Botswana;

TO market and promote the establishment of joint tourism business ventures between citizen and foreign investors;

TO grade and classify accommodation facilities in the tourism industry;

TO promote the improvement of tourism industry standards, in the areas of service standards and a code of ethics;

TO conduct tourism awareness campaigns within and outside Botswana; and

TO develop and improve existing tourism opportunities, and to diversify the sector to include other forms of tourism, such as cultural and heritage tourism, eco-tourism, entertainment,

recreational and leisure tourism, and to bring them to the required marketable standard.

The grading system serves as a means to protect the consumer and guarantee quality accommodation and services in Botswana. It also assists the accommodation establishment to benchmark its performance against set standards.

Additionally, the grading system is a useful tool to indicate to travel agents, tour operators and tourists the general quality of accommodation facilities in the country. This can serve as a guide for tourists planning their destinations in Botswana.

The system also provides a framework to industry investors so that they are able to design their facilities to attract the desired market segments.

BTB is funded through grants received from the Government. 🏠

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See page 35 for additional contact details for all local and international offices.

Southern Highlights

Enjoy the amenities of a modern cosmopolitan city, with luxury hotels and world class conference centres.

Gain an introduction to Botswana's fascinating wildlife through accessible reserves in and around the city.

Experience vibrant music and dance performances, as well as colourful arts and crafts.



Browse cottage industries specialising in pottery, weaving, glasswear, leatherworks, and meet local artists.

Visit our village homesteads and glean insights into traditional life.



Travel COMPANION

SOUTHERN BOTSWANA

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Travel COMPANION to...

Gaborone

Once proudly referred to as “Africa’s fastest growing city,” Botswana’s capital, Gaborone, has been – since its inception – continually expanding, to the point that now the sprawling urban centre of some 300 000 residents has become nearly unrecognisable from the tiny, dusty administrative town it was at the country’s independence in 1966.

From the end of the nineteenth century, until 1963, tiny ‘Gaberones’ Village, as the town was then called, consisted of only a small settlement on the railway line and a small administrative centre in the area now called ‘The Village.’ The land between both settlements was Crown land,

but was used by the people of the neighbouring village of Tlokweng as a cattle grazing area.

Britain’s Bechuanaland protectorate (established in 1885) had its main administrative centre in Mafeking (now Mafikeng), in South Africa, just over the current Ramatlabama border. As plans developed for the country’s independence, it was clear it would need an administrative town within its political boundaries. Bechuanaland was the only territory in the world whose administrative centre lay outside its boundaries.

Nine possible sites were suggested: Mahalapye, Shashe, Francistown, Serowe, Artesia, Lobatse, Gaborone,

Maun and a point within the Tuli Block. Gaborone was chosen because of its strategic location, its proximity to the railway line and Pretoria, its already established administrative offices, its accessibility to most of the major tribes, its non-association with any particular tribe, and most importantly, its closeness to a major water source.

The city was named after Kgosi Gaborone, leader of the Batlokwa people, who migrated from their ancestral homelands in the Magaliesberg Mountains and in 1881 settled in the Tlokweng area (then called Moshaweng). Gaborone literally means ‘it does not fit badly’ or



Left to right: Gaborone City Centre; The Ministry of Health building close to the Main Mall; Riverwalk Shopping Centre.

‘it is not unbecoming.’

Once plans for the city had been drawn up, technical experts from several European countries were brought in to assist with the planning and building of the town; and architects, artisans, supervisors and labourers were brought in from surrounding areas in Botswana, and from Southern Rhodesia.

In mid-1963, construction on the Gaborone Dam began, while work on the town itself commenced in early 1964.

In eighteen months, the new capital emerged from the African bush. By the time it was completed – incidentally nearly on time – it boasted National Assembly buildings, Government office

blocks, a power station, a hospital, schools, a radio station, an airfield, a telephone exchange, police stations, a post office, banks, shops, a church, a hotel, a brewery, a stadium grandstand, a dam, and more than one thousand houses.

Indeed the basic infrastructure was in place for Independence Day on 30th September 1966, when Bechuanaland became the eleventh British territory in Africa to become independent.

Since then the city has grown into a modern, bustling government, commercial and industrial centre, now incorporating the neighbouring villages of Tlokweng and Mogoditshane, and with housing estates, industrial estates

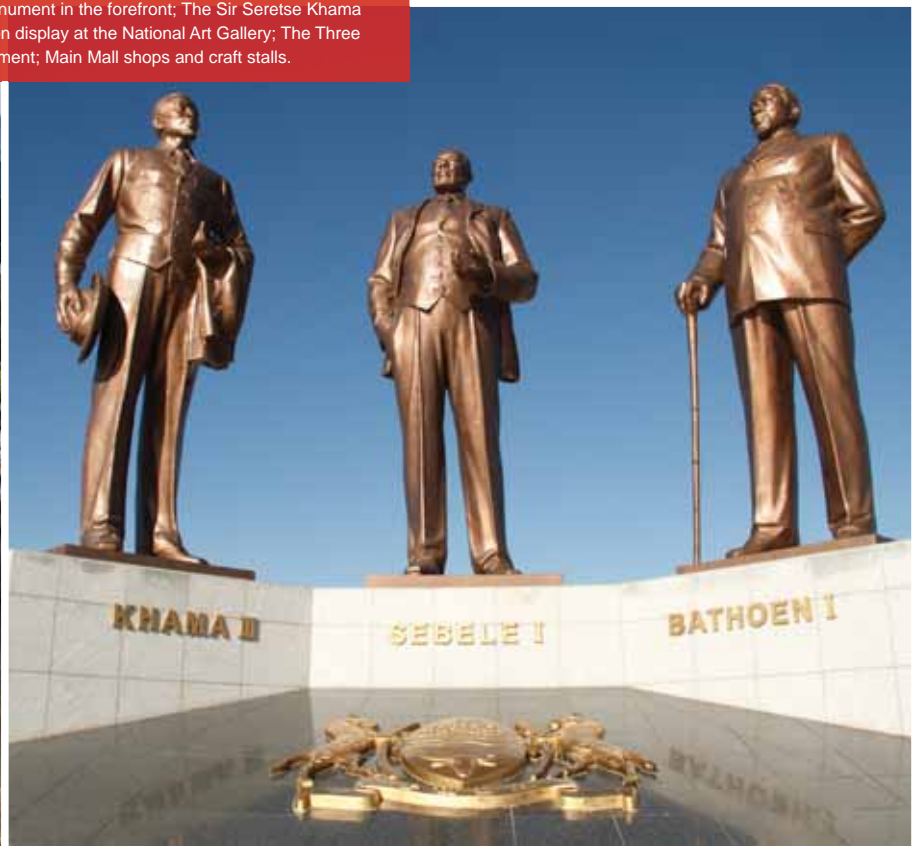
and financial centres radiating from its centre. Gaborone gained city status in 1986.

Twenty-first century Gaborone now boasts four, large American-style malls, replete with cinema complexes, a host of hotels, guest houses and restaurants, an international airport, a cultural centre, discos and nightclubs, a national museum and art gallery, as well as two golf courses and other sports facilities.

What makes Gaborone so unique, however, is that the visitor can enjoy all the familiar modern conveniences of home, but can gain entry into rural Africa, or wildlife areas, within minutes – having then the best of both possible worlds. 🏠



Clockwise from top left: Government Enclave buildings with the BDF Monument in the foreground; The Sir Seretse Khama Statue; Art on display at the National Art Gallery; The Three Kings Monument; Main Mall shops and craft stalls.



TOWN CENTRE

Scheduled for a face-lift, Gaborone's first mall – often referred to as The Main Mall – is a pedestrian-only business and commercial centre that boasts some of the town's oldest shops and office buildings, as well as one of its first hotels, The President Hotel. At its top end, across the Nelson Mandela Road, sits the Government Enclave and the National Assembly; and at the opposite end are the Gaborone City Town Council offices. Shoppers will enjoy browsing the many outdoor stalls of African arts, crafts and curios that line the main walkway.

GOVERNMENT ENCLAVE

Adorned with trees and flowers and several important monuments, the attractive Government Enclave is open to the public. It contains the National Assembly, where Parliament convenes, the Office of the President, and a number of ministry offices.

One historical statue commemorates those Batswana who served in the Second World War; whilst another honours those Botswana Defence Force soldiers who perished in the Rhodesian war of liberation. (It is advised that permission be obtained before taking photos of Government buildings.)

SIR SERETSE KHAMA STATUE

Unveiled on the occasion of Botswana's 20th anniversary of independence in 1986, this striking bronze statue now faces the National Assembly, having recently been turned 180 degrees from its previous position where it overlooked the Main Mall. The statue

was sculpted by British artist Norman Pearce, and cast in Britain, then flown to Botswana for its unveiling.

Sir Seretse Khama (1921-1980) was the founding father and first president of Botswana, who led his Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) to election victory in 1965 to establish a unified, democratic, multi-party, multi-racial society. Through his political acumen, honesty, tolerance, and sense of humour he quickly won the respect and admiration of his people, as well as that of European and African leaders. He was knighted in 1991 by Queen Elizabeth II.

THREE CHIEFS MONUMENT

Crossing the railway tracks over the flyover, and turning into a newly developed Central Business District, the Monument of the Three Chiefs is another impressive historical statue that marks an important turning point in the history of Botswana.

In the late 1800s, Botswana territory was under threat from British industrialist Cecil Rhodes, who wished to take over Bechuanaland for his British South Africa Company. Three senior chiefs of the time – Chief Khama III of the Bangwato, Chief Sebele I of the Bakwena, and Chief Bathoen I of the Bangwaketse – travelled to London in 1885 to petition Joseph Chamberlain, Secretary of State for the Colonies, and whilst there, they were presented to Queen Victoria.

Gaining support from the British public, they petitioned the Queen for protection; and this was granted. The Bechuanaland Protectorate was established in the same year, thus circumventing the territory's potentially disastrous incorporation

into the British South Africa Company, and forever altering the history of the country.

The monument was sculpted and cast by North Korean artisans, using a photograph of the three chiefs. It was unveiled on the occasion of the country's 39th anniversary of independence in 2005.

THE NATIONAL MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY

Established in June 1967 and officially opened in September, 1968 by the then Acting President of Botswana, Dr. Q.K.J. Masire, the National Museum has been a vibrant focal point of artistic and cultural activity since its inception. The mandate has always been to display and promote the country's natural and cultural heritage, and to acquire artifacts relating to Africa south of the Sahara.

