

FREE FAMILY TRAVEL GUIDE

Travel smarter, explore further, create memories that last a lifetime.

INTRODUCTION

Hi, I'm Nolene — a mom of two, online travel agent, content creator, and travel business mentor. I've travelled **33 countries with my kids before Grade 7** and now help families **plan unforgettable trips** while avoiding the mistakes most travellers make.

This guide is for:

- Families dreaming of **Europe or Africa adventures**
- **stress-free, intentional travel**
- Anyone wanting to **maximize experiences**

SECTION 1: PLANNING FAMILY TRAVEL SMARTLY

1. Start with realistic goals:

- Decide on **destinations, duration, and pace**.
- Don't overpack — some prefer wheely bags, we prefer back packs. Learn kids to live without baggage and travel light.

2. Budget properly:

- Include flights, transfers, accommodation, activities, meals, and insurance, toll roads.
- Save money by **booking early**.
- Leave space for **unforeseen**.

3. Pick family-friendly accommodations:

- Airbnb, lodges, or safari camps with family rooms.
- Location > Book your accommodation with purpose — close to pick up points in Europe or close to the Safari's. Make sure of the location & accommodation to avoid hidden transfer costs.

4. Travel documents & visas:

- Check passports, visas, and vaccinations **well in advance**.
- Keep digital & physical copies.
- You need underbridge certificates to travel with kids in Africa.

SECTION 2: EUROPE FAMILY TRAVEL HACKS

1. Plan Fewer Countries, Stay Longer

- Focus on **2–3 cities per country** instead of rushing through 5–6.
- Base yourself in **well-connected cities** for easy day trips.
- We've done **marathon travel** — multiple countries in just a few days. It's intense, exhausting, and **definitely not for the faint-hearted**. While it looks impressive on paper, we've learned that **slower**

travel with fewer countries creates deeper experiences, happier kids, and far better memories.

Travel isn't a race — it's about presence, connection, and truly experiencing each place.

- Research properly the countries, things to do and what is suitable with kids. There is an amazing app that share all these info.

2. Transport Tips

- **Trains:** Fast, scenic, kid-friendly. Book early for cheap tickets and seat reservations especially overnight cabins if you are doing a long train ride.
- **Flights:** Budget airlines are cheap but check luggage policies carefully, but it can save time between countries.
- **Public transport passes** save money and simplify travel. Hop on and hop off busses.
- **Make use of Bolt** – easy and efficient

3. Family-Friendly Accommodation

- Airbnb or serviced apartments with **kitchen facilities** save money and are great for families.
- Choose **central locations** to reduce walking with kids.
- If you are travelling as a couple or solo – I would recommend booking your excursions – check the pick up points and book accommodation close by to cut on taxi fees.

4. Pack Smart

- Layered clothing works for changing climates.
- Comfortable shoes + daypacks for kids and important documentation.
- Snacks, refillable water bottles, and small entertainment for flights/trains
- Keep your passport in close reach for border crossings.

5. Money & Payments

- Use a **currency converter app** for easy budgeting in each country.
- Consider a **digital banking system** that holds multiple currencies — avoids constant exchange fees. I can help with this.
- **Track spending** per family member to stay on budget. Keep a little note pad – solo travel or as couple is still fine – when you add kids constantly hungry or thirsty – you need to write it all down.

6. Book Experiences Online

- Use **online experience booking apps** — we have one that works amazingly!
- Book museums, day trips, tours, or adventure activities in advance.
- Saves time and you can keep to a schedule if need be.

7. Must-o Experiences

- Include **parks, playgrounds, and kid-friendly museums**.
- Look for **local experiences** beyond tourist hotspots.
- Attend **festivals or cultural events** for authentic travel.
- Ask locals what they do in the area, find those hidden gems.

8. Budgeting Tips

- Europe can be expensive; set a **daily budget per city**.
- Grocery shopping + picnics = fun and cost-saving.

- Online banking + currency apps make managing multiple currencies easy.

9. Travel Tips With Kids

- Involve kids in planning — let them **choose activities, read maps, or journal**.
- Include **downtime** to avoid burnout.
- Reward patience with small treats or fun experiences along the way.

