

South Africa

Frequently Asked Questions

Prior to Departure

Q: What are the travel requirements for minors traveling to South Africa?

A: As of the 1st June 2015, new documentation requirements apply for all passengers traveling to or from South Africa with children under the age of 18. Refer to page 1 of the ODFL trip application for specific document requirements and for more information, please visit: <http://southafricahouseuk.com/documents/pepletravchil.pdf> Also, please remember that the U.S. Department of State recommends that travelers ensure that their passport has at least six months of validity beyond their dates of international travel.

Q: What if I am not a US citizen?

A: Please notify Cathy Dwulet if you do not carry a US Passport.

Q: What items should I collect to donate?

A: Toys (puzzles, legos, games, etc.), children's books, school supplies (pencils, paper, crayons, pens, white boards, markers), sporting equipment (soccer balls, baseballs, jump ropes, etc.), musical instruments, clothing (sports uniforms, blankets, baby clothes, shoes), laptops, medical supplies (bandaids, first aid kits, gloves, masks, etc.). Bread tags (the kind that close a loaf of bread) – for every 100,000 bread tags, a disabled person in the township near Johannesburg will receive a free wheelchair.

Q: How many students and adults are allowed on the trip?

A: Due to lodging restrictions, the maximum number is 18 students and 2 chaperones.

Q: Who are the trip leaders?

A: All ODFL trips are chaperoned by credential teachers who have been involved with ODFL. Each trip will have a minimum of one male and one female chaperone.

Q: Are the trip fees tax deductible?

A: No but any donations that you make directly to a project that ODFL supports are 100% of what you donate goes to a project. ODFL does not take any administrative fees or other fees from donations.

Q: Can I fundraise to cover the trip costs?

A: Absolutely! We encourage students to raise funds and can help with suggested ways to do so. We find that those students who have actively helped pay for the trip are more invested and committed to the goals of the trip.

Q: Can I fly independently from the group?

A: We discourage students from traveling separately from the group however it may be allowed with prior approval from ODFL.

Q: Does the trip count for community service hours for school?

A: Yes, a portion of your work during the trip can count towards community service hours. Please contact Cathy Dwulet for more details.

Q: What are the age requirements to travel on an ODFL trip?

A: We allow high school students of any age as well as an occasional college student who had prior involvement with ODFL.

Q: Can parents accompany their child on the trip and/or act as a trip leader?

A: No, ODFL does not allow parents to accompany their child on ODFL trips.

Q: What language do they speak in South Africa?

A: There are 11 national languages with English and Afrikaans being the most common. Most everyone you will encounter on the trip will speak some English.

Q: How can I learn more about South Africa?

A: It is well worth the time and effort to learn about the rich history of South Africa. Once you have been chosen to go on the trip, you will be assigned some reading and homework. In the meantime, please feel free to search the internet for the following terms: apartheid, townships of Johannesburg, history of gold and/or diamonds in South Africa, Tembisa, Nelson Mandela, watch one of the many movies: Mandela, Long Walk to Freedom (2013), Invictus (2009)

Getting There

Q: When and where do I arrive and depart from South Africa?

A: You will fly round-trip from San Francisco to London (11 hours), change planes and then fly directly to Johannesburg, South Africa (11:45min).

Q: Who will meet us at the airport?

A: Our South African partners, Lucas and Leona Scheepers, as well as some of their family members and/or assistants, will meet the group. They will help load the bags into their vans and drive you directly to their home, which is your lodging as well.

Health and Safety Tips

Q: What vaccinations are required to visit South Africa?

A: We follow the Center for Disease Control's recommendations that can be found here: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/south-africa> It is important that you let your doctor know you are traveling to South Africa and make an appointment at least 4-6 weeks before your trip. This allows for adequate time to get new immunizations and ensure that others are up-to-date.

- * Hepatitis A is required
- * Hepatitis B and Typhoid are optional
- * Malaria is not needed as the group will be there in the winter and not in any malaria infected areas.

Q: What are the principal health risks?

A: We strongly recommend you consult your own physician, public health clinic and/or travel clinic for detailed travel health information. In the six years that we have been going to South Africa, the only health problem we've encountered has been occasional traveler's diarrhea. HIV/AIDS is prevalent and we will be working with

individuals that have tested positive for HIV/AIDS. We will discuss safe practices and behaviors in our pre-departure meetings. There are very good western style doctors and hospitals near by should they be needed.

Q: Do I need any special insurance for the trip?

A: Regular medical doctor visits are inexpensive and can be paid out-of-pocket. If an injury or accident required hospitalization, your US medical insurance typically will reimburse you for out-of-country expenses. Please check with your medical carrier to see what their specific policy is. Additional trip cancellation and/or medical insurance can be purchased at a reasonable rate should you decide to do so.

Q: Is the water safe to drink?

A: Yes, however when we are working in the Township, we bring our own water so please pack at least one reusable water bottle.

Q: What measures are taken to ensure the safety of the group?

A: Safety is the NUMBER ONE priority of ODFL. The group is *never* without adult supervision and in addition to the two ODFL chaperones, the hosts are with the group at all times. The group only goes to areas where our partners are known and have established relationships. The group does not go into downtown Johannesburg at any time. They do, however, work in the township of Tembisa on a daily basis. Our partners have a community center within the township where they base most of their activities.

Food and Lodging

Q: What is the lodging that is provided?

A: You will stay at a 4 star bed and breakfast resort called Africa Footprints www.afrifoot.co.za. Most rooms have single beds and/or bunk beds and there are max 4 people per room. Every room has their own private bathroom. The facility is secured behind a fence and has a night guard.