The adjoining National Art Gallery was opened in 1975 and it continually stages quality exhibitions of art, crafts and photography, of increasing diversity.

Recently celebrating its 40th anniversary (2008), the National Museum and Art Gallery has gone from strength to strength in the collection of artifacts, research, exhibitions, national and international collaborations, and in its vigorous outreach programmes that bring the museum – and instruction in cultural heritage – to rural residents. This 'Pitse ya Naga' ('Zebra on Wheels') has now reached virtually every primary school in the country. Research is in such diverse fields as geology, ethnology, entomology, zoology, art, graphic and exhibition design, education and archaeology.



Left: Eclectic art on display at Thapong; Right: The Botanical Gardens.



The Museum has registered and documented over 100 000 artifacts, 40 000 insect specimens and 20 000 slides; it houses priceless paintings and original historical photos. It has held over 300 local and international exhibitions and gazetted a number of national monuments. Colourful indoor and outdoor permanent displays chronicle the flora, fauna and cultures of Botswana.

The National Museum and Art Gallery are frequented by thousands of schoolchildren every year, as well as residents of and visitors to the country. Contact the Museum's Information Centre, as well as the local media, for a listing of upcoming exhibitions and events, Tel: +267 397-4616.

THE VILLAGE

Established in 1890 and for some time serving as an administrative centre for the southern part of Bechuanaland

Protectorate, the Village once held a fort, (constructed 1890-91), the area's first post office, a prison, a grave yard, and the 'Gaberones' magistrate's house. Of these buildings, only the prison remains, albeit in rather poor condition; and the graveyard still contains the grave markers of the men who died in the Anglo-Boer War. A few late 19th and early 20th century buildings in the Village are still in use.

THAPONG VISUAL ARTS CENTRE

Situated in the former magistrate's house (1902), the Thapong Visual Arts Centre is home to Botswana's young, gifted – and sometimes avant-garde – artists. In addition to the exhibitions it regularly stages, this very active centre also periodically offers art courses for children. Enquire at their offices for a schedule of upcoming activities, or check the local newspapers. For details Tel: +267 316-1771.

BOTANICAL GARDENS

The recently opened National Museum Botanical Gardens is a welcome addition to the city of Gaborone. It features walking trails (with labeled trees and plants), exhibits on the flora of Botswana, a library of botanical books, and historical buildings, including a colonial guest house. This is a pleasant place for a family outing, also providing an educational perspective on the country's flora.



ECOLOGICAL PARK

Initiated in 2002 by the highly active environmental NGO Somarelang Tikologo, Gaborone's Ecological Park – situated on the corner of South Ring Road and Kaunda Road – is a welcome retreat for city dwellers. It also is a highly instructive facility that familiarises visitors with simple but effective technologies for resource conservation and waste management. The park has been developed to inspire people to live in an environmentally friendly life, whilst at the same time save money.

Transforming a once idle open space into an oasis of eco-friendly technologies, the facilities on offer are wide ranging and exemplary. They include: *The Green Shop*, selling a unique assortment of products made from natural or recycled materials, such as jewellery, hats, mats, bags, aprons, waste bins and children's mobiles, as well as sweets and snacks made from desert fruits; the *Drop Off and Recycling Centre*, the only such facility of its kind in the city. (Separate receptacles for cans, bottles, plastics,

Above: Children's Playground and Eco Café at the Ecological Park; Right: Suckling newborn zebra at the Gaborone Game Reserve.

paper and cardboard are provided, and drop off is permitted 24/7.); the *Organic Garden*, demonstrating low water usage, water recycling / harvesting, organic growing techniques, organic pesticides, and selling fresh organic vegetables once a week; and the *Children's Playground*, made from recycled and natural products. Tel: +267 391-3709.

GABORONE GAME RESERVE

Possibly one of the few national reserves to be situated inside a city, this relatively small (5 square kms) but well stocked park is home to a number of Botswana's indigenous species, including zebra, eland, gemsbok, red hartebeest, blue wildebeest, impala, kudu, steenbok, vervet monkeys, warthog and rock dassies, as well as numerous resident and migrant bird species, best viewed from the small



dam in the park. Terrain includes tree savanna, riparian woodland, marsh and rocky outcrops.

The park is popular for weekend outings and picnics, with two well-appointed picnic sites. There are also animal and bird observation hides and a visitors' centre; and pre-booked educational tours can be arranged for both schoolchildren and visitors.

GABORONE DAM

The life source of Gaborone and its surrounding areas, the Gaborone Dam is often part of people's conversations during the dry season, or drought years, during which time a neon signboard in town regularly informs residents of how full the dam is. In this desert country prone to prolonged drought, water – and having enough of it – is an over-riding preoccupation.



Construction on the dam began in 1963, capturing water from the Ngotwane River, to supply the country's planned new capital city. The reservoir filled, and overflowed, during the 1965-66 rainy season. Ten years later, the dam wall was raised by eight metres. Other sources of water to supply the ever-growing metropolitan area have been built further north at Bokaa and Letsibogo.

The Gaborone Yacht Club is situated at the south end of the dam; this very active club offers canoeing, yachting, picnics, and bushwalks and is open to the public.

THE NO. 1 LADIES' DETECTIVE AGENCY FILM SET

The award winning British director Anthony Minghella, upon searching for the right location to film Alexander McCall Smith's international best seller, *The No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency*, chose a cul de sac at the base of Kgale Hill. Here his production crew rebuilt a segment of the old-time Gaborone city, replete with butchery, general supplies shop, beauty salon, bike repair shop and outdoor eatery. Long-time residents of the capital city have remarked how the colourful film set had captured the exact look and feel of bygone Gaborone. The set will eventually be opened to visitors. 'Mma Ramotswa' tours – visiting the various

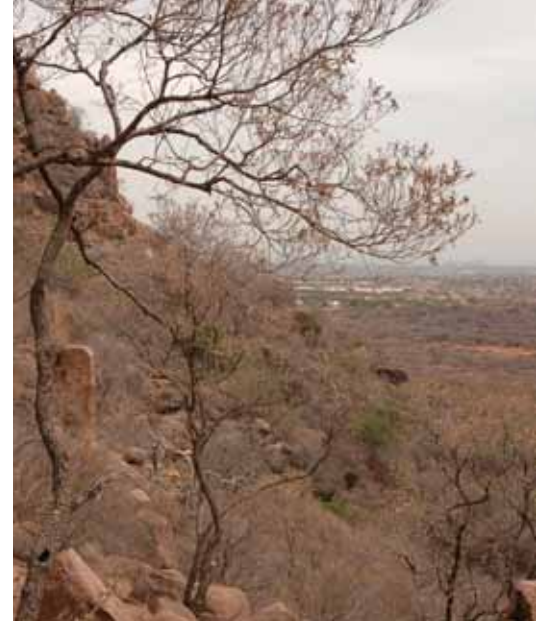
locations that inspired the stories, can be booked in Gaborone. Contact a local travel agency for more details.

SPORTS

Gaborone's warm, sunny weather makes it an ideal venue for sports enthusiasts; and the city boasts a number of modern sports facilities. These include tennis courts, squash courts, boating, yachting, cricket, rugby, football, horse riding, golf, netball, softball, volleyball and of course swimming. There are a number of well equipped fitness centres that offer weight training, aerobics, yoga and dance. One-off visitors are welcome.

KGALE HILL

Gaborone's most visible hill – and one of the city's major landmarks – overlooks both the Gaborone Dam as well as its largest mall, Game City, providing a beautiful panorama of the city, and in the late afternoon, dramatic African sunsets. Kgale (meaning 'the place that dried up') is popular for climbers and picnickers, and has clearly defined routes up and down. Some wildlife still lives in the hills, and the most visible are the ubiquitous baboon troupes. The climb takes approximately one hour.



Top left: Gaborone Golf Course; Top: A climb up Kgale Hill is great weekend fun; Middle: Boating is one of the many activities at the Gaborone Yacht Club, Gaborone Dam; Above: The No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency film set.

The Arts

MUSIC, DANCE, DRAMA

One of the greatest attractions of living in, or visiting, Gaborone is its dynamic music and dance scene. The happy, infectious, soulful music of Botswana, and southern Africa, is everywhere, and is one of the most exciting aspects of culture to experience here. And it is rarely performed without fabulous dancing.

Regularly staged performances in traditional, rock, pop, jazz, classical – just about every kind of music imaginable – can best be seen at the Maitisong Cultural Centre, situated at Maru a Pula Secondary School campus (Tel: +267 397-1809); other venues include the Alliance Française (Tel: +267 365-1650) and Botswanacraft (Tel: +267 392-2487). There are many jazz clubs and nightclubs in town, or in surrounding areas, and several of the hotels have in-house musicians who perform on the weekends. Check the local media or the *Botswana Advertiser* for listings.

ART EXHIBITIONS

In addition to the Art Gallery at the National Museum, arts and crafts exhibitions, by both local and international artists, are regularly held at the Alliance Française (Tel: +267 365-1650) and Botswanacraft (Tel: +267 392-2487).

