

CLIA DESTINATION FACTSHEET

AFRICA & INDIAN OCEAN



Safari in Kenya

BEST TIME TO GO/WEATHER

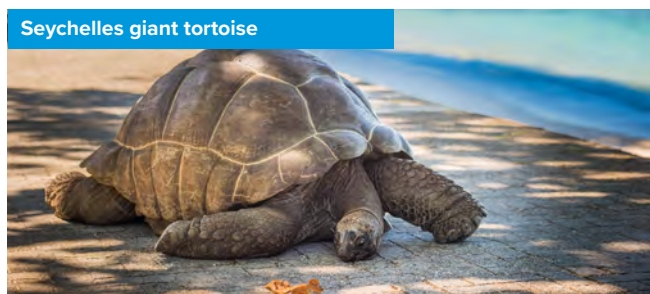
While the weather is warm year-round, the main cruise season is during winter. In South Africa and other Southern Hemisphere countries, this falls during their summer which runs from December to March when temperatures sit around 28 degrees Celsius with plentiful sunshine. April is also considered to be a good month to visit as the summer heat lessens.

Across Africa, the climate varies and is split between wet and dry seasons. Specifics can vary, but as a rule of thumb West Africa's dry season is from October to March, while in East Africa it is from May to September and December to March.

Cruises to the Indian Ocean run all year, particularly to the Seychelles, with its tropical year-round climate ensuring warm temperatures in the high 20s. The dry season generally runs from January to March while the wet season is from May to November, though this can vary between the islands.



Walvis Bay, Namibia



Seychelles giant tortoise

10 REASONS TO CRUISE HERE

Natural treasures – witness prowling lions and herds of elephants roaming across the African savannah, drive into the glorious rolling landscapes of South Africa's winelands, and admire the tropical beauty of the bountiful isles of Mauritius and the Seychelles.

Fascinating tribal culture – from scarlet-clad Maasai warriors of Kenya and Tanzania and the nomadic Himba of Namibia to South Africa's Ndebele and Zulu tribes, whose distinctive colours can be seen in decorative pottery and beadwork curios sold in tourist shops.

Animal magic – the African Bush is ultimate game-spotting territory, while Namibia's Walvis Bay attracts flocks of pink flamingos and the Southern Cape is famed for African penguins. Giant tortoises roam the Seychelles, while Madagascar boasts a plethora of exotic creatures, led by cute wide-eyed lemurs.

Winter sun warmth – swap winter's icy grip for the tropical embrace of the Seychelles and Mauritius or the beaches of Senegal, The Gambia and Mozambique. Alternatively, head to the Southern Hemisphere spots of South Africa, Namibia and Tanzania for summer sunshine.

Bucket list – snorkel with sea turtles and manta rays in the gin-clear waters of the Maldives; relish amazing far-reaching views from the top of Cape Town's Table Mountain; spot lowland gorillas and hippos in Gabon's Loango National Park.

Shipwrecks and stories – unlock the secrets of Namibia's untamed Skeleton Coast littered with remains of hundreds of ships amid tales of how survivors battled for survival in the Namib Desert, along with the ghost towns of former diamond mining settlements.

Island idylls – feel the French heritage of Indian Ocean castaway retreats Mayotte, part of the Comoros archipelago, and Reunion, a scenic treasure trove of mountains and lush forests infused with Creole charm.

