

Six treasures to include in your suitcase that will make safari more enjoyable.

1. Extra toothbrushes. The water's bad - really bad - even just a drop can create havoc. It's easy to lapse into that unconscious habit of rinsing your toothbrush under the faucet even with bottled water perched on the sink. No telling what kind of bug is hidden in those bristles or how long it wants to stay, so cut out the guess work, save your gut, and bring as many extra brushes as you want since there's no guarantee replacements will be available in the bush.
 2. Wipes of any kind are a blessing, be it Lysol wipes, baby wipes, Neutrogena's makeup wipes or Cottonelle. They're great for cleaning toilet seats - if you find one, or washing sunglasses specked with mud from mud-flinging baby elephants or wiping dust off everything you brought.
 3. When packing, bag it. If it's not the rainy season, dust will sift through suitcases. If it is wet, mud can gunk up everything, so zip lock plastic bags in a variety of sizes work great. They're also great for encasing dung encrusted shoes courtesy of any village visit, damp laundry, snacks and camera gear.
 4. Collapsible, small duffel bag of the inexpensive, nylon kind. Mega-suitcases or too many bags don't belong on safari, which took me forever to figure out. Whatever the mode of transportation, weight and size limits apply, which means shuffling bags around in Nairobi. Double check with your travel agent or the tour operator you booked with regarding luggage requirements since some itineraries bypass Nairobi completely.
- If you can, and choose to take a large suitcase - try this:
- Put contents of your carryon that you will need on safari in the duffel bag, clothes you choose to take on safari go in the carryon, then store the big suitcase in hotel storage. The duffel and carryon are within size and weight limits.
5. Flip flops. There is nothing worse than stepping on some mysterious object during the night and wondering if your tetanus booster is current, or stepping onto a shower floor that appears - well questionable.
 6. Used or Dollar store t-shirts. Try to pack as many as you can for bartering at those tiny *duka*, shops, you may discover on safari. The t-shirts are also fun to give children in the Samburu or Maasai villages.