CASINOS

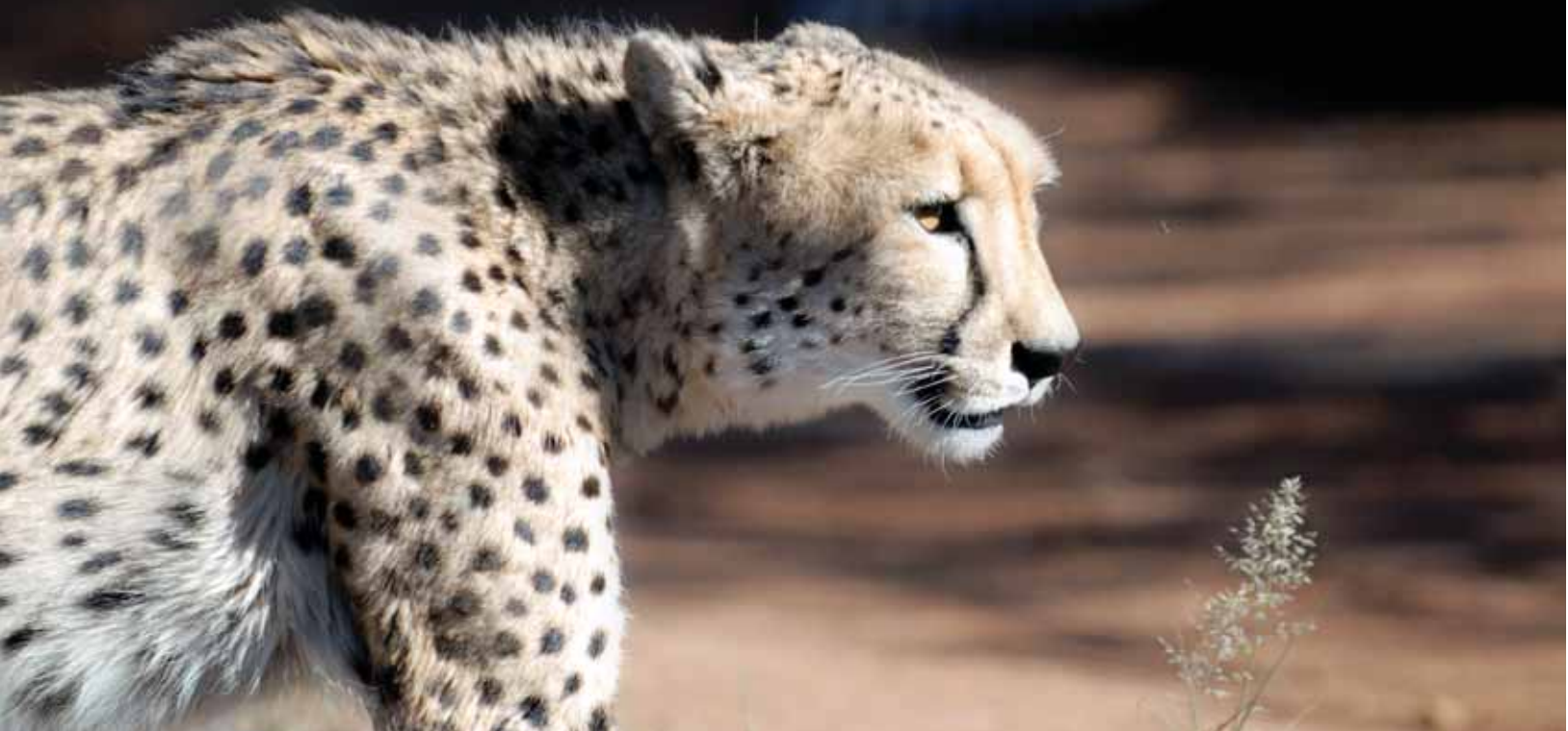
Gaborone has three casinos, at the Grand Palm Hotel (Tel: +267 363-7777), the Gaborone Hotel (Tel: +267 392-2777) and at the Gaborone Sun Hotel (Tel: +267 361-6000). 🎰

ACTIVITIES

- Game drives
- Rhino tracking
- Cheetah visits
- Elephant walks
- Guided walks
- Giraffe tracking
- Horse-back safari
- Bird watching
- Picnic and bush braai
- Camping
- Shopping
- Golf
- Theatre
- Cultural tourism
- Museum visits
- Historical and National Monuments
- Botanical Garden
- Arts and Crafts
- Sightseeing
- Pottery
- Restaurants
- Water Park
- Casinos
- Nightclubs
- Pubs



Music and dance performances take place nearly every weekend at venues around the city.



Day trips heading South

MOKOLODI NATURE RESERVE

For nature and wildlife lovers, Mokolodi is the closest excursion from Gaborone that offers a wide variety of activities for the entire family. Situated approximately 10 kilometres south of Game City, on the main Lobatse Road, the five-square kilometre reserve is comprised of riverine terrain interspersed with rocky hills, with the very picturesque Lake Gwithian and adjoining picnic site.

Mokolodi offers game drives, guided walks, horse-back safari, rhino tracking, giraffe tracking, walks with trained elephants, and cheetah visits.

It holds regularly scheduled lectures, as well as annual events, such as Easter and Christmas day excursions for children, and the Mokolodi Photography Competition.

Wildlife resident in the reserve include kudu, warthog, duiker, giraffe, steenbok, zebra, blue wildebeest, gemsbok, ostrich, impala, springbok, waterbuck, baboons, vervet monkeys, mountain reedbuck, eland, bushbuck and leopard. A highly successful white rhino reintroduction and breeding programme now puts the white rhino population in the reserve at eight.

Mokolodi also houses a reptile park, and a wildlife sanctuary for

disabled or orphaned animals that for one reason or another cannot be returned to the wild, and an animal clinic that treats sick or injured animals.

Facilities include camping sites, chalets, picnic sites, an education centre, museum and library, the World's View Conference and Function Centre, The Alexander McCall Smith Traditional Rest Camp, as well as a lovely stone and thatch restaurant that gives a beautiful view of the surrounding bush.

Environmental education for Botswana children is a major mandate of the nature reserve; and each year

thousands of schoolchildren come for courses, sleeping in the dormitories, or on camp outs. For more information or bookings, Tel: +267 316-1955.

LION PARK RESORT

Approximately five kilometres further south of Mokolodi, the recently opened Lion Park Resort, situated at the former Lion Park, adds a new dimension to fun family outings. Here kids can let loose on water slides, the valley of the waves, swimming pools and other water features, as well as a variety of rides. Great for those sizzling summer days! Tel: +267 397-3700.

OTSE

Flanked by the Otse Mountains, including the country's highest – Otse Peak (1,491m) – the picturesque village of Otse has a number of attractions, not the least of which are the many wonderful climbing and hiking options in the area.

The most prominent hill is Baratani Hill, on the west side of the road, about 40 kilometres from



Lion Park Resort.

Gaborone's Game City. Called the 'Lovers' Hill,' ('Lentswe la Baratani'), it carries a legend about two young lovers who were refused permission to marry. Despondent, they both flung themselves off the cliff to their deaths. The hill is regarded as sacred; and historically Batswana would neither climb the hill, nor point to it.

Just after Baratani Hill, still on the main road, and before the turn-off to the village, are a cheese factory (locally made) and adjoining café, and Botlhale Jwa Phala, a paper factory that produces invitation cards, photo

albums, bags, book-markers and fuel briquettes from discarded paper. Broken bits of tiles are used to make photo and mirror frames, lampshades and furniture decoration.

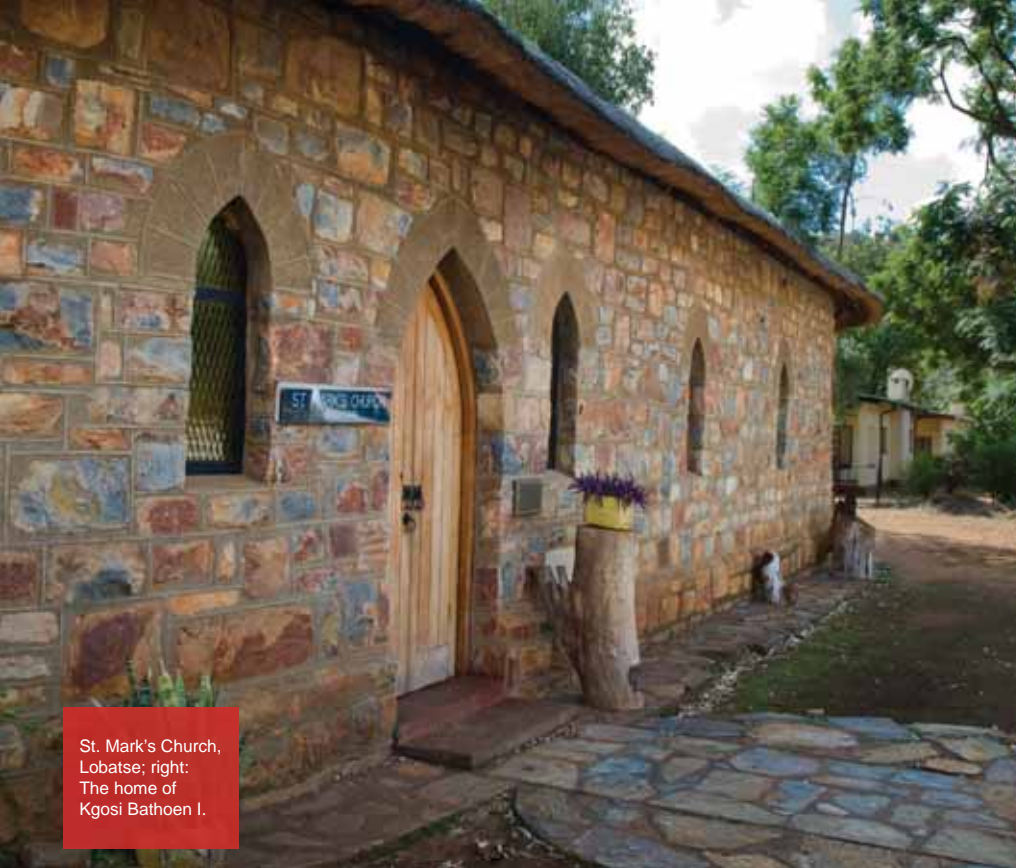
Browsing is encouraged, and purchases can be made directly from the factory.

Turning left at the Otse signpost, and driving through the village, one crosses a pretty river valley where cattle and goats are usually grazing. The Mannyelanong Game Reserve is visible from here, and provides a dramatic backdrop to the landscape.

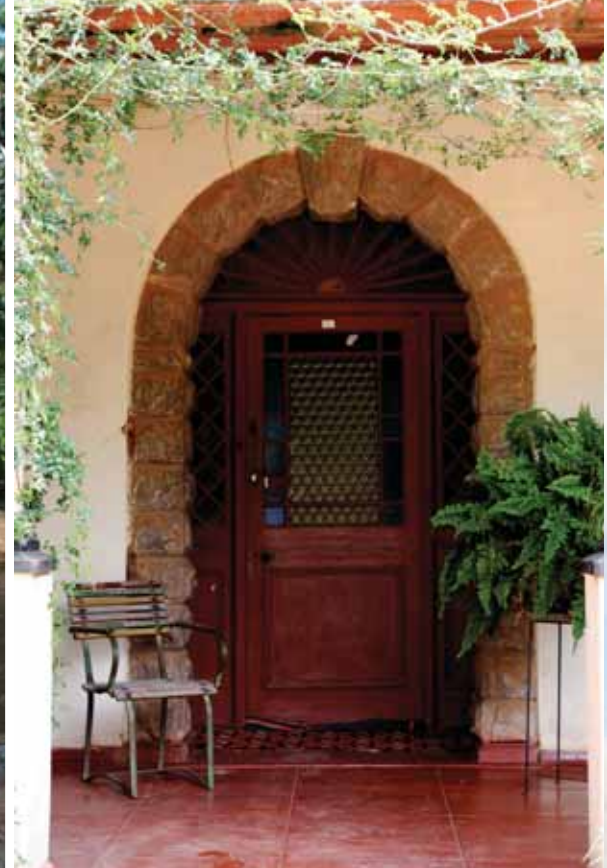


Lentswe la Baratani, or 'Lovers' Hill' in Otse; Right: Vulture at the Mannyelanong Game Reserve.





