

Tippling and Gratuity Etiquette in Africa

In Africa the tourism, hospitality and service industries often employ people from previously disadvantaged areas within the local community, many of whom do not earn a large basic salary and therefore rely on tips from customers in order to survive financially. However, tipping indicates appreciation for good service. Dollars and Euros are accepted if you don't want to withdraw money at the ATM. Many lodges will let you charge gratuities to your bill and will ask you for a breakdown of how you would like the tips dispersed.

The following amounts are basic guidelines only and you can always reward excellent service with a larger gratuity, should you wish to. R stands for South African Rand.

Game Lodge

It is standard to tip the staff at the end of your stay at a game lodge. Usually suggestions are given at the lodge but to give you an idea here are some guidelines:

Ranger / Guide	R300/ USD \$17 per couple per day
Tracker	R200/ USD \$11 per couple per day
Butler/waiters	R150/ USD \$8 per couple per day
General Camp Staff	R175/ USD \$9 per couple per day
Trip Guide	USD \$10-15 per person per day

Accommodation/housekeeping tips:

Similar to what you would tip cleaning staff in the US-between \$3-5 a day, or around R50/day.

Airport, train station and hotel porters tipping in Africa:

Porters are given a tip of R10-20 (\$2-3 USD) per item of luggage, paid directly at the service.

Tour Guide Tipping in Africa:

Recommended rate is **R300-350 (USD \$20-\$30) per couple per day** for a fully guided day. Should you have the services of a driver, plus a specialist guide, you can give the driver R150 and the guide R275-300. If you are on an escorted tour, check with your escort. Sometimes they tip for your group.

Restaurant tipping in Africa:

A tip of 12-15% is standard but do check with the manager as some restaurants in South Africa add on a service charge if in a large group.

Spa & beauty tipping in Africa:

10% – 15% tip to the stylist or beauty therapist, nominal tip for hair washer

Zimbabwe, Botswana, Zambia, Kenya and Tanzania- tip in USD or local currency except Zimbabwe where only USD is accepted.