

# 4 tips to planning your 2020 holiday

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The new year is a great time to start thinking ahead about the next holiday period. Plan early and you're bound to benefit in a variety of ways: cheaper flights, a better choice of accommodation before everything gets booked out, and the time to plan what to do and where to go in far more detail than when it's a rushed job.



Image source: Gallo/Getty

## 1. Decide on the type of holiday you want

Discuss this with everyone who will be going on the holiday. Try to find consensus about what the basis of the holiday should be: adventure travel, a focus on history and culture, travel for a sporting event, and so on. It may be difficult to get agreement from everyone, so be flexible. If most of the group fancy doing adventure tourism, such as sailing or ziplining, but someone in the group is really not that type of person, try to find at least one activity that they would relish. For instance, while the group goes paragliding, the foodie in the group could attend a local cooking class.

## 2. Consider the time of year that's best for the destination you've identified

If you've decided on a beach holiday, it's best not to visit during the months when rainfall is likely to be the highest. And, when considering a safari destination, it's best to go during the dry season when the grasses are low and there's more chance of spotting an elusive leopard or lion, as they walk through the veld to reach water.

On the other hand, if budget is a consideration, rates for accommodation and tours may be lower during the off-season.

## 3. Research accommodation options that would be most suitable for your group

Where you stay can be a crucial element of the success of a holiday, so do your homework thoroughly. You'll need to consider various factors when you make your choices: location, your budget, a 'roughing it' experience or something more luxurious, self-catering or a hotel with a good restaurant, to mention a few.

With so many of the best South African travel experiences involving nature, travellers are spoilt for choice when it comes to

where to stay. Whether it's as basic as a tent at the beach, glamping in a safari destination, or a treehouse in a forest, South Africa has among the most sophisticated and varied of options available.

#### **4. Take advantage of special offers and discounts**

If you qualify for pensioners' discounts, find out whether there are any special deals in the places you'd like to visit. Some botanical gardens, for instance, offer free entry to pensioners on certain days. In addition, South African citizens who can show their IDs qualify for discounted rates at South African National Parks (SANParks). SANParks also offers a Wild Card, which allows for free entry to many national parks once the annual fee has been paid. Other membership and loyalty cards are available in various locations throughout the country, so make sure you find out about these.

#### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

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