St. Mark's Church,
Lobatse; right:
The home of
Kgosi Bathoen I.



The reserve was established in 1985 on Balete Tribal Land for the protection of the Cape vultures that nest at its south end. The four-square kilometre area encompasses a single, red sandstone hill. Visitors can climb the hill, but the south end is fenced, and cannot be entered, to prevent disturbance to the vultures at their nesting sites. Entrance to the reserve is through the Department of Wildlife and National Parks offices in Otse, and is free.

The Cape Vulture is an endangered species and fully protected under the laws of Botswana. Cape vultures have nested in Mannyelanong for hundreds of years, but in the last 30 years or so their numbers have diminished considerably. With human expansion,

the vultures' food has become scarcer, with the result that chicks suffer from calcium deficiency due to lack of bone in their diet. Since the establishment of the reserve, vulture populations there have stabilised.

LOBATSE

The entrance (from the Gaborone road) to this pleasant town set amongst hills and stands of tall trees is a shady, tree-lined avenue. One passes the country's High Court, as well as the Botswana Meat Commission (BMC), one of Africa's largest abattoirs and meat-processing operations.

Lobatse, approximately 70 kms south of Gaborone, is the last stop for cattle farmers trekking their livestock

hundreds of kilometres through Kalahari sands for sale to the BMC. Cattle farming is the country's third largest revenue earner, and its high quality, free-roaming beef is primarily exported to the United Kingdom and the European Union. Tours to the BMC can be arranged through the General Manager Operations, Tel: +267 533-1292.

The first major tribal settlement in the area was a Bangwaketse village, built in the late 18th century. Later, because of conflict with neighbouring groups, they moved west to their present capital, Kanye.

A construction camp and railway siding were built in 1896, the latter servicing Cecil Rhodes' railway line that ran north to Southern Rhodesia.

Scene from
Polokwe Viewpoint,
en route to Kanye.





The London Missionary Society Church, Kanye.

The original railway station no longer stands, but Botswana Railways still runs through the town, then passing through Gaborone, and towns further north, before reaching Francistown.

There are several interesting archaeological remains to be seen around Lobatse. Some are on private land and require permission to visit. These include stone walling from the Ngwaketse village, situated on Lobatse Estates, and the earlier Seoke stone wall settlement built by the Bangwaketse around 1770.

Just outside the town, on the main Mafikeng road, there are rock paintings of wildebeest – though now quite faded, probably painted by Khoe herders, and possibly dating between 1000 to 1700AD.

KANYE

One of the most scenic routes in southern Botswana is the Gaborone to Kanye drive (approximately 80 kms southwest of Gaborone). The road gently climbs and descends, giving entrance to gently rolling grasslands rich in trees and shrubs, quaint vistas of agricultural lands and grazing livestock, and tiny villages nestled between rock-strewn hills.

Home of the Bangwaketse people who settled in the area in the mid-19th century, Kanye is the longest continuously occupied capital village in Botswana. There are a number of interesting places to see in Kanye, so plan on a full day excursion from Gaborone, or a night-over at one of its

lodges or guest houses.

The Polokwe Viewpoint, situated about ten kilometres north of Kanye on the Thamaga road, gives a breathtaking view of the northern valley, particularly at sunrise and sunset. From the Gorge, near Seepapitso Secondary School, interesting, and very beautiful, walks can be taken – lush in vegetation, with good birding possibilities. Stone wall settlements are also visible along the way. According to oral history, the Gorge is the place where the Bangwaketse hid from Mzilikazi's Ndebele raids in the area. Just north of the village and near the dam lies a bird sanctuary.

Kanye's main *kgotla* (village meeting place and customary court) is full of interesting historical buildings,

including the former residence of Kgosi (Chief) Bathoen I, the original tribal offices, built in 1914 by Seepapitso III, and nearby, the former residence of the late Kgosi Bathoen II. As well, there are several old churches to explore, the oldest being the London Missionary Church, built in 1894. The proper courtesy is to first go to the *kgotla* offices and inform officials that you wish to visit the *kgotla*, at which point you will be warmly welcomed, and shown around.

The delightful Motse Lodge houses a cultural centre, where traditional arts and crafts are being revitalised, and a museum, which holds artifacts from the area. Tel: +267 548-0363.

JWANENG

Fittingly named, the Jwaneng Diamond Mine – the richest diamond mine in the world – is situated in south-central Botswana, on the fringes of the Kgalagadi, approximately 80 kms west of Kanye. Jwaneng means ‘a place of small stones.’

Owned and operated by Debswana, a partnership between the diamond mining magnate DeBeers and the Botswana Government, Jwaneng has been in operation since 1982, and has consistently contributed a large share of Botswana’s total ore output. In 2007, the mine produced approximately 13.5 million carats from 10.3 million tonnes of ore.

The mine’s accompanying township (population, 15,000) is an open one, and tourists can drive through the township and make use of its facilities, such as petrol stations, restaurants or guest houses.

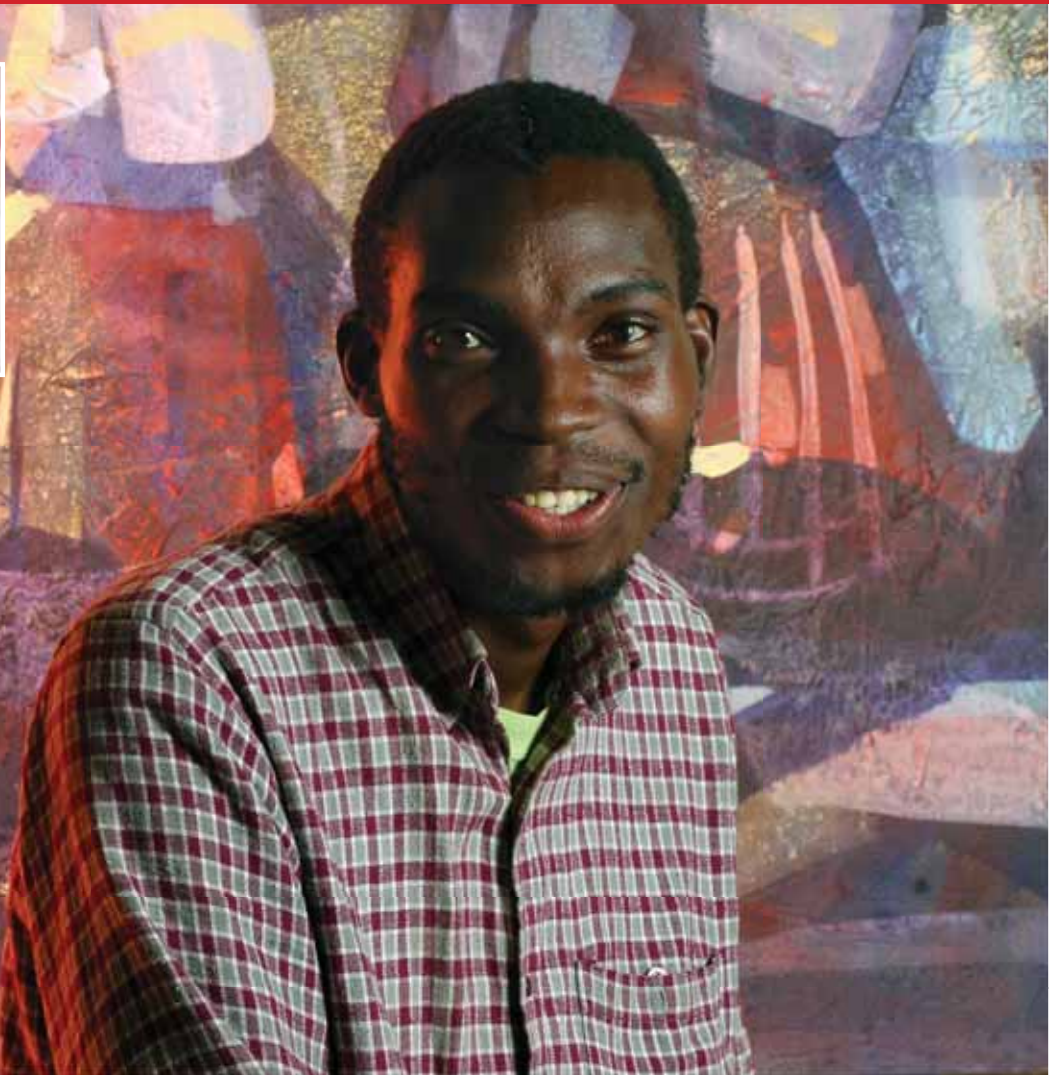


The mine has established and supports the nearby Jwana Game Park, which is home to a number of indigenous wildlife species, excluding the large predators. There is, however, a Cheetah Conservation Botswana field unit in the park. And in 2007, two white rhinos were introduced into the park from the Khama Rhino Sanctuary.

Members of the public are welcome to visit the game park, and tours of the diamond mine can be booked through the Jwaneng Mine Public Relations Office, tel: +267 588-4245. 🗺️



Top: Visitors touring the Jwaneng Diamond Mine are dwarfed by the immense vehicles used to transport ore; Above: The open cast mine.



Martin with his work at Pelegano Village Industry.

GABANE

Approximately 15 kms from Gaborone, this lovely village set amongst hills is wonderful for walking and exploring on foot. It is home to the Pelegano Village Industry, a development estate that houses a number of different village ventures, including a glass factory, metal works and a sorghum milling plant. The pottery factory and shop feature uniquely designed tableware, vases, and decorative items.

The Veld Products Research centre welcomes casual visitors. This is an innovative research and development organisation that promotes the sound management of veldt products in SADC (Southern African Development Community) countries, as well as investigates the potential for domesticating indigenous plants for sale.

