

## CLIMATE

Botswana is a very dry, semi-arid land. The northern two-thirds of the country lies within the tropics. Day time temperatures of 27 degrees Celsius may drop to below freezing point occasionally during the night. The rainfall ranges from 600mm in the Northwest to 250mm in the southern part. The rainfall is extremely unpredictable therefore there are frequent droughts.



### Summer (September - April)

Frequent rain and thunderstorms; days and nights are very hot, but cooling off after rain spells.

### Winter (May - July)

Dry and cold days and nights cold especially in the early hours of the morning.

## CLOTHING

Generally throughout the year casual comfortable clothes are worn, blouses, shirts, shorts or light skirts are best. Some hotels in Gaborone do not permit jeans although they are useful on safari. Jerseys and jackets are necessary for winter mornings and evenings.

Dull colours are more suitable on safari, white is not practical. In winter, warmer clothing is needed and track suits are very useful for sleeping in on safari. Comfortable shoes are essential.

## ACCESSORIES

Sun block lotion, sunglasses, hats and insect repellents are essential. Binoculars are an absolute must.

## HEALTH

Consult a doctor at least 2 weeks prior to entering Botswana on what precautions should be taken against malaria. There has been a dramatic increase in the incidence of malaria infection amongst visitors and residents of Botswana's malaria endemic areas. As a precaution boil or sterilize drinking water outside of the main towns.



Botswana like other countries has been threatened by the Aids pandemic. However, the government has put in place measures like the National Aids Control Program to help address the many problems that this scourge has created. The general advice given by Worldwide Aids awareness

campaigns should be adhered to while in the country.

## VISA REQUIREMENTS

Visas are required by all nationals of foreign countries excluding the following: All Commonwealth countries, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece., Iceland, Rep. of Ireland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Namibia, Netherlands, Norway, Pakistan, Samoa (Western), San Marino, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Uruguay and USA.

Any visitor wishing to stay more than 90 days will have to apply for prior permission to the

Chief Immigration Officer, PO Box 942, Gaborone, Botswana.

The following countries although Commonwealth countries do require visas: Ghana, India, Mauritius, Nigeria and Sri Lanka.

Visa application forms are obtained from:  
Department of Immigration and Citizenship  
P.O. Box 942, Gaborone, Botswana  
Tel: +267 3611-300/342  
Fax: +267 352-996

Visa applications may be obtained from Botswana Embassies or High Commissions. In those countries where Botswana is not represented, the British High Commission does provide Botswana visas.

### **CUSTOMS & DUTY FREE ALLOWANCES**

Tobacco.....400 cigarettes or 50 cigars or 250g of tobacco  
Liquor.....2 litres of wine and 1 litre of spirits  
Perfume.....50ml of perfume and 250ml of eau de toilette  
Cameras..... Must be declared on arrival  
Film.....Reasonable for personal use  
Agriculture items..... Refer to consulate  
Currency..... Must be declared on arrival

### **CURRENCY**

The unit of currency is the Pula. Notes are in P5, P10, P50 and P100. Coins (Thebe) are in denominations of 1, 5, 10, 25, 50, P1 & P2.

The Visa, MasterCard, American Express and Dinners Club are accepted as forms of payment, but only to a limited extent. Most hotels and lodges accept major foreign currencies or traveller's cheques, but the surcharge may be high. It is advisable to change money into local currency.

### **COMMERCIAL BANKS**

Barclays Bank of Botswana, Standard Chartered Botswana Limited, Stanbic, First National Bank of Botswana, Union Bank of Botswana and Zimbank of Botswana.

Banking Hours: Monday – Friday: 09h00 – 14h30  
Wednesday: 08h00 – 12h00  
Saturday: 08h00 – 10h45

Major hotels have foreign currency facilities and most shops, lodges and travel agencies will accept travellers cheques.

## **GETTING TO**

The best gateway to enter Botswana is via OR Tambo (Johannesburg) International Airport. Air Botswana and South African Airways flies daily between Johannesburg, Harare and Victoria Falls.

Botswana's main Airport is Sir Seretse Khama International Airport situated 15km from the capital of Gaborone. Other airports receiving international flights are Francistown, Selebi-Phikwe, Maun and Kasane.

Botswana has a well-developed road network with easy access to its neighbouring countries. Gaborone is only 360km from Johannesburg, with a good road link.

