

AFRICA · WILDLIFE · CULTURE · OFF THE BEATEN PATH · ADVENTURE

 South Sudan

The world's youngest country, independent since 2011, is for seasoned travellers only. Its draws exist nowhere else: Mundari herders and their long-horned cattle in smoky camps near Terekeka, the vast Sudd wetland, and a seasonal migration of millions of antelope across Boma and Badingilo national parks. Read the FCDO travel advice before planning anything.

 **The UK Foreign Office (FCDO) advises against all travel to South Sudan.**
Read the latest FCDO travel advice before planning a trip. Your travel insurance may be invalid if you travel against FCDO advice.
FCDO advice last updated 25 August 2026.

 CAPITAL Juba	 CURRENCY South Sudanese pound (SSP) £1 ≈ SSP 7,703	 LANGUAGE English, Juba Arabic Dinka, Nuer	 BEST TIME Dec–Feb
 DAILY BUDGET £90–£400 £££ Expensive	 PLUGS Type C, D 230V · adapter needed	 FLIGHT FROM LONDON 13h via Addis Ababa or Nairobi ~£900–£1,400 return	 TIME ZONE UTC+2 standard time

South Sudan is a vast, largely roadless country of savannah, swamp and the White Nile, and tourism is in its infancy. Almost every trip begins in Juba, the capital on the Nile, and is shaped by a specialist operator. The best-known sight lies a few hours north: the Mundari cattle camps near Terekeka, where herders sleep among their animals in a haze of dung smoke. Further east, Boma and Badingilo national parks host one of the largest antelope migrations on Earth, while the south-east is home to the Toposa and other pastoralist peoples around Kapoeta.

Travel here is slow, expensive and bureaucratic: permits for travel and photography, police checkpoints and rain-cut roads are part of the experience, and daily costs can rival a Kenyan safari despite basic facilities. Hotels in Juba are priced for aid-agency and oil-industry budgets. In return there are no crowds at all, and time with pastoralist communities can be among the most striking experiences anywhere in Africa. It suits seasoned travellers with flexible plans and deep pockets, and anyone going should follow FCDO advice closely. Dry-season heat, often above 35°C, surprises many.

Top 5 highlights

- 1

CULTURE

Mundari cattle camps

On the plains near Terekeka, Mundari herders live alongside thousands of long-horned cattle, dusting themselves and the animals with ash from dung fires against insects; visits are arranged through operators with local permission.
- 2

WILDLIFE

Boma National Park

Remote grassland and woodland near the Ethiopian border, the eastern stronghold of the great seasonal migration of white-eared kob and tiang; access is by light aircraft or a long expedition by 4x4.

3

WILDLIFE

Badingilo National Park

East of the Nile near Juba, Badingilo forms the other half of a migration in which aerial surveys in 2023 counted around six million antelope, including white-eared kob, tiang and Mongalla gazelle.

4

NATURE

The Sudd

One of the world's largest tropical wetlands, where the White Nile spreads into papyrus swamps and floodplains; home to shoebills, vast waterbird flocks and Dinka and Nuer herders, best seen by river or from the air.

5

WILDLIFE

Nimule National Park

On the Ugandan border, where the White Nile churns through the Fula rapids, this small park shelters elephants, hippos and Uganda kob, and is reached by the paved highway from Juba.

Biggest cities

LARGEST CITY

Juba

≈ 450,000 people

A fast-growing, low-rise capital on the White Nile, dominated by hotels, NGO compounds and markets such as Konyo Konyo; riverside bars give sunset views. Few sights, but the base for every trip.

2ND LARGEST CITY

Wau

≈ 150,000 people

The country's second city, in the north-west on the Jur River, with a large red-brick Catholic cathedral and a mixed Dinka, Luo and Fertit population; rarely visited by outsiders.

3RD LARGEST CITY

Malakal

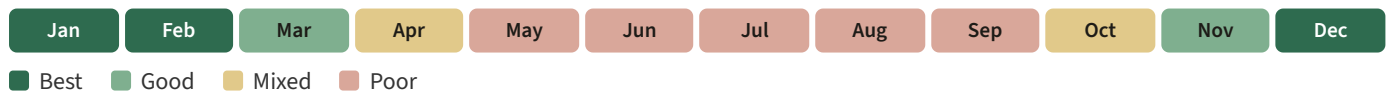
≈ 140,000 people

Upper Nile's capital on the White Nile near its confluence with the Sobat, heavily damaged during the civil war; today a logistics hub for aid agencies rather than a destination.

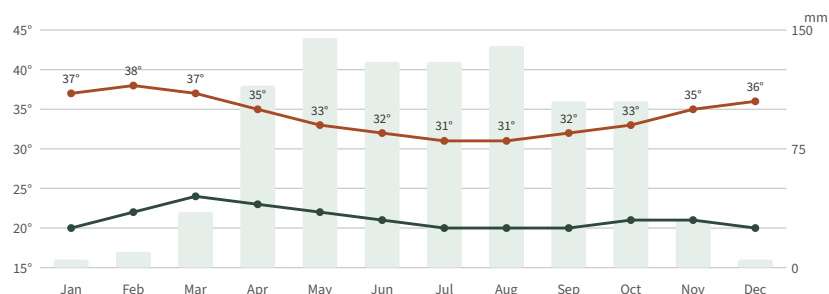
No census has been held since 2008, and conflict and displacement have shifted populations sharply, so these figures are rough estimates.

When to go to South Sudan

Best time: **Dec–Feb**.