THAMAGA

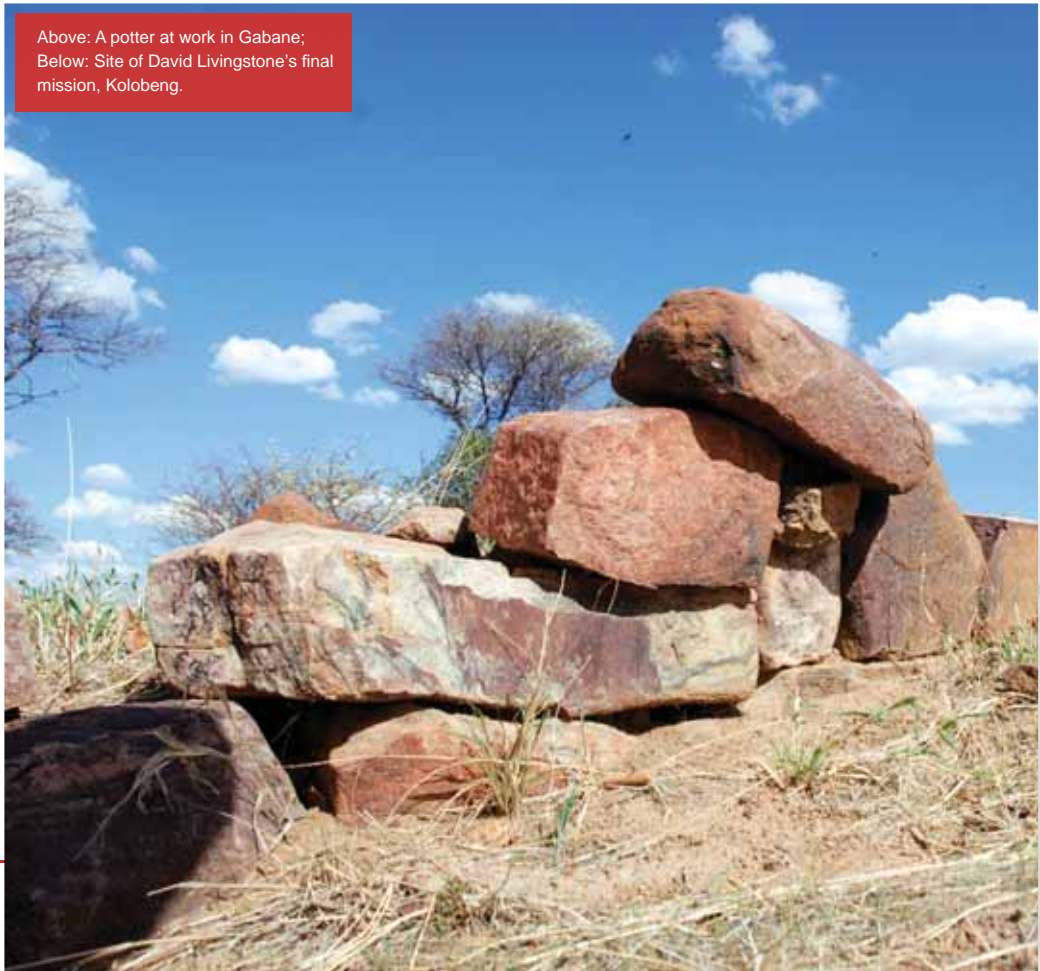
This picturesque village, situated southwest of Gaborone, is set amongst large granite boulders. It is best known for its very beautiful pottery, of the same name, and its factory has been in operation for more than 30 years. A wide range of top quality products is available, from tea and coffee sets, to platters, to candle holders, to full tableware sets, all in keeping with its inimitable designs.

KOLOBENG

The site of David Livingstone's third and final mission station was Kolobeng, approximately 20 kms west of Gaborone, past Gabane. Here he built the house and church



Above: A potter at work in Gabane;
Below: Site of David Livingstone's final mission, Kolobeng.





where he and his wife Mary would work to convert the local Bakwena to Christianity. Their daughter Elizabeth, who died at the age of six weeks, is buried here. What remains now is the foundation of the house. Kolobeng is gazetted as a National Monument, and you can only gain entry through the custodian.

BAHURUTSHE CULTURAL VILLAGE

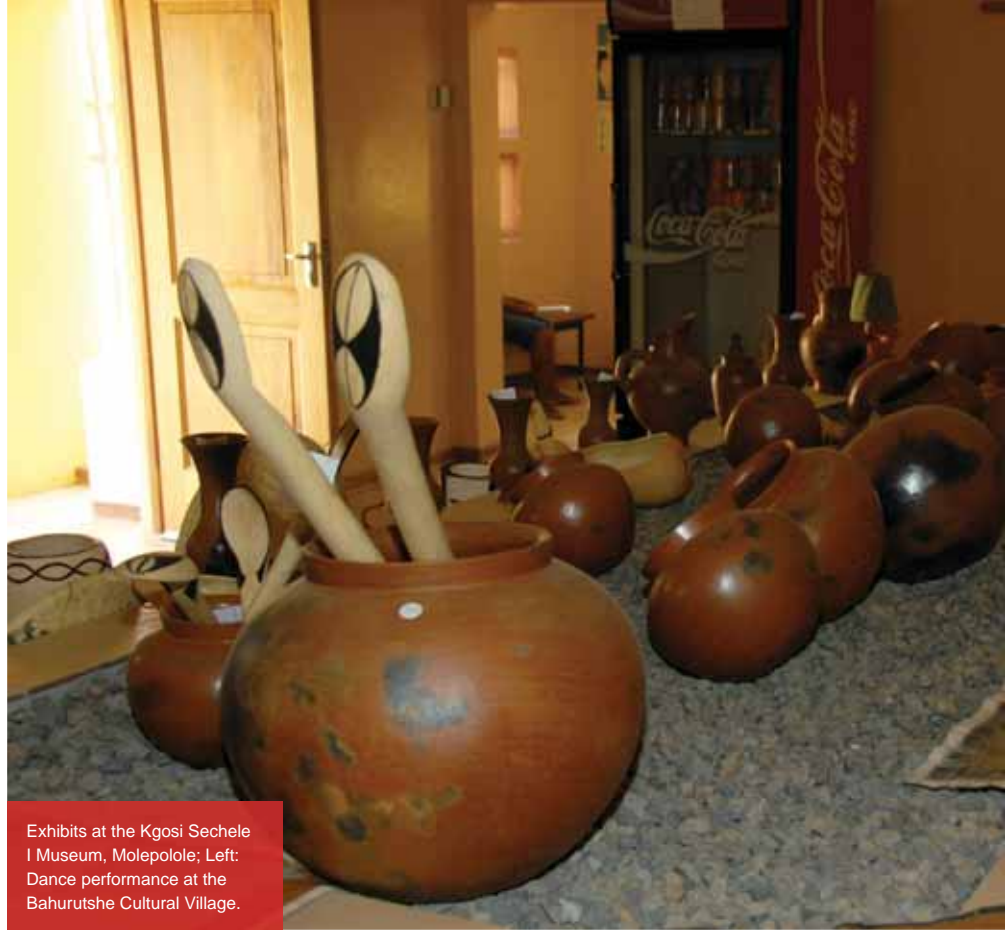
This delightful diversion is a recreated Hurutshe village offering accommodation (in traditional rondavels), arts, crafts and dancing, and Sunday brunch with local cuisine. Educational cultural tours for schoolchildren are frequently conducted. Tel: +267 72-928-625.

MANYANA

Perhaps the most visited rock painting site in the Gaborone area, the paintings are spread over five separate areas of rock cliff face. Images include giraffe, antelope, human figures and geometric designs, all of which date from between 1100 and 1700AD. They were in all likelihood made by Khoe (click-speaking) herders. Gazetted as a National Monument, the site is fenced, and you can only gain entry through the custodian.

At the south end of the village stands Livingstone's Tree, under which the great explorer is said to have preached. This old, massive fig tree – now fenced off – rests on its branches that now touch the ground.

Manyana rock paintings.



Exhibits at the Kgosi Sechele I Museum, Molepolole; Left: Dance performance at the Bahurutshe Cultural Village.

MOLEPOLOLE

Often referred to as 'Gateway to the Kalahari,' Molepolole is the last major settlement one passes on the way to Khutse Game Reserve. Home to the Bakwena people, on and off for the past four hundred years, their tradition of building stone walls around their courtyards is still practised by some families.

A modern façade covers the bustling town centre, now full of every manner of shop.

The Kgosi Sechele I Museum is one of the major points of interest in

the village. Housed in what once was the colonial police station (1902), its exhibitions seek to preserve the fast disappearing culture of the Bakwena people. The Museum offers an arts and crafts programme, educational programmes for schoolchildren, and guided tours of the village.

The Scottish Livingstone Church, situated on the main road is still a very prominent landmark. It was built early in the 20th century, and in the 1930s established the Scottish Livingstone Hospital, situated further

down the main road.

Just outside Molepolole, on the Thamaga Road, is Livingstone's Cave. Despite warnings from the Kwena tribal magician that he would die if he entered the cave, Livingstone did so and emerged alive. It is believed that Chief Sechele's brief conversion to Christianity was prompted by this event. 🍷



Travel COMPANION to... SOUTHERN BOTSWANA

Day trips heading North

OODI WEAVERS

The Lentswe-la-Oodi Weavers is a Swedish-initiated cooperative (1973) situated in Oodi village, approximately 20 kms north of Gaborone, on the Francistown Road. The weavers – mostly women who now fully own the cooperative – produce hand-woven wall hangings, tapestries, runners, napkins, cushion covers, jackets, and bedspreads, all designed by the weavers themselves. The wool is hand-woven and hand-dyed. Most designs depict rural scenes, animals or geometric patterns.

Interested customers can order originally designed pieces. Visitors are encouraged to browse the factory, and the adjacent shop.

MOCHUDI

Mochudi is home to the Bakgatla people, who migrated from present-day South Africa in 1871 to escape Boer encroachment of their lands. They settled at the base of Phuthadikobo Hill and along the Ngotwane River. Like most major villages in Botswana, Mochudi is a mixture of old and new, traditional and modern, as is best seen through changing architectural preferences in housing.

A tour of the village is best begun at the *kgotla*, signposted on the main road through the village, and situated near the tribal administration offices. It is proper courtesy to present yourself at the offices and ask permission to visit.

Recognised by large logs set vertically in the ground in a semi-circle, this is the village meeting place and customary court, a focal point of the village. Nearby is a stone-walled enclosure where stray cattle and/or cattle that are being disputed, are kept. Two Kgatla chiefs, Kgosi Linchwe Khamanyane Pilane (who ruled between 1875 and 1924) and Kgosi Molefi Kgafela Pilane (who ruled between 1929 and 1958) are buried here. Also nearby are two traditional rondavels, beautifully maintained, and good examples of how village housing once looked.