SECTION 3: AFRICA SAFARI TIPS

Namibia self-drive:

1. Best Time to Visit

- **May–October (dry season):** Best for wildlife viewing; animals congregate at waterholes.
- **November–April (wet season):** Green landscapes, fewer tourists, some roads may be challenging.
- Dry season = easier self-driving and family-friendly safaris.

2. Plan Your Route

- Popular destinations for families and first-timers:
 - **Etosha National Park** – wildlife-rich, easy drives between waterholes.
 - **Sossusvlei & Deadvlei** – iconic red dunes and photography.
 - **Swakopmund** – adventure sports and family-friendly activities. Need at least 3-5 days
 - **Damaraland** – desert-adapted wildlife and unique landscapes.
- Don't try to see everything; **focus on fewer destinations for a relaxed trip**. Namibia is vast, driving distances takes time.
- Things to do from Swakopmund:
 - LOCAL – Swakopmund Town & Nearby
 - Beach walks & promenade strolls
 - Coffee shops & seaside cafés
 - Craft markets & local shopping
 - Swakopmund Museum (great for kids)
 - Fresh seafood & oysters
 - Sunset beach views
 - **Adventure Activities (Town-Based):**
 - Sandboarding (kids & adults)
 - Quad biking in the dunes
 - Fat biking (guided rides)
 - Skydiving over the desert & ocean
 - Go-karting & desert tracks
 - **Nature & Wildlife (Close by):**
 - Living Desert Tour (desert-adapted wildlife)
 - Beach exploring & tide pool walks
- **DAY TRIPS – Swakopmund Surrounds**
 - **Walvis Bay Lagoon**
 - Boat cruises (dolphins, seals, flamingos)
 - Kayaking with seals
 - Sunset lagoon cruises

- **Sandwich Harbour (guided 4x4)**
 - Dunes meeting the ocean
 - Sunrise or sunset tours
 - Photography & wildlife sightings
- **Cape Cross Seal Reserve**
 - One of the largest seal colonies in the world
 - Easy half-day trip
 - Great for kids & photography
- **Dorob National Park**
 - Coastal desert landscapes
 - Off-road exploration (with permits)

- **INSIDER FAMILY TIPS**

- Book activities early — Swakopmund fills fast
- Mix adventure days with beach & café downtime
- Guided tours are best for Sandwich Harbour & desert routes
- Ideal stopover between **Sossusvlei & Etosha**

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3. Self-Drive Tips

- 4x4 recommended for **off-road areas** like Damaraland and Sossusvlei.
- Plan fuel stops carefully, **long distances with few petrol stations**.
- Carry **water, snacks, spare tires, and a first-aid kit**.
- Keep **maps or offline GPS**; network coverage can be limited.
- E-Sim is now available in Namibia.

4. Accommodation

- Book **lodges, campsites, or guesthouses** in advance.
- Family-friendly lodges often include **en-suite rooms or family tents**.

5. Wildlife & Safari Tips

- Etosha: Best wildlife spotting in **morning & late afternoon**. For a safari – Timing is essential.
- Bring **binoculars and cameras** for amazing sightings. Learn your camera settings.
- Waterholes attract predators — **watch from safe distances**.
- Guides can add value for spotting and tracking animals.
- Keep to the park rules.
- Make sure you know what is the “Redline” you are not allowed to bring meat from North to South here in Namibia.
- You have to drive with headlights on – all Namibia roads.

6. Health & Safety

- Sun protection is essential: hats, sunscreen, sunglasses.
- Carry **first aid, insect repellent, and sufficient water**.
- Travel insurance is recommended, especially for remote self-drive safaris.

7. Family-Friendly Travel

- Keep kids engaged with **wildlife spotting games, journaling, or mini-photo challenges**.
- Include **short drives and breaks** — Namibia's distances can be long.
- Snacks and hydration are crucial on desert routes.