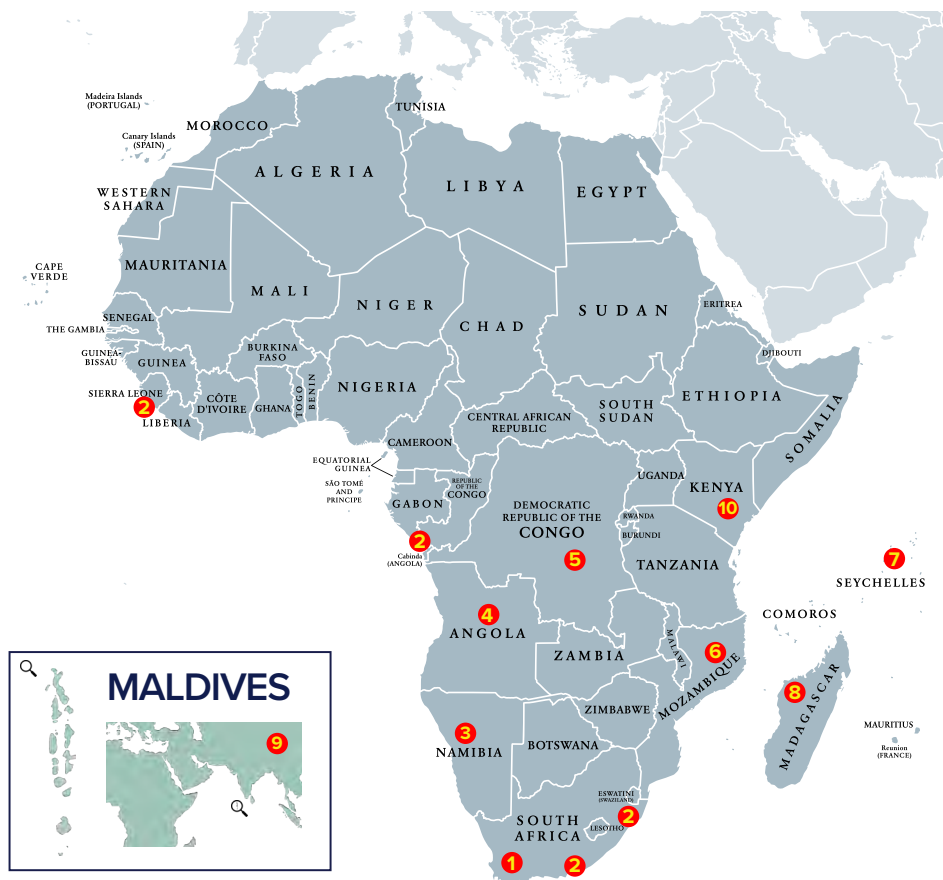
Africa's wild west – delve into West African nations including Togo, Ghana and Sierra Leone with their vibrant tribal culture and traditions. Add to that the tumultuous history of European occupation, their importance as vital trading posts and role in the Atlantic slave trade.

Volcanos and voodoo – if the rugged volcanic terrain of Reunion doesn't cast its spell on visitors, perhaps the former French colony of Benin will as this is the birthplace of voodoo. It is the state religion and markets contain an array of sacred items.

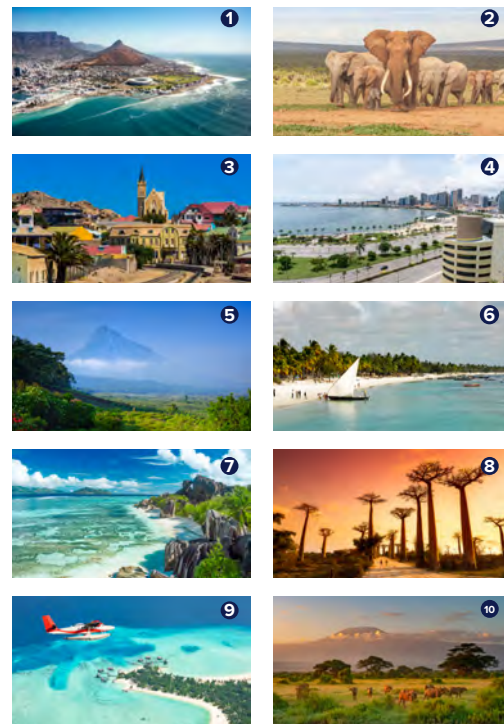
Exotic hideaways – from the uninhabited Bijagos Archipelago offshore from Guinea-Bissau and little-known isles of Sao Tome and Principe, off the coast of Gabon, to the rich cultural spirit of Zanzibar lying off Tanzania's shores.