A small path up the hill from the *kgotla* leads to the Phuthadikobo Museum. Packed with information about Mochudi's history, the Museum



Opposite page: Lentswe la Oodi weaver;
Above left: Oxcart on display at the
Phuthadikobo Museum, Mochudi; Right:
Matsieng Footprints.

is a reflector of cultural change in Botswana. Its collection of historical photographs shows women making pottery, blacksmiths operating bellows, chiefs making rain, houses being decorated, and boys' and girls' initiation rites. Artifacts include pottery, basketry and other traditional utensils, weaponry, as well as Regent Isang's rain-making pots.

The building was originally a school built by Regent Isang Pilane in 1921. It was the first school in Botswana to offer secondary education and became a museum in 1976. It has steadily expanded its stock of artifacts and historical photographs. It holds a number of fascinating photographs donated by Professor Isaac Schapera, the world-renowned anthropologist who chronicled in meticulous detail the life and culture of the Batswana, and the changes rapidly taking place in their lives in the 20th century, nearly up to his death in the year 2000. There is a small shop in the Museum selling

local arts and crafts, and silkscreen products made there.

Another building of interest is the Deborah Retief Memorial Church, administered by the Dutch Reformed Mission, located just after the turn-off to the *kgotla*. This was built by the Bakgatla in 1903 and is still in use today.

The Pilane Leatherworks, situated near the railway tracks crossover, near the Francistown Road, produce sturdy and long-lasting leather shoes, sandals, purses and handbags.

MATSIENG FOOTPRINTS

Further north on the main road, just after the village of Rasesa, this National Monument consists of a slab of sandstone pierced by two deep holes, as well as engravings. Legend says that the first ancestor of the Batswana, Matsieng – a giant, one-legged man, climbed out of one hole, followed by his people, their domestic animals, and wildlife. The engravings – now very faint – were probably made by Khoe herders, and date to the beginning of the second millennium. 🏠



Botswana at a Glance

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| LOCATION: | Botswana is a land-locked country situated in southern Africa. It borders South Africa, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Approximately two-thirds of the country lies within the Tropics. |
| COUNTRY SIZE: | Botswana covers an area of 581 730 square kilometres – about the size of France or Kenya. |
| TOPOGRAPHY: | Most of the country is flat, with some small hills in the eastern areas. Kalahari sands cover 84 percent of the surface area. With the exception of the northern areas, most of Botswana is without perennial surface water. |
| CAPITAL: | Gaborone |
| URBAN CENTRES: | Francistown, Lobatse, Selebi-Phikwe |
| TOURISM CENTRES: | Maun, Kasane |
| INDEPENDENCE DAY: | 30 September 1966 |
| GOVERNMENT: | Multi-party democracy |
| HEAD OF STATE: | His Excellency Lt. Gen. Seretse Khama Ian Khama |
| POPULATION: | 1.85 million, with an average annual growth rate of 2.4 % (2006 statistics) |
| NATIONAL LANGUAGE: | Setswana |
| OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: | English |
| CURRENCY: | Pula |
| MAIN EXPORTS: | Diamonds, copper nickel, beef, soda ash, tourism |
| MAJOR CROPS: | Maize, sorghum, millet |



Visitor Information

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See page 35 for all local and international Botswana Tourism Board offices.



GETTING THERE

BY AIR

Air Botswana, Botswana's national and only airline, provides international flights between Gaborone and Johannesburg, Gaborone and Harare, Kasane and Johannesburg and Francistown and Johannesburg. Domestic flights run between Gaborone and Francistown, Gaborone and Kasane, and the airline has recently re-introduced its Maun to Kasane flight (three times per week).

- Air Botswana has thrice daily flights between Gaborone and Johannesburg.
- South African Airways has twice daily flights between Johannesburg and Gaborone, during the week.
- South African Express has five flights daily between Johannesburg and Gaborone, during the week.
- Air Botswana has daily flights from Johannesburg direct to Maun.
- Air Namibia flies Windhoek to Maun every day of the week, except Tuesday and Thursday.
- Air charter services are also available.

Most major international airlines from Europe, the United States, Asia and Australia fly to Johannesburg, South Africa, where connecting flights can be booked to Sir Seretse Khama International Airport in Gaborone, or to Maun.

For flight details contact:

Air Botswana Central Reservations

Tel: +267 395-1921

Web: www.airbotswana.bw

South African Express

Tel: +267 397-2397

Web: www.flysax.com

South African Airways

Tel: +267 390-2210/12

Web: www.saa.com

Air Namibia

Tel (South Africa): +27 11-978-5055

Tel (Namibia): +26 461-299-6444

Web: www.airnamibia.com.na

BY ROAD

Botswana is accessible by tarred road from South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia and Namibia. Vehicles are driven on the left hand side of the road. A valid international driver's license, along with vehicle registration documents, are required to drive in Botswana, and drivers should always carry them.

Most major roads in Botswana are tarred and driving conditions are generally good. The main roads to established areas are regularly graded. Four-wheel drive is required when travelling in the national parks and reserves, as well as in remote areas.

Car and four-wheel drive rental services are widely available in major tourist centres, airports and hotels.

BY BUS

There are scheduled bus services across borders between Botswana and South Africa, Zimbabwe, Namibia and Zambia, as well as good internal bus services linking major and minor towns and villages across the country.

BY RAIL

There are no passenger train services in Botswana. Cargo services run on a daily basis.

For more information consult:

The Botswana Railways website:

www.botswanarailways.co.bw

GETTING AROUND IN TOWNS

Taxis are normally a convenient way to get around in towns and are reasonably priced. They are easily identified in designated stations or can be contacted by telephone. Taxis to Gaborone are also available from Sir Seretse Khama International Airport.



GAZETTED BORDER POSTS

BOTSWANA / NAMIBIA

| | |
|---------|-------------|
| Mamuno | 07h00–00h00 |
| Ngoma | 07h00–18h00 |
| Mohembo | 06h00–18h00 |

BOTSWANA / SOUTH AFRICA

| | |
|-------------------|-------------|
| Pont Drift (Tuli) | 08h00–16h00 |
| Martin's Drift | 06h00–22h00 |
| Tlokweng Gate | 06h00–00h00 |
| Ramotswa (Bridge) | 07h00–19h00 |

| | |
|---------------|-------------|
| Ramatlabama | 06h00–22h00 |
| Pioneer Gate | 06h00–00h00 |
| McCarthy Rest | 08h00–16h00 |

BOTSWANA/ ZIMBABWE

| | |
|--------------|-------------|
| Kazungula | 06h00–18h00 |
| Pandamatenga | 08h00–17h00 |
| Ramokgwebana | 06h00–22h00 |

BOTSWANA / ZAMBIA

| | |
|-------------------|-------------|
| Kazungula (Ferry) | 06h00–18h00 |
|-------------------|-------------|



ENTRY FORMALITIES

VISAS

Citizens of most European and Commonwealth countries do not require a visa for entry into Botswana.

Visitors should check with Botswana embassies or consulates, or their travel agents, before departure.

It is vital for visitors to carry a valid passport and sufficient funds to facilitate their stay.

Note: For countries with whom Botswana has no diplomatic representation, visa information and processing is available through British Embassies and High Commissions.

LUGGAGE RESTRICTIONS

It is advisable to adhere to the luggage restrictions for both scheduled international, domestic and charter flights: 20kgs (44lbs) on domestic flights, 12kgs (26lbs) on light aircraft (including Okavango Delta charter



CUSTOMS OFFICES

HEADQUARTERS

Private Bag 0041, Gaborone
Tel: +267 363-8000 / 363-9999
Fax: +267 392-2781

REGIONAL OFFICES

SOUTH REGION

P.O. Box 263, Lobatse
Tel: +267 533-0566,
Fax: +267 533-2477

SOUTH CENTRAL REGION

Private Bag 00102, Gaborone
Tel: +267 363-8000 / 363-9999
Fax: +267 392-2781

CENTRAL REGION

P.O. Box 129, Selebi-Phikwe
Tel: +267 261-3699 / 261-0627
Fax: +267 261-5367

NORTH REGION

P.O. Box 457, Francistown
Tel: +267 241-3635
Fax: +267 241-3114

NORTH WEST REGION

P.O. Box 219, Maun
Tel: +267 686-1312
Fax: +267 686-0194

flights), and 20kgs (44lbs) on international flights.

VACCINATIONS

If you are travelling to Botswana from areas infected with Yellow Fever, you must have a valid Yellow Fever vaccination certificate. Otherwise, no other immunisations are required. However, it would be wise to have an updated TPD (tetanus, polio, diphtheria) vaccine, and a Hepatitis A vaccine.

CUSTOMS

All goods acquired outside Botswana must be declared when you enter the country.

BOATS

No boat, *mokoro* or aquatic apparatus may be imported into Botswana, unless the owner is in possession of an import permit issued by the Department of Water Affairs.

For more information contact:

Department of Water Affairs
P/Bag 0029, Gaborone
Tel: +267 360-7100

PETS

The importation of animals is closely regulated for public health reasons and also for the well being of the animals. Domestic pets and livestock may be imported subject to animal health restrictions.

For more information contact:

Director of Animal Health & Production
P/Bag 0032, Gaborone
Tel: +267 395-0500

Note: A valid certificate of identity, rabies vaccination and movement permit issued in Lesotho, Malawi, South Africa, Swaziland, Namibia or Zimbabwe will be accepted at the time of importation into Botswana.



DUTY FREE ALLOWANCES

Customs duties are not charged on the following goods imported as accompanied or unaccompanied passengers' baggage:

| | |
|-------------------|----------|
| Wines | 2 litres |
| Spirituos*..... | 1 litre |
| Cigarettes | 200 |
| Cigars | 20 |
| Tobacco** | 250 gms |
| Perfume | 50 ml |
| Toilet water..... | 250 ml |

* Includes all other alcoholic beverages

** Includes cigarette and pipe tobacco

Note: Duty will be payable at the applicable rates where travellers import goods exceeding the above allowances. Travellers importing goods for business or commercial purpose will not qualify for the above allowances.

DRIVERS' LICENSES

Drivers are required to carry their licenses at all times. Licenses from neighbouring countries are accepted in Botswana. If not written in English, a certified written translation is required. International drivers' licenses are accepted in Botswana.

IMPORTATION OF MOTOR VEHICLES

Non-residents visiting Botswana and coming from a country outside the Southern African Common Customs Area for a limited period are normally required to produce a carnet or bill of entry (any duty liability thereon being

secured by bond or cash deposit) in respect of their motor vehicles. For further information, please contact Department of Customs.