8. Insider Advice

- Work with a **Namibia safari planner** to optimize routes, bookings, and park permits.
- Avoid trying to see everything in one trip — **quality > quantity**.
- Combine **Namibia with Botswana or Victoria Falls** for epic Southern Africa adventures.
- If you do multiple country – make sure you know what is needed at borders, have all documents.
- If doing a self drive – you need vehicle papers as well.

SUMMARY:

TOP ADVICE & TIPS FOR OVERLANDING NAMIBIA

1. TYRE PRESSURE (THIS IS CRITICAL)

- Gravel roads: **1.6/1.8 bar**
- Thick sand (dunes, riverbeds): **1.2 – 1.5 bar**
- Corrugations: Lower pressure = less damage
- Always **air down** when leaving tar roads
- Carry a **reliable compressor** to reinflate

 Most breakdowns in Namibia are from **incorrect tyre pressure**

2. TYRES & SPARES

- All-terrain tyres are best
- Carry **at least one full spare** (two is ideal)
- Puncture repair kit is essential
- Check tyres daily for cuts & bulges

3. VEHICLE & RECOVERY GEAR

- High-clearance **4x4 recommended**
- Recovery points front & rear
- Essential gear:
 - Tow strap
 - Shovel
 - Tyre gauge
 - Jack base plate
- Know your vehicle before you go

4. FUEL PLANNING

- Distances are long — **fuel up whenever you can**
- Do not pass a fuel station thinking “I'll get fuel later”

- Carry **extra fuel** for remote routes
- Know your vehicle's fuel range

5. WATER & SUPPLIES

- Minimum **5–7 litres of water per person per day**
- Extra water for vehicle emergencies
- Always carry snacks & emergency food
- Never rely on remote shops being open

6. SPEED & ROAD CONDITIONS

- Gravel roads are unpredictable
- Drive **slower than you think necessary**
- Corrugations, animals & washouts are common
- Early mornings & late afternoons are safest

7. NAVIGATION & CONNECTIVITY

- Mobile signal is limited
- Use **offline GPS maps**
- Paper maps are a good backup
- Tell someone your route if travelling remote

8. CAMPING & LODGES

- Book campsites and lodges in advance
- Respect camp rules & wildlife
- Never leave food outside at night
- Pack away everything — including shoes

9. WILDLIFE AWARENESS

- Animals have right of way
- Never get out of your vehicle in unfenced areas
- Be alert at waterholes & camps
- Night driving is dangerous — avoid it

10. SAFETY & PREP

- Carry **basic first-aid kit**
- Travel insurance is essential

- Emergency contacts saved offline
- Keep calm — panic causes mistakes

11. FAMILY OVERLANDING TIPS

- Shorter driving days are better
- Snacks, water & shade are essential
- Let kids help with navigation & spotting
- Build in rest days — Namibia is intense

INSIDER OVERLANDING TRUTH

Namibia rewards those who are **prepared, patient, and respectful**.

Slow down, plan properly, and let the landscape lead.

 **DM NAMIBIA** if you want help planning a safe self-drive or overlanding route.

Botswana safari planning:

1. Best Time to Visit

- **Dry season (May–Oct)** is ideal for **wildlife viewing**: animals congregate around waterholes.
- **Wet season (Nov–Apr)**: lush scenery, birdwatching, fewer tourists, but some areas may be inaccessible. Moremi is a must see – but do not underestimate.

2. Plan Your Itinerary Wisely

- Focus on **fewer destinations** to avoid long drives.
- Popular regions:
 - **Okavango Delta** – wildlife & unique safari experiences – one of the best safari destinations.
 - **Chobe National Park** – famous for elephants and river safaris
 - **Moremi Game Reserve** – best for family safaris and photographic opportunities. Our top pick!
 - **Adhere to the speed limit.**

3. Safari Tips

- **4x4 vehicle recommended**, ideally with a guide for first-time travellers.
- Morning and evening safaris offer the **best wildlife sightings**.
- Pack **neutral-coloured clothing, hats, sunscreen, and binoculars**.
- Bring **camera + extra memory cards** — wildlife moments are priceless. Know your camera

4. Accommodation

- Book **lodges and camps well in advance** — they fill up fast in peak season.
- Family-friendly options: lodges with **en-suite rooms or tents**.
- Consider **luxury tented camps** for an authentic safari experience.