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10 KEY ATTRACTIONS



- 1. South African Cape** – from Cape Town’s buzzing Victoria and Alfred Waterfront and Table Mountain to the glorious winelands of the Western Cape at Stellenbosch and Franschhoek and the Garden Route, a beautiful 190-mile stretch of coast from Mossel Bay.
- 2. African game reserves** – the numerous selection includes the Addo Elephant Park (pictured) near Port Elizabeth, Thula Thula private game reserve near Durban, the Conkouati-Douli coastal national park in Congo and Tacugama Chimpanzee Sanctuary in Sierra Leone.
- 3. Namibia** – Bavarian influences in the coastal town of Lüderitz, squeezed between the Namib Desert and the sea, come from the country’s former German rulers, while Walvis Bay is a magnet for birdlife and nearby sand dunes are made for hiking and sandboarding.
- 4. Angola** – this low-profile country is full of Portuguese colonial heritage evident in the capital Luanda (pictured). Port town Namibe is close to the Namibe Partial Reserve spanning the surrounding desert while coastal city Lobito is testament to Angola’s trading past.
- 5. Republic of the Congo** – or Congo-Brazzaville as it’s also known, is blessed with exceptional natural resources and biodiverse terrain that have created a habitat for incredible wildlife, while the port city Pointe-Noire reflects the country’s historic French ties.
- 6. Mozambique** - explore the Portuguese past of Mozambique, with its colourful trading roots and the continental ambience of capital Maputo whose wide boulevards and colonial buildings make it one of Africa’s handsomest cities.
- 7. Seychelles** – these drop-dead gorgeous isles covered with lush terrain are ringed by dazzling white powder sand beaches and sparkling turquoise waters. The main islands of Mahe, La Digue and Praslin are complemented by Aldabra Atoll, famous for giant tortoises, Assumption Island, Curieuse and Moyenne Island.
- 8. Madagascar** – brimming with natural wonders, this Indian Ocean isle is a honeypot of rare species that thrive in its rich biodiverse landscapes. It boasts 200,000 known species, from lemurs to chameleons, throughout the numerous national parks and reserves.
- 9. Maldives** – there are nearly 1,200 of these island paradises, renowned for their beaches and castaway ambience, scattered like precious jewels across the Indian Ocean’s shimmering sapphire waters of stunning marine life and colourful corals.
- 10. Kenya** – synonymous with Africa’s beating heart and one of its ultimate safari destinations, this is home to the sweeping plains of the Maasai Mara and beautiful beaches of Mombasa, a short distance from the Tsavo national parks.

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10 THINGS TO KNOW BEFORE YOU GO:

- 1. Extend your stay** – there's so much potential, whether it is tagging on visits to South Africa's Kruger National Park or Cape Winelands, travelling inland to Tanzania's Serengeti National Park and Mount Kilimanjaro, or adding stays at island resorts in the Indian Ocean.
- 2. Book organised tours** – many African port stops are not places to wander off exploring on your own, especially as public transport can be limited and not advisable for tourists to use, which leads on to
- 3. . . . Personal safety** – while Cape Town's main tourist spots are safe, it is not advisable to venture too far outside these areas. Nations such as Angola, Togo and Congo-Brazzaville have high crime rates and foreigners may be targeted. Also beware of political rallies or demonstrations.
- 4. Minimal time difference** – with only one or two hours difference between many African nations and the UK, there's no problem with jetlag. South Africa is just two hours ahead, while Kenya is +3 and Ghana and Togo follow GMT year-round.
- 5. Rocky seas off South Africa** – the country's Eastern Cape isn't called the Wild Coast for nothing as pounding waves and currents have taken a dramatic toll along this coastline. Strong winds can whip up seas along the Western Cape too, so take seasickness pills just in case.
- 6. Do more than one game drive** – to maximise the chances of spotting more animals as sightings can be unpredictable, especially in the middle of the day when many creatures will hide from the blazing sun.
- 7. Smaller ships** – vital for accessing smaller tucked-away islands and ports, especially in the Indian Ocean archipelagos and islands off the West African coast.
- 8. Don't try to rush it** – there's so much to pack in with all of these destinations. Devote a decent stretch of time to explore them thoroughly on a longer voyage or with add-ons too.
- 9. Consider world cruise segments** – in addition to stand-alone sailings that focus on Africa or the Indian Ocean, look at world cruises that may also visit these regions and offer them as individual segments.
- 10. Study itineraries** – they vary between those that only offer headline ports such as Cape Town and Walvis Bay in southern Africa or Mauritius and Reunion in the Indian Ocean and ones that also include numerous smaller ports and countries.