Note: The Southern African Common Customs Area comprises Botswana, Lesotho, South Africa, Swaziland and Namibia.



WHAT TO BRING

Binoculars, torch, insect repellent, lip salve, sunscreen, sunglasses. Cosmetics, medications, and cigarettes are all available in the major towns, but if specific brand names are needed, it is best to bring enough to last your stay.

However, care needs to be taken to comply with international aviation security regulations for items in carry on luggage. Contact your airline for details.



WHAT TO WEAR

- In summer, lightweight, light-coloured cottons are preferable.
- Garments of neutral colours that blend with the bush and forest are advisable for safaris and game viewing.
- Avoid synthetic materials and black clothing, as they increase perspiration and discomfort.
- Bring a lightweight jacket and/or jersey for unexpected temperature changes or rain.
- In winter, wear trousers, long-sleeved shirts / blouses and jerseys.
- From May – August, night temperatures can fall below zero degrees celsius, so warm jerseys and jackets are vital, especially on morning and evening game drives.



IMPORTATION OF GOODS

CONSUMER GOODS

The following consumer goods may be imported for private use without an import permit, provided they do not exceed the maximum allowable quantities.

Key: PP-per person. PF-per family

| PRODUCT TYPE | MAX QUANTITY |
|--|--------------|
| MEAT | |
| Red meat, goat/lamb | 25 kg PF |
| Poultry meat | 5 kg PP |
| Tinned poultry meat | 20 kg PP |
| DAIRY | |
| Eggs | 36 eggs PP |
| Fresh milk | 2 litres PP |
| OTHERS | |
| Maize / maize products | 25 kg PP |
| Wheat | 25 kg PP |
| Pulses (beans, peas, lentils) | 25 kg PP |
| Sorghum / sorghum products | 25 kg PP |
| Cabbage, Onions | 1 bag PP |
| Potatoes, Oranges, Tomatoes, Chimolia, Rape, Spinach | |
| Bread loaves | 6 per week |

- Closed, comfortable walking shoes or gym shoes are a must in all seasons.
- Special attention should be given to protection from the sun. Bring a sunhat, good quality sunscreen, sun lotion and polarised sunglasses.
- Wide brimmed hats are preferable to baseball caps.

For more information contact:
Ministry of Agriculture, Enquiries
P/Bag 003, Gaborone
Tel +267 395-0500

MEAT / DAIRY PRODUCTS

The regulations on importing meat products change frequently, because they are based on disease outbreaks in different countries. Always ask customs officials upon arrival what are the specific regulations.

For more information contact:
Ministry of Agriculture, Enquiries
P/Bag 003, Gaborone
Tel +267 395-0500

RESTRICTED GOODS

These are goods that can only be imported with a license or permit.

- Narcotic, habit forming drugs and related substances in any form;
- Firearms, ammunition and explosives;
- Indecent and obscene material such as pornographic books, magazines, films, videos, DVDs and software.

PLANTS

Plants may be imported subject to plant health restrictions, and South African transit permits may also be required in respect of plants shipped through South Africa.



COMMUNICATIONS

Most of Botswana is networked by automatic telephone exchanges, with public telephones in even the most remote places.

The International access code in Botswana is 00. When calling international to Botswana, dial +267.

Cellular phone coverage is provided by three mobile networks in Botswana: Mascom, Orange and be Mobile. Mobile Sim cards are available in most supermarkets and service stations. All major towns in Botswana are network covered, as well as portions of the national highway.

Mobile networks in Botswana offer various services to their subscribers, including Internet access, fax, and International Roaming. It is always important to seek advice about network services so as to choose one that will work for you.

Using a cellular phone whilst driving is against the law in Botswana, and liable to a P300 fine. Earphones or hands-free devices are recommended.

For further information on the network providers in Botswana, consult the following services:

MASCOM www.mascom.co.bw
ORANGE www.orange-botswana.co.bw
BTC www.btc.co.bw
be Mobile www.be-mobile.co.bw



MONEY

CURRENCY

The Botswana currency is the Pula (meaning 'rain' in Setswana). It is

divided into 100 thebe (meaning 'shield' in Setswana).

Travellers' cheques and foreign currency may be changed at banks, bureaux de change, and authorised hotels.

The US dollar, Euros, British Pound and the South African Rand are the most easily convertible currencies.

Automatic teller machines accept foreign visa cards, but are mostly found in larger towns and cities. Cultural sites and community art and craft outlets usually only accept cash.

BANKS

Seven main commercial banks, as well as a number of foreign exchange bureaux, operate in Botswana.

BANKING HOURS:

Monday to Friday 8:30-15:30
Saturday 8:30 to 10:45.

CREDIT CARDS

Major credit cards, such as MasterCard and Visa, are accepted throughout the country, in most hotels, restaurants, retail outlets and safari companies. However, shops in remote areas and service stations may only accept cash.



OFFICE HOURS

Government Offices / Departments
7:30 - 12:45 and 13:45 - 16:30
Business 8:00 - 13:00 and 14:00 - 17:00
Shops 9:00 - 18:00 Monday to Friday,
9:00 - 15:00 Saturday
9:00 - 13:00 Sunday



TIME

GMT plus 2 hours



ELECTRICAL SUPPLY

Electricity is supplied at 220/240v. Both square and round wall plugs are used.



FIREARMS & AMMUNITION

The issue of firearms licenses in Botswana is strictly controlled, and all firearms imported under the authority of an import permit must be licensed immediately upon arrival in Botswana. The importation of firearms that do not have the manufacturer's serial number or other number by which they can be identified, stamped or engraved on a metal part of the weapon is totally prohibited.

It should also be noted that police permits for firearms are issued on a limited quota basis, and there can be a considerable delay in obtaining a permit, particularly on first importation. It is advisable for intending importers to make applications well in advance of dispatch, so that unnecessary inconvenience and expenses can be avoided.

Police permits for firearms are issued by:
Central Arms, The Registry
P O Box 334, Gaborone.
Tel: +267 391-4202, +267 391-4106



DIAMOND PURCHASE

Visitors to Botswana have the opportunity to purchase diamond jewellery from authorised dealers. A strict certification system is in place to inform the buyer of the origin of the diamond, and the stated value and quality is verified.



HEALTH

Botswana is one of the healthiest countries in sub-Saharan Africa, with good primary health care facilities available throughout the country. However, the following health precautions are advised.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

It is essential for visitors to remote areas of Botswana to have a comprehensive medical insurance policy, to provide coverage for the treatment of serious illnesses/accidents, and if required, medical evacuation. Personal effects insurance is also advisable.

Check that your insurance policy will be accepted by service providers in Botswana. Ensure that you are treated by licensed medical personnel to enable you to provide your insurance company with appropriate documentation and receipts.

Reasonably priced medical services are available at government clinics and hospitals throughout the country. Private medical practitioners are available in the cities and major towns, such as Gaborone, Francistown and Maun.

Gaborone Private Hospital is the largest private hospital in Botswana. The hospital requires medical coverage, or cash payment in advance where medical coverage is not available.

DRINKING WATER

Tap water throughout the country is safe to drink. Bottled mineral water is readily available in most shops and supermarkets, and at camps and lodges.

Tourists travelling by road are advised to carry sufficient water at all times.

HIV/AIDS

Visitors are advised to take the necessary precautions against HIV/AIDS and other Sexually Transmitted Diseases.

MALARIA

Malaria, including cerebral malaria, is common in northern Botswana, in the Okavango and Chobe areas, particularly during and immediately following the rainy season, from November to April.

As the strains of malaria, and the drugs used to combat them, frequently change, and as certain strains can become drug resistant, it is best to seek medical advice before your departure and take any medication prescribed. Pregnant or very young children are not advised to travel to malarial areas.

Other precautions are: to wear long sleeves, socks, closed shoes, and generally keep the body covered, to sleep with a mosquito net and to use mosquito coils and repellent.

SUN AND HEAT-RELATED PROBLEMS

Always take preventive measures that include wearing a wide-brimmed sunhat and sunglasses, liberally applying sunscreen every three or four hours, regularly taking rehydration mixes, drinking plenty of water and fruit juices (at least three litres of liquid daily), avoiding prolonged exposure to the sun, and avoiding excessive amounts of alcohol, which causes dehydration.



SHOPPING

All major towns in Botswana, including Maun and Kasane, have shopping centres and supermarkets, and all basic commodities can easily be purchased. Many regional chain stores operate in Botswana. In addition, there are 24-

hour convenience shops at most fuel service stations.

There is an increasing range of local arts and crafts on sale in Gaborone, Maun and Kasane and other tourist areas; they include Botswana's renowned world-class baskets, woodcarvings, jewellery, pottery, tapestries, fabrics and clothing, glassware, and San crafts.

VALUE ADDED TAX

To claim 10% VAT refund for total value of goods purchased, the amount spent should be more than P5 000. In such cases, the following is required: a tax invoice stating VAT paid, your passport number and your bank account details.

It is always advisable to keep a copy of the VAT form as a record for any follow-up on the transaction.

VAT claims usually can be made at all major border posts and airports.



SAFETY

The self-drive camper driving the open roads in Botswana should always drive at a reasonable speed, and avoid over-taking, except when absolutely necessary.

CRIME

Botswana remains a relatively safe place to visit or live. Take the normal precautions you would take anywhere else:

- Always lock car doors;
- Always lock hotel rooms;
- Don't leave valuables in cars or hotel rooms;
- Take care with your bags in shopping centres and other crowded places, and after coming out of banks or ATM kiosks;
- Avoid walking alone at night.



ACCOMMODATION

All major towns and villages in the country have hotels, lodges, motels and guesthouses, catering to a range of budgets, and some have camping facilities. In and around parks and reserves, there are a variety of lodges, as well as camps in private concessions.

Camping facilities are widely available around the country, both at private lodges and/or hotels, and within the government parks and reserves.

Visit www.botswanaturism.co.bw for graded accommodation facilities.



NATIONAL PARKS & RESERVES

Botswana's extensive system of national parks and game reserves comprises approximately 17% of national land area. A further 18% of national land is allocated as Wildlife Management Areas which act as buffer zones around the parks and reserves.

The parks are primarily unfenced, allowing wildlife to freely roam, are situated in a variety of habitats and for the most part are well managed.

Camping facilities are available in all national parks and reserves. Campsites typically have standpipes and ablution blocks, with toilets and showers.

All camping in the national parks and reserves is in designated campsites, and campers are not allowed to camp elsewhere in the parks.

Reservations for camping in national parks and reserves should be made prior to departure.