5. Health & Safety

- **Malaria prevention:** speak to your doctor about prophylactics.
- **Carry a first aid kit, water, and snacks** for drives.
- Travel insurance is **mandatory** — cover medical emergencies and cancellations.

6. Local Culture & Etiquette

- Respect local customs and guides' instructions.
- Interact with locals politely; tips are appreciated in lodges and camps.
- Learn basic phrases or greetings for a more immersive experience.

7. Travel Logistics

- Flights: **Maun or Kasane airports** for major safari regions.
- Road travel: 4x4 with **high clearance** is essential; some routes may be sandy or muddy.
- Fuel up whenever possible — remote areas have limited stations.

8. Pack Smart

- Binoculars & cameras for wildlife spotting.
- Neutral-coloured clothing (avoid bright colours).
- Comfortable walking shoes and a hat for sun protection.
- Light rain jacket if visiting wet season.

Victoria Falls – One of the Wonders of the World - Quadripoint

1. Best Time to Visit

- **High water season (Feb–May):** Falls are at their fullest — spectacular spray and rainbows – the thunder effect.
- **Low water season (Sep–Dec):** Less spray, better visibility, and easier walking paths.
- Consider your priorities: **photography vs adventure activities.**

2. Where to Stay

- Stay close to the falls for **early morning or sunset walks.**
- Family-friendly options: hotels, lodges, or Airbnb with easy access to viewpoints.
- Book **in advance**, especially during peak season.
- For camping or lodging advice you can ask me.
- Amazing local guide – I can put you in contact with him.

3. Must-Do Activities

- **Walking the Rainforest Trail:** Best for families, incredible views, and photography.
- **Sunset cruise on the Zambezi River:** Wildlife + relaxation.
- **Adventure activities for older kids/adults:** White-water rafting, ziplining, bungee jumping.
- **Helicopter or microlight flight:** Iconic aerial views — unforgettable memories.

4. Practical Tips

- Wear **waterproof clothing or poncho** — you'll get wet from the spray.
- Comfortable shoes: trails can be slippery.

- Carry **water, snacks, sunscreen, and insect repellent**.

5. Entry & Permits

- Purchase **Victoria Falls National Park tickets** in advance if possible.
- Consider **local guides** for deeper insights into wildlife and history.
- Cross-border visits: Zimbabwe vs Zambia — each side has unique views.

6. Photography Tips

- Early morning or late afternoon: **best light and fewer crowds**.
- Waterproof camera bag or phone case recommended.
- Bring a **wide-angle lens** to capture the full scale of the falls.

7. Family-Friendly Tips

- Toddlers and younger kids: stroller-friendly paths on the Zimbabwe side.
- Older kids: include adventure activities, boat trips, and wildlife spotting.
- Keep the pace relaxed: Victoria Falls is breathtaking but can be tiring.
- There is loads to do around Victoria falls
- Devils Pool in Zambia

MADAGASCAR –

1. Best Time to Visit

- **April–November (dry season):** Ideal for wildlife spotting, hiking, and beach trips.
- **December–March (wet season):** Rainy, some roads may be difficult; fewer tourists.
- Consider timing your visit depending on **lemurs, whales, or diving activities**.

2. Plan Enough Time

- Madagascar is **huge and remote** — plan at least **10–14 days** to see multiple regions.
- Travel is slower: **domestic flights or long drives** are common.

3. Top Destinations

- **Antananarivo (Tana):** Capital city, cultural introduction.
- **Andasibe-Mantadia National Park:** Lemurs, chameleons, and rainforest walks.
- **Avenue of the Baobabs:** Iconic sunset photography.
- **Nosy Be / Île Sainte-Marie:** Beaches, diving, and whale watching.
- **Isalo National Park:** Unique rock formations, hiking trails, and waterfalls.

4. Travel Logistics

- Domestic flights save time; roads can be **rough and slow**.
- Hiring a **local guide or driver** is recommended for remote areas.
- Carry **cash in local currency** — ATMs are limited outside cities.

