

## Suggested Rifles and Calibers

This can become a heated debate indeed. The general rule applies in this case where we suggest you bring the rifle(s) you are most comfortable with. It is important to spend time on the shooting range before your African hunt commences. You will sight your rifles prior to commencing the hunt, however, you must be familiar with your rifle.

Most calibres in the 6.5mm, .270, 7mm, .308, .30-06, 8mm or .300 Magnum classes, launching at least 140 or 150gr bullets at about 2500fps, are powerful enough to kill antelope up to and including kudu at ranges out to 200m. Currently the most popular calibres in South Africa for general plains game hunting are the .243Win, .270Win, .308Win and .30-06 while the .375H&H is the most popular big bore. Although taking long shots might be necessary on occasion, it is not the norm - most South African game animals are taken inside 200m. Resist the urge to buy a powerful rifle in the belief that you'll need it for long shots. Too many people owning magnums are afraid of the recoil and subsequently do not shoot them well. A mild calibre that you have mastered is more efficient in the veld than a magnum that you fear.

So-called slow calibres such as the 7x57 or .308, loaded with heavy bullets, are preferable for bushveld hunting where shots are often taken at less than 100m. At short ranges fast travelling bullets cause extensive meat damage when body shots are taken. Fast or flat shooters such as the .270Win or .300 Win Mag are preferred for long shots in open country because their bullets drop less (they have flat trajectories), making it less crucial to judge range correctly. Those owning "slow" calibres can hunt successfully at longer ranges by using a rangefinder. Once you know the range and know where your rifle shoots at that particular distance (determined on the shooting range) the advantage a flat shooting calibre holds, disappears.

The ability to place shots accurately is far more important than the calibre, make of the rifle or the bullet brand. It is good policy to invest in the best scope you can afford and then learn to shoot. Scopes afford much better target acquisition and therefore can aid the hunter to shoot more accurately.

The average hunter should stick to magnifications of 4x to 6x for bushveld hunting and for open country anything from 6x to 12x. That is just a guideline though, many experienced hunters shooting game at long ranges prefer magnifications of 14x to 20x. Do not make the mistake of trying to "buy" shooting ability by spending large amounts of money on custom work to rifles, expensive bullets and developing the perfect load. The secret to successful hunting is accurate shooting and the only way to shoot better is to shoot more (practice, practice, practice). To hunt properly and to fully enjoy the experience prospective hunters need to learn as much as possible about the animals they are about to hunt and the habitat these animals prefer.

Please bear in mind that according to South African law, it is prohibited to bring a semi-automatic firearm into the country. You are also limited to bringing in 200 rounds of ammunition per caliber into the country. Depending on how many animals you aim to shoot, we suggest 80-100 rounds of ammunition per caliber should be more than adequate. Remember the cleaning equipment!.