



Trip Resources: Visas

If you are going on an international adventure with Embark, the chances are good you will need a Visa. Many countries – most of them in Europe, for example – do not require US citizens to obtain a Visa. But the countries where we go – Nepal, Bhutan, Tanzania, Kenya, Chile, Argentina, etc. – generally do. So here is some helpful information on Visas.

What is a Visa?

A visa is just a document which, along with your passport, grants you entry into a country. The visa is either a stamp in your passport or a separate document given to you by the government where you're going.

How do I know if I need one?

Of the countries Embark currently travels to, all of these require a visa to obtain entry:

- Argentina (for stays of 90 days or longer)
- Bhutan
- Chile (for stays of 90 days or longer)
- Kenya
- Nepal
- Tanzania
- Tibet (China)

Does each person need one?

Yes, each person in a party needs their own Visa. There are no group or family visas, and generally speaking, children need one, as well.

How long is it good for?

Usually a visa is good for 90 days, though there are variations on this. The important thing is to not overstay your visa. This can result in fines and possible arrest.

How do I get a visa?

In some cases, you will need to get them ahead of time, and the place to start is that country's embassy in your home country. In Nepal, Kenya and Tanzania, you can simply purchase one at the airport upon arrival.

Bhutan and Tibet are special cases. For Bhutan, your tour operator will handle obtaining the visa for you, so they are the place to start. For Tibet, you will need a Chinese visa before arriving, and then you will need a separate Tibet permit from a Chinese travel agent. Again, your tour operator will handle this, so check with them for details.

What do I need to get one?



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You will need a passport in good condition and not expired. In fact, your passport cannot expire during the time of your visit, and many countries require your passport be good for as long as six months from your arrival date. Note that the “good condition” requirement actually refers to its physical state; some countries will not let you in if your passport is worn out, damaged, etc. Your passport will also need a blank visa page for each visa you are seeking.

How long does it take?

If you have to apply ahead of time from an embassy, it is best to start as soon as you know your arrival date. It may be possible to expedite the process by paying extra, but this shouldn't be necessary if you start well ahead of time. Assume it will take at least a month to get a visa.

Do I have to mail off my passport?

In almost all cases, a photocopy of your passport will suffice, if an actual mailing is required.

Do I need one if I'm just passing through or changing planes?

If you're not leaving the airport, you won't need a visa for that country. However, even if you're only driving across the country, you should assume you need a visa.

I know which country I'm going to; where do I start?

Start with the [US State Department website](#), where you can search for the country you are visiting and get the most up-to-date information. You can also begin with these links to embassies in the United States:

- [Argentina](#)
- [Bhutan](#)
- [Chile](#)
- [China](#)
- [Kenya](#)
- [Nepal](#)
- [Tanzania](#)