

Tipping Guidelines



There are often varying expectations around tipping. This is due to different nationalities and their own cultural norms. In Africa, tipping is customary in most service industries, however, though it is not mandatory. The amount of tip is generally based on the role the staff member is performing. The following guidelines are based on Epic's experience. Please remember, you are not obliged to give these exact amounts and if you would like to give more, or less, please do so. After all, a tip is a personal gesture of appreciation.

What, when and how to tip:

The suggested tipping amounts depend on the type of service provided. It's important to remember that many individuals work behind the scenes, mechanics, maintenance teams, and other support staff often in remote locations, whom you may never meet. The figures below reflect what has become customary over time. There is no obligation to follow them precisely; give what feels right.

Currency

US dollars are the most widely accepted currency for tipping. It is helpful to carry a mix of denominations to allow flexibility, with tens, twenties, and fifties being ideal—particularly for 2–3 night stays. Please plan ahead to ensure you have sufficient cash available before your holiday.

Suggested Tipping Guidelines:

- **Airport/Hotel Porters/Bag carriers:** USD 2.00 per porter
- **Transfer only guides:** USD 5.00 per group per transfer.
- **Private Safari vehicle Driver-Guide (Full day or multi day):** Between USD 15.00 – USD25.00 per guest per day. Hand to the driver/guide directly at the end of the stay. For 4+ guests, a bit less per person is fine since the total adds up.
- **Shared Safari Vehicle (game drives with camp guide):** Between USD 10.00 – USD15.00 per guest per day. Hand to the driver/guide directly at the end of the stay.
- **Local Tour Leaders/Professional Local guides:** USD 40.00 per group per day, hand directly to the guide at the end of the trip.
- **Butler (if you have one at the lodge):** USD 15.00 per guest per day. Hand to the butler directly at the end of the stay.
- **General Camp Staff:** Between USD 10.00 – USD20.00 per guest per day. This can be placed in a communal tip box or hand to the camp manager at the end of the stay for the staff pool (housekeepers, waiters, back-of-house).
- **Community Excursions:** USD 10.00 per guest, to be given to the village leader for distribution.
- **Kilimanjaro Climbers:** Please refer to the tipping document provided separately.

Gorilla Trekking Guidelines

- **Gorilla Trek: USD 50.00** per guest per trek (usually 2 treks), typically divided as follows:
 - USD 30.00 per guest per trek to the tracking team (hand directly as you come out of the forest).
 - USD 20.00 per guest per trek to the two guides (hand at the end of your trek).
- **Gorilla Porters:** USD 15 – USD 20.00 per porter per trek. The porters are local villagers, and this support provides a meaningful contribution to their families and community. Our Rwandan ground handler also pays each porter USD 11.00 per trek.
- **Driver/Guide:** USD 30.00 per group per day. Hand directly to the driver/guide at the end of the trip.

Other Considerations

- **Unused Snacks, Clothing, and Equipment:** Staff are always grateful to receive these.
- Please, note we discourage giving money, sweets, and school supplies directly to the children as this promotes begging.
- If you wish to support schools or communities, please refer to *Epic's Making A Difference document* for meaningful ways to contribute.

In Summary

Tips are deeply appreciated by the people who make your safari experience memorable. You may hear differing opinions from other travellers, but these guidelines reflect our experience with Epic. Tipping supports local communities and contributes to wildlife conservation by helping ensure that tourism benefits the people who protect these incredible environments.

Happy Trails, Brad, Rob, and the Epic Team