Q: What is the electrical power?

A: 220 volts, so if you plan to bring a cell phone or other electrical device, you should bring an adapter plug.

Q: Can special diets be accommodated?

A: Yes, there will always be a vegetarian option available. For other special needs, please indicate on the ODFL Medical Form so we can make appropriate arrangements.

Q: What is the local cuisine?

A: Although you will have a chance to try some traditional South African dishes, most of the food that you will eat will be similar to American food. The main South Africa staple food is made from corn maize and is called pap. You will see this served many times and have a chance to help make it. Breakfast will be both hot foods (eggs, bacon, toast) and cold foods: cereal, fruit and yogurt. Lunch is typically brought from home and is sandwiches and/or during a preschool upgrade, the owner of the preschool may make you a traditional lunch. Dinner is at our hosts' home and is typical of what you would eat here in the US.

What should I pack?

We recommend packing one suitcase (med sized wheeled luggage or duffel) and a carry-on that can double as a daypack. Many of you will also be carrying another large duffel bag with donated items. You will be transporting your gear in vehicles with limited space so pack lightly. Be sure to mark your belongings with your name. Delicate items, such as medications or cameras should be packed in your carry-on daypack. It is important that you leave all expensive jewelry, watches, etc., at home. These items are all considered signs of wealth in South Africa and can draw unwanted attention.

Q: What will the weather be like?

A: Since South Africa is in the Southern Hemisphere, their seasons are the opposite of ours in the United States. You will be there in their winter so expect daytime temperatures in the 50-60's and nighttime in the 30-40's. There will likely be occasional rain.

Packing List:

1	Duffel bag/ Backpack/suitcase	Soft-sided travel luggage with wheels is easier and less bulky for travel and storage. (Remember, new regulations require airline baggage to be 50 lbs. or less)
1	Day pack/Travel Pack	Small backpack for day hikes with a trash bag to use as a cover if it rains. Use as a carry-on for plane trip.
2-3	Long sleeve shirts	
2	Warm jackets/hoodie	1 fleece/hoodie and one heavier jacket for cold evenings
4-5	T-shirts	
2	Pants	1 pair jeans and 1 pair khakis or synthetic work best
1	Nice outfit	Something nice to wear to a restaurant
1	Sweats/yoga pants	For downtime and travel comfort
6-8	Underwear	Enough regular underwear to keep you happy; nothing too fancy as your underwear will be hanging on a line for all to see
1	Pair sneakers	They call them 'tackies'
1	Pair shoes or sandals	Comfortable footwear for vehicle and down time.
4-6	Socks	Preferably synthetic
1	Beanie cap	It is sometimes very cold!
1	Gloves	Warm gloves or mittens
1	Sun Hat	Baseball cap or other hat to keep the sun and rain off
1-2	Water Bottle	Reusable water bottle
1	Sunglasses	A sports strap to hold them on is helpful.
1	Small bag of toiletries	Toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, etc. Women (new environments and activities may alter cycles. Bring

		an extra supply of feminine products.)
2	Sets of medications	For critical meds we recommend giving an extra set to your trip leader in case one gets lost.
1	Sunscreen/lip balm	
1	Bandana	Used for a variety of things including marking your bags
1	Towel	Bath towel, synthetic is best so it dries easier
1	Pajamas	
1	First aid kit	Hand sanitizer, Advil, motion sickness pills, etc.
	Optional:	
	Journal and/or book	Record hard names to remember, stories, etc.
	Ear plugs	
	Plastic bags	Can hold dirty shoes, clothes, etc.
	Camera and plenty of film or memory cards	Camera or phone
	Binoculars	(medium strength) and/or spotting scope
	Power adapter	They have 220 v
	Swimsuit	We might make it to a gym with a pool
	Mini Photo Album or family photos	To share with the people you meet

Laundry

Q: Is there a washing machine and dryer available?

A: There is a clothes washer at our hosts' house that the group is welcome to use along with laundry soap. Laundry is hung to dry as there is no dryer.

Money

Q: What money do they use in South Africa?

A: The local currency is called Rand. The approximate exchange rate is 14 Rand = \$1 US Dollar. Bring your spending money in at least two of the following forms: credit cards, ATM cards, or cash. Your hosts will help you change some US dollars into Rand. We also recommend that you do not bring traveler's checks because they are difficult to cash. Visa credit/debit cards are much more widely accepted than any other type but cash is the best. It is best to carry small bills because change is often hard to come by in rural areas. Personal spending money is required for bottled water, beverages, gifts, souvenirs, and 2-3 meals while on the road. Depending on how much shopping you wish to do, \$150-\$200 total spending money should be plenty.

Q: How are my valuables kept safe?

A: Your hosts have a safe that you may use. We recommend, upon arrival, that you give them your passport and money to store until needed.

Communications

Q: What if I need to reach my child and/or the chaperone during the trip?

A: You will be given the direct phone numbers for your hosts in South Africa as well as the chaperones. The chaperones will be in frequent communication with the parents during the trip. They will send emails giving details of how the trip is going as well as post photos on Facebook. Of course, if the traveler is having any problems, we will immediately email and/or call the parents.

Q: Will internet service be available?

A: The lodging does have wifi but we do not typically give out the wifi password. Part of the trip is for the travelers to 'disconnect' from texting, Snapchat, Twitter, Facebook, etc. They are welcome to use their phones as a camera but we discourage parents from buying international plans.