5. Wildlife & Nature Tip

- Madagascar is **unique and fragile**: respect wildlife and follow park rules.
- Use **binoculars and camera** — wildlife can be shy.
- Early morning safaris give the best animal sightings.

6. Accommodation

- Family-friendly lodges and eco-resorts are available in major regions.
- Book **well in advance** for popular parks and islands.
- Self-catering options are great for families with young kids.

7. Health & Safety

- Consult a doctor about **vaccinations and malaria prophylaxis**.
- Carry **insect repellent, sunscreen, and first aid kit**.
- Drink **bottled water** and eat freshly prepared food.

8. Family Travel Tips

- Involve kids in spotting wildlife and documenting trips.
- Break longer drives into **shorter segments** to avoid fatigue.
- Pack snacks, water, and entertainment for long journeys.
- Important Things to Know Before Travelling to Madagascar - **SUMMARY**
- **LANGUAGE**
 - **Malagasy** is the main language
 - **French** is widely spoken
 - English is **limited outside hotels & tour operators**
 - ✓ Learn a few basic French phrases — it helps a lot
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- **CURRENCY & PAYMENTS**
 - Local currency: **Malagasy Ariary (MGA)**
 - **Cash is essential** — ATMs are limited outside major cities
 - Credit cards accepted only at **high-end hotels & lodges**
 - Carry **small denominations** for tips and local purchases
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- **VISA ON ARRIVAL**
 - **Visa is required for most nationalities**
 - Obtain visa **on arrival at the airport**
 - **Cash payment only** — bring EUR or USD
 - Ensure passport has **at least 6 months validity**
 - **⚠ Very important: No card payments for visas**
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- **SAFETY**
 - Madagascar is generally safe with **common-sense precautions**
 - Avoid walking alone at night, especially in cities
 - Use **trusted guides, drivers, or transfers**
 - Keep valuables out of sight
 - Travel insurance is **strongly recommended**
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- GETTING AROUND
 - Roads can be **slow and rough** — distances take longer than expected
 - Domestic flights save time but can change schedules
 - Hiring a **local driver/guide** is highly recommended
 - Plan **extra travel days** — flexibility is key
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- HEALTH & MEDICAL
 - Speak to your doctor about **vaccinations & malaria prevention**
 - Bring **insect repellent, sunscreen & first-aid kit**
 - Drink **bottled water only**
 - Medical facilities are limited outside major cities
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- POWER & CONNECTIVITY
 - Electricity can be unreliable in remote areas
 - Bring **power banks & adapters**
 - Mobile signal is limited in rural regions
 - Offline maps are essential
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- CULTURE & ETIQUETTE
 - Respect local customs & traditions
 - Ask permission before photographing people
 - Dress modestly in rural villages
 - Patience and kindness go a long way
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- WHAT MAKES MADAGASCAR UNIQUE
 - 90% of wildlife is **found nowhere else on Earth**
 - Lemurs, baobabs, chameleons & untouched landscapes
 - Slow travel is essential — Madagascar rewards patience
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- INSIDER TRAVEL TIP
 - ✓ Madagascar is **not a quick, easy destination**
 - ✓ Plan fewer places and spend more time in each
 - ✓ Work with a **Madagascar travel expert** to avoid costly mistakes
 -  DM me **MADAGASCAR** if you want help planning a safe, smooth, unforgettable trip.

SECTION 4: TRAVEL BUSINESS & CREATOR TIPS

- Want to **turn travel into income?**
- Build a **digital business or online travel agency**.
- Document your trips — share tips, hacks, and stories.
- Monetize content ethically while helping others travel smarter.
- Work from anywhere, set your schedule, scale slowly.
- Send us a message if you need help planning your next adventure.

We book Africa:

Namibia

Botswana

Zimbabwe

Zambia

South Africa

Madagascar

Zanzibar

Mauritius

Europe:

Book:

Skiing in Bansko

Meeting Santa Clause

Northern Lights

Free info if you need advice booking a Europe trip