For park camping reservations, contact:
Department of Wildlife & National Parks
Gaborone Office: P.O. Box 131, Gaborone
Tel: +267 318-0774, Fax: +267 391-2354
Maun Office: P.O. Box 11, Maun
Tel: +267 686-1265, Fax: +267 686-1264

Offices can be emailed on dwnp@gov.bw

Note: If you cannot honour your reservations, please cancel well in advance to give others a chance.

NORTHERN BOTSWANA

CHobe NATIONAL PARK

A park abundant in wildlife, offering a safari experience of a lifetime.

Size: 11 700 km²

When to visit: all year round

Rainfall: 600mm per annum

Altitude: 930m to 1000m above sea level

MOREMI GAME RESERVE

Described as one of the most beautiful wildlife reserves in Africa.

Size: 5 000 km²

When to Visit: all year round

Climate: Temperatures range from about 14° Celsius (July) to 24° Celsius (January)

Rainfall: 525mm per annum, varying

Altitude: 930m to 1000m above sea level

NXAI PAN NATIONAL PARK

Once part of a prehistoric lake that covered central Botswana, this park is now transformed into fossil pans covered with grassland that attract an abundance of game.

Size: 2 578 km²

When to visit: all year round

Climate: Hot, extreme daytime conditions

MAKGADIKGADI PANS NATIONAL PARK

Part of one of the world's largest salt pans and prehistoric lakes.

Size: 12 000 km²

When to visit: all year round

Climate: Hot, extreme daytime conditions

Rainfall: 500mm per annum

Altitude: 930m to 1000m above sea level

MAUN EDUCATIONAL PARK

Situated on the eastern banks of the Thamalakane River, the park is an education centre for schoolchildren; it has a variety of wildlife species that can be viewed from game hides.

When to visit: all year round

CENTRAL BOTSWANA

CENTRAL KALAHARI GAME RESERVE

The world's second largest reserve, holding vast open plains, scrub bush, salt pans, ancient riverbeds, and sand dunes.

Size: 52 800 km²

When to visit: all year round

Climate: Hot, dry conditions

Rainfall: 150mm per annum

Altitude: 600m to 1600m above sea level

KHUTSE GAME RESERVE

Characterised by undulating plains and dry Kalahari bush savannah, with an extensive mineral pan system in the reserve, which attracts animals.

Size: 2,500 km²

When to visit: all year round

WESTERN BOTSWANA

KGALAGADI TRANSFRONTIER PARK

Famous for its large antelope herds, this is Africa's first peace park, where animals roam freely across the national borders of Botswana and South Africa.

Size: 36 000 km²

When to visit: all year round

Climate: Hot, dry conditions

Rainfall: 200mm per annum, varying

Altitude: 900m to 1100m above sea level

SOUTHERN BOTSWANA

GABORONE GAME RESERVE

Nestled in the city and a popular spot for city residents, the park offers game

and bird viewing, picnic sites and an education centre.

Size: 500 Hectares

When to visit: all year round

Rainfall: 510mm per annum

Altitude: 970m above sea level

MANNYELANONG GAME RESERVE

The name of the park derives from the Cape Vulture, an endangered bird that is protected; the area is fenced and the birds can only be viewed from afar.

When to visit: all year round



SELF DRIVE CAMPING

Embarking on a camping trip in Botswana requires a good deal of planning and preparation. You will be going to remote areas, accessible only by four-wheel drive, where water, petrol or food may not be available. You may often be driving on rough terrain, and through heavy sand, in conditions very different from those you are used to.

As a general rule, take all food requirements to last your stay. Take at least 20 litres of water per person, preferably more; for desert destinations, carry between 50 and 100 litres. Carry at least 100 litres of petrol in long-range tanks or in metal jerry tins. Take spare vehicle parts for breakdowns.

As campsites within game reserves and national parks are usually not fenced, it is important for campers to take necessary precautionary measures to ensure their safety, and to abide by the information provided by wildlife officers.

The following basic camping rules should be strictly heeded:

- Only camp in designated campsites.
- Always sleep in your tent, roof tent or vehicle. Make sure your tent zips up well.
- Don't sleep with legs or arms protruding from the tent.
- Use rubbish receptacles at the campsites; if there are none, carry away all rubbish until you get to the next town.
- Cigarette butts should be well extinguished and placed in a rubbish bag, not thrown on the ground.
- Make sure the campfire is well extinguished at the end of the evening, or after use, and cover it with sand.
- Don't sleep on bridges or animal paths, particularly those of elephants and hippos.
- Bury all faecal matter and burn all toilet paper.
- Don't bathe or drink from still bodies of water; there is the danger of bilharzia.
- In the Okavango, don't swim in lagoons or streams; there is the danger of crocodiles and/or hippos.
- Children must be constantly supervised. Never leave them alone in the campsite. Never allow children to nap on the ground or in the open.
- Don't stray far from the campsite, or walk in the bush, unless with a qualified guide.

The general rule of thumb for camping in Botswana is – take only memories, leave only footprints.

FISHING

In the Panhandle area of the Okavango, there are a number of camps and lodges that specialise in fishing excursions. Fishing can also be done on the Chobe River, outside the park. Fishing is only allowed in designated areas of the national parks, and only with an official permit.

For fishing permit enquiries, contact:

Department of Wildlife & National Parks
Gaborone Office: P.O. Box 131, Gaborone

Tel: +267 397-1405

Fax: +267 391-2354 / 393-2205

Maun Office: P.O. Box 11, Maun

Tel: +267 686-0368, Fax: +267 686-0053

Kasane Office: P.O. Box 17, Kasane

Tel: +267 625-0486, Fax: +267 625-1623

Note: Permits must be applied for in person. Both monthly and annual permits are issued.

FIREWOOD

Firewood is defined as wood that is both dead and fallen and which can be removed without the use of tools. Self-drive campers should use firewood sparingly and only when necessary.



EMERGENCY NUMBERS

| | |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| Ambulance | 997 (toll free) |
| Police | 999 (toll free) |
| Fire Brigade | 998 (toll free) |
| Medical Rescue | 911 (toll free) |
| Medical Air Rescue | 390-1601 |
| Mascom | 122 |
| Orange | 112 |
| be mobile | 1333 |



LOCAL OFFICES

Headquarters

Private Bag 00275
Plot 50676, Fairgrounds Office Park
Gaborone, Botswana
Tel: +267 391-3111
Fax: +267 395-9220
board@botswanaturism.co.bw
www.botswanaturism.co.bw

Main Mall

Cresta President Hotel, Ground Floor
Gaborone, Botswana
Tel: +267 395-9455
Fax: +267 318-1373

Francistown

P.O. Box 301236
Plot 316 Shop D5 & D6, C.B.D,
Ground floor of Diggers Inn Hotel,
Francistown, Botswana
Tel: +267 244-0113
Fax: +267 244-0120
francistown@botswanaturism.co.bw

Ghanzi

P.O. Box 282
Department of Tourism Building,
Opposite Shell Filling Station
Ghanzi, Botswana
Tel: +267 659-6704
Fax: +267 659-6706
ghanzi@botswanaturism.co.bw

Selebi-Phikwe

P.O. Box 2885
Lot 2574, Block 2, Shop 3B
Central Business District
Selebi-Phikwe, Botswana

Kasane

P.O. Box 381
Madiba Shopping Centre,
Opposite Bus Rank, next to The Bakery
Kasane, Botswana
Tel: +267 625-0555
Tel: +267 625-2210/1 (airport office)
Fax: +267 625-0424
kasane@botswanaturism.co.bw

Maun

P.O. Box 20068, Boseja
Plot 246, Apollo House
Maun, Botswana
Tel: +267 686-1056
Tel: +267 686-3093 (airport office)
Fax: +267 686-1062
maun@botswanaturism.co.bw

Palapye

P.O. Box 11040
Plot 3726, along the A1 Road,
Agrivert Building
Palapye, Botswana
Tel: +267 492-2138
Fax: +267 492-2147
palapye@botswanaturism.co.bw

Tsabong

P.O. Box 688
Department of Tourism Building
Tsabong, Botswana
Tel: +267 654-0822
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tsabong@botswanaturism.co.bw

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botswanaturism@interface-net.de
www.botswanaturism.de

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Fax: +44 207 495-8595
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www.botswanaturism.org.uk

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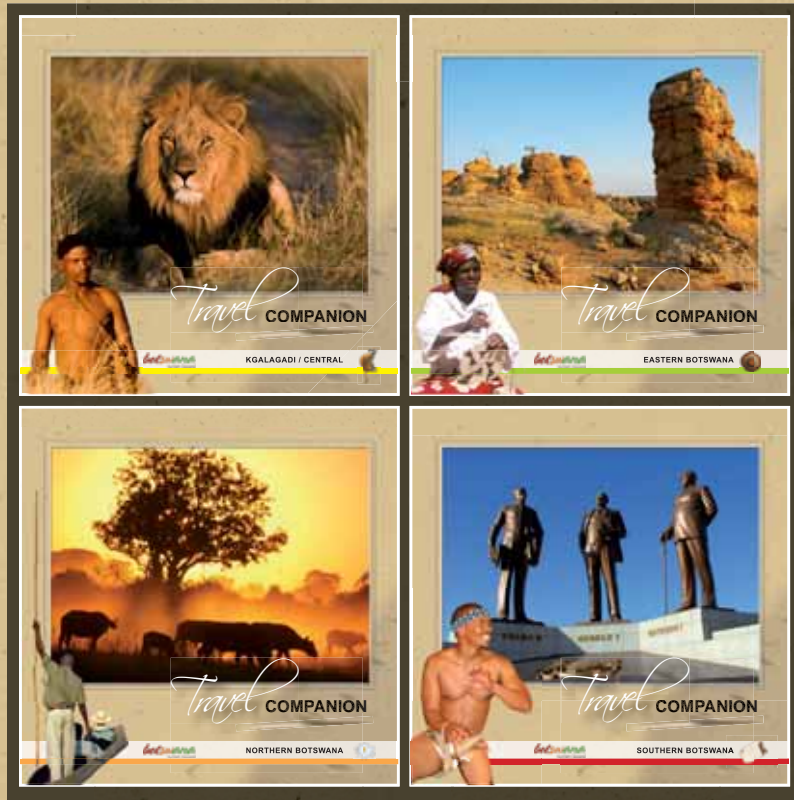
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Red-billed quelea fly over
the dam at Mokolodi Nature
Reserve.



Travel COMPANION



The definitive travel guides to Botswana

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