



Swaziland

POP 1.3 MILLION / 268

Includes ➔

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Best Places to Eat

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- ➔ Lihawu Restaurant (p960)
- ➔ Ramblas Restaurant (p957)

Best Places to Sleep

- ➔ Stone Camp (p965)
- ➔ Sondzela Backpackers (p961)
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- ➔ Phophonyane Falls Ecologde & Nature Reserve (p964)

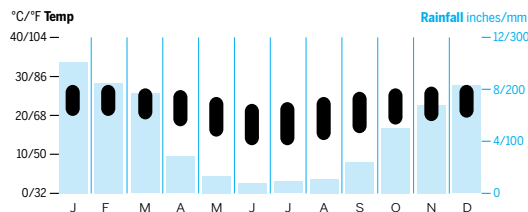
Why Go?

In short: big things come in small packages. The intriguing kingdom of Swaziland is diminutive but boasts a huge checklist for any visitor. Rewarding wildlife-watching? Tick. Adrenaline-boosting activities such as rafting and mountain biking? Tick. Lively and colourful local culture, with celebrations and ceremonies still common practice? Tick. Plus there are superb walking trails, stunning mountain and flatland scenery, varied accommodation options and excellent, high-quality handicrafts.

Unlike South Africa, Swaziland has managed to hold on to that slow-down-this-is-Africa feeling, and that's why it's gaining in popularity. Everything remains small and personable. Instead of making a flying visit here on your way to Kruger National Park, KwaZulu-Natal or Mozambique, consider staying at least a week to do the country justice. If you plan a visit during the winter months, try to make it coincide with the Umhlanga festival, one of Africa's biggest cultural events.

When to Go

Mbabane



Dec–Apr Full rivers and lush vegetation. Incwala festival takes place in Lobamba.

Feb–Mar Baganu season – enjoy home-brewed marula beer in rural Swaziland.

May–Sep Wonderful wildlife viewing in the lowveld. Don't miss the Umhlanga festival.



Swaziland Highlights

1 Mkhaya Game Reserve (p964) Watching wildlife, including rare black rhinos, at this excellent reserve.

2 Maloti Nature Reserve (p962) Walking or hiking in this enchanting wilderness area.

3 Great Usutu River (Lusutu River; p965) Shooting

over whitewater rapids on a day-long adventure.

4 Ezulwini Valley (p959) Browsing the valley's craft shops.

5 Mlilwane Wildlife Sanctuary (p961) Exploring on foot, horseback or by bike and relaxing in the comfortable lodges.

6 Sibebe Rock (p957) Climbing this massive granite dome just outside the capital and soaking up the lovely views.

7 Hlane Royal National Park (p963) Coming face-to-face with a pride of lions or watching white rhinos congregate at the accessible watering hole.