**Average climate in Juba**

— High °C — Low °C — Rain (mm)

**Festivals & events**

Jul

Independence Day

South Sudan marks its 2011 independence on 9 July; in years when official celebrations go ahead, Juba hosts flag-raising and parades at the John Garang Mausoleum, where independence was declared.

Dec

Christmas

In a largely Christian country, Christmas brings packed churches with choirs and drumming, and many families travel home to their villages, so book transport early.

How much does South Sudan cost?

SHOESTRING

£90

per person / day

≈ SSP 693,314

hostels, street food, buses

MID-RANGE

£200

per person / day

≈ SSP 1,540,697

3-star hotels, restaurants, some taxis

COMFORTABLE

£400

per person / day

≈ SSP 3,081,395

4-star+, guided trips, private transfers

Estimates per person per day, excluding flights. Prices vary by season and city.

Food to try

Kisra with mulah

Thin, slightly sour sorghum crêpes torn and dipped into mulah, a stew of okra, meat, dried fish or peanut paste.

Ful medames

Fava beans slow-cooked and mashed with oil, cumin and onion — a breakfast inherited from Sudan, eaten with bread in Juba's cafés.

Grilled Nile fish

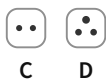
Tilapia or Nile perch grilled or fried whole and served at riverside restaurants in Juba with salad, chilli and chips or kisra.

Getting around

Most visitors travel with an operator who arranges permits, a driver and a fixer. Paved roads are few: the Juba–Nimule highway to Uganda is the main exception, and many routes become impassable in the rains. Small domestic carriers and charter flights link Juba with Wau, Malakal, Rumbek and other towns, though schedules are unreliable. Within Juba, use a hotel driver; boda-boda motorbike taxis are everywhere but risky.

Practical information

PLUGS & VOLTAGE



230V — bring a UK-to-C/D adapter

DIALLING CODE

+211

TAP WATER

Not safe — drink bottled or treated water

TIPPING

Tip guides, drivers and fixers in US dollars at the end of a trip; in Juba restaurants, leaving 5–10% for good service is appreciated.

ETIQUETTE

Photography needs a government permit and is sensitive near officials, checkpoints and buildings. At cattle camps, greet elders first, ask before photographing anyone, and don't touch cattle without permission.

MAIN AIRPORTS

Juba International Airport (JUB), Juba

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Police **999**

Not confirmed by the FCDO — services may be unreliable. Ask your accommodation for local numbers.

TIME ZONE

UTC+2 (standard time)

DRIVING

On the right

Visas & entry for South Sudan

Shown for a British passport.

Visa required — apply before you go

You must have a visa to enter or travel through South Sudan.

From the UK government's FCDO entry requirements for British passport holders — read the full page for passport validity, permits and exceptions.

Health & vaccinations



See a travel health nurse, GP or travel clinic **6–8 weeks before you go**. Make sure routine UK vaccinations (such as MMR and diphtheria-tetanus-polio) are up to date.

RECOMMENDED FOR MOST TRAVELLERS

Hepatitis A Tetanus Typhoid Yellow fever

SOMETIMES ADVISED — DEPENDS ON YOUR TRIP, ACTIVITIES AND HEALTH

Chikungunya Dengue Hepatitis B Measles Meningococcal disease Polio Rabies Tuberculosis

YELLOW FEVER CERTIFICATE

A yellow fever vaccination certificate is required for all travellers (usually over 9 months or 1 year old). There is a risk of yellow fever in parts of the country — vaccination may be advised.

MALARIA

High risk of malaria

- There is a high risk of malaria in South Sudan: antimalarial tablets recommended.

Source: TravelHealthPro (National Travel Health Network and Centre), checked 21 October 2026. This is a summary, not medical advice.

Public holidays in South Sudan

The next 12 months. Banks, offices and some sights may close, and transport and hotels get busy around these dates.

Thu 24 Dec 2026	Christmas Eve
Fri 25 Dec 2026	Christmas Day
Sat 26 Dec 2026	Second Day of Christmas
Fri 1 Jan 2027	New Year's Day
Sat 9 Jan 2027	Peace Agreement Day
Tue 9 Mar 2027	Eid al-Fitr (date may shift)
Fri 26 Mar 2027	Good Friday
Sat 27 Mar 2027	Holy Saturday
Sun 28 Mar 2027	Easter Sunday
Mon 29 Mar 2027	Easter Monday
Sat 1 May 2027	International Labour Day
Sun 16 May 2027	Eid al-Adha · SPLA Day (date may shift)
Fri 9 Jul 2027	Independence Day
Fri 30 Jul 2027	Martyrs' Day

National holidays only. Dates based on lunar calendars can move by a day or two depending on official announcements.

Useful phrases in Juba Arabic

ENGLISH	JUBA ARABIC	SAY IT
Hello	Salaam	sah-LAAM
Thank you	Shukran	SHOOK-rahN
Please	Min fadlak	min FAD-lak
Excuse me	Lo samaht	loh sah-MAHT
How much is this?	Da be kam?	dah beh KAHM

Know before you go

Read the FCDO travel advice carefully, and travel only with an experienced operator who arranges permits, briefings, vehicles and local contacts; independent travel is extremely difficult.

Carry crisp, recent-series US dollar notes in small denominations; damaged or older bills are often refused, and cards and ATMs are of little use to visitors.

A yellow fever certificate is required on arrival and malaria is present year-round; bring antimalarials, repellent and a good medical kit, as healthcare is very limited.

Visa, health and safety rules change. Before you book or travel, check the FCDO travel advice (gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice) and TravelHealthPro (travelhealthpro.org.uk). Costs are estimates. © 2026 Pick My Trip.