The main entry points by road into Botswana are as follows:

From Zimbabwe - Ramokgwebane, Pandamatenga and Kazungula

From Namibia - Mamuno, Mohebo and Ngoma Bridge

From Zambia - Kazungula Ferry

From South Africa - Martin's Drift (from Limpopo); Tlokweng (from Johannesburg);

Ramatlabama (from Mafikeng)

An easy way to reach Johannesburg is by mini-bus. There are mini-buses everyday from Gaborone to Mafikeng and Johannesburg departing from the main bus station in Gaborone.

## **LANGUAGE**

English is the official language. Setswana is the local language.

## **LOCAL TIME**

G.M.T. plus 2

## **ELECTRICITY**

230 V AC 50hz.

## **INTERNATIONAL TELEPHONE DIALING**

Int. Code + 267

### **General country name:**

Conventional long form: Republic of Botswana

Conventional short form: Botswana (BW)

Former: Bechuanaland

**Nationality** (noun & adjective): Motswana (sing.) and Batswana (pl.)

**Government type:** Parliamentary republic, democracy

**Capital:** Gaborone

**Administrative division:** 9 districts and town councils\* in alphabetical order: Central, Francistown\*, Gaborone\*, Ghanzi, Kgalagadi, Kgatleng, Kweneng, Lobatse\*, North-East, North-West, Selebi-Phikwe\*, South, South-East

**Census districts 1991:** Because of their size, some districts were divided into census districts (total 24):

- Central: was already divided into the sub-districts of Central Mahalapye, Serowe/Palalye, Central Bobonong, Central Boteti and Central Tutume
- Ghanzi, including Central Kgalagadi Game Reserve: no subdivision
- Kgalagadi: into Kgalagadi-South and Kgalagadi-North
- Kgatleng: no subdivision
- Kweneng: no subdivision
- North-East: no subdivision
- North-West: into Ngamiland South (including Okavango Delta), Ngamiland North and Chobe
- Southern District: into Ngwaketse (assigned to 4 DCOs, namely Ngwaketse East, Ngwaketse West, Ngwaketse South, and Ngwaketse North) and Barolong - South-East: no subdivision
- Each of the towns Francistown, Lobatse, Selebi-Phikwe, Orapa, Jwaneng, Sowa Town, and City of Gaborone formed a census district
- Gaborone was further subdivided into sub-districts such as Gaborone Central, Gaborone West, Gaborone North, and Gaborone South/East

**Independence:** September 30, 1966 (from British Protectorate, Botswana Day)

**Constitution:** March 1965

**Suffrage:** Universal at 21

**Executive branch:** President (His Excellency Mr. Festus Mogae, chief of state and head of government, since 1999) and Cabinet

Elections: The President is elected by the National Assembly for a concurrent term of office; the Vice-President is appointed by the President.

**Legislative branch:** The National Assembly is elected by popular vote and consists of 44 members, of which 40 are elected every five years on the basis of universal adult suffrage, and the other 4 are appointed by the elected members of the assembly. In addition there is an advisory House of Chiefs. The presidential candidate, whose declared supporters form the majority of Parliament members, takes office as President and selects his Ministers from among the members of the National Assembly. The next parliamentary elections in Botswana should be in October 2004.

**Judicial branch:** The judiciary is independent. A Chief Justice presides over the High Court. Some cases are heard by local chiefs and headmen, or their representatives, and are decided in accordance with customary law. The Magistrates Court, the High Court, the Court of Appeals, or the Industrial or Labor Court deal with other cases according to statute law.

**Major political parties:** The ruling Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) - 33 seats (1999 elections); Botswana National Front (BNF); Botswana People's Party (BPP); Botswana Freedom Party (BFP); and the United Action Party.

**Latest population census:** 1991

**Latest household or demographic survey:** DHS 1988

**International organization participation:** ACP, AfDB, C, CCC, ECA, FAO, G-77, IBRD, ICAO, ICFTU, ICRM, IDA, IFAD, IFC, IFRC, ILO, IMF, Intelsat, Interpol, IOC, ITU, NAM, OAU, SACU, SADC, UN, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNIDO, UPU, WCL, WFTU, WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO

### **Sources**

[1] CIA, *The World Factbook*, Botswana,

<http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/bc.html>

[2] University of Botswana - History Department, <http://humanities.ub.bw/>

[3] U.S. Department of State, *Background Notes. Botswana*,

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/bgn/index.cfm?docid=611>

[4] Government of Botswana, Ministry of State President,

[http://www.gov.bw/government/ministry\\_of\\_state\\_president.html](http://www.gov.bw/government/ministry_of_state_president.html)

[5] Republic of Botswana. 1991. *1991 Population and Housing Census*.

*Administrative/Technical Report and National Statistical Tables*. Gaborone, Botswana: Central Statistics Office.