

# THE MAGIC OF KENYA!

## A PRIVATE AFRICAN SAFARI

DESIGNED BY

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## A CLASSIC AFRICAN SAFARI

### SAFARI SUMMARY

The month of June is the perfect time of year to explore Kenya, one of Africa's most exciting wildlife viewing destinations. Beginning with Theodore Roosevelt's pioneering 1909 safari, intrepid travelers have enjoyed the excitement of exploring Kenya and discovering its incredibly diverse population of wildlife. Over a century later, Kenya continues to offer an unequalled diversity of habitats, each with its own unique population of species. The expected "long rains" of April and May have passed and the dry season has taken over. Wildlife congregates around dwindling sources of water, providing the best opportunities to view concentrations of animals. This is also the season of plenty for the area's top predators - lions, leopards, and cheetahs – who take advantage of the drawing power of limited water.

During some years, this is the time when the initial wave of the Great Serengeti Migration may arrive in the Maasai Mara. Although the arrival varies each year, between 1½ and 2 million wildebeest and zebra begin to return to the nutritious grasses of the Mara's savanna. Once they arrive, the herds constantly move throughout the Mara, often encountering the obstacles presented by the Talek and Mara Rivers. This may provide potential opportunities to witness one of nature's most amazing sights – a river crossing of hundreds of wildebeest and zebra.

### Your Accommodations

Avoiding the high-density tourist areas, your accommodations are in permanent tented camps. In the permanent camps your lodgings are large canvas tents which are hung under traditionally thatched or canvas roofs, with raised wooden or concrete floors. Essentially, each tent is an airy room with breathable walls. The ensuite baths offer completely private facilities, including a hot shower and flush toilet. These modern versions of the traditional safari camps allow you to enjoy the romance of the classic East African safari in comfort without giving up your most essential conveniences.

### Your Transportation



Your private game drives in Kenya take place in custom-designed safari vehicles. These spacious classic Land Rovers and Toyota Land Cruisers provide comfortable seating for up to six people. Each person has a window, as well as direct access to an open hatch in the roof to optimize your game viewing opportunities. Flights included in your safari are generally arranged on scheduled airlines, although some flights may take place on chartered aircraft.



## Your Guide

From the moment you leave the customs area, you are in the hands of the Safari Professionals team. Your professional staff in Kenya is dedicated to making sure you safely enjoy every aspect of your safari. After breakfast on your first morning in Africa, you will receive a detailed summary of your safari and will be thoroughly briefed before you set out into the African bush.

We are particularly proud of our professional safari guides. Their exceptional knowledge and determination to show you everything you wish to see is matched only by their dedication to your safety and comfort. In Kenya, each one of them has earned certification by the Kenya Professional Safari Guides Association, a distinction achieved by a very small fraction of those who identify themselves as safari guides in Kenya.

I am personally thrilled to let you know that your personal safari guide will be Stanley Kariithi. His father, Davis Kariithi, was my original personal safari guide in the 1980s and Stanley has more than filled his father's shoes. Stanley will meet you in Samburu and will be with you throughout your safari in Kenya. You will have his undivided attention, as well as the exclusive use of his safari vehicle. As opposed to the practices of most safari companies, your guide has no limit on the number of game drives or safari mileage. Stanley will have no limitations regarding the distances he might need to cover in order to provide you with a truly amazing safari. Aside from being the best safari guide we know, Stanley is also a talented performer and we suspect you will be able to convince him to sing a song or two for you during your safari.



Stanley Kariithi



## Safari Life

Just before dawn each day, we are awakened by a gentle voice greeting you with “Jambo” (Swahili for “Hello”). A tray of coffee, tea, and biscuits are left on your verandah to give you a start to the day, before you venture out for your morning game drive. Africa’s wildlife is most active in the early morning and late afternoon, making these the best times to seek them out. Upon your return from the bush, breakfast awaits you, served in open-air dining rooms or under an airy canopy of trees. The morning menu tends to reflect Africa’s British heritage with fresh fruit, cereals, meats, and breads. The chef prepares your eggs to your specifications while delicious locally-grown coffee replaces tea as the primary breakfast beverage. Lunches are often served buffet style and feature fresh salads, soup, and hot entrees. Beef, chicken, lamb, and fish are the primary main dish ingredients but the menus can be adjusted to meet any special dietary needs. Your meals are made with fresh ingredients, a seemingly overwhelming challenge, considering some of the locations you visit.



Each day, between 3:30-4:00 PM, you venture out on your afternoon game drive in search of more animals as the African sun continues its journey toward the western horizon. Upon your return to camp at dusk, a refreshing hot shower awaits. You are then invited to conclude your day by gathering around the campfire for refreshments. After toasting the day with a raised glass, you are served a delicious three or four course meal under candle or lantern light while the sounds of the African night begin to call. After further campfire discussions of the day’s events, you are escorted back to your cozy quarters to rest for another day.

## Your Safari Itinerary

### **SUMMARY:**

**DAY 1 – DEPART FROM YOUR HOME AIRPORT**

**DAY 2 – ARRIVE AT NAIROBI, KENYA – ACCOMMODATIONS AT THE NORFOLK HOTEL**

**DAYS 3-5 – FLY TO SAMBURU NATIONAL GAME RESERVE – ACCOMMODATIONS AT SAMBURU  
INTREPIDS CAMP**

**DAYS 6-8 – DRIVE TO LEWA CONSERVANCY – ACCOMMODATIONS AT LEWA SAFARI CAMP**

**DAYS 9-12 – FLY TO MAASAI MARA NATIONAL GAME RESERVE – ACCOMMODATIONS AT  
INTREPIDS MARA CAMP**

**DAY 13 – FLY TO NAIROBI – DAYROOM AT OLE SERENI HOTEL AND DEPART**

**DAY 14 – RETURN TO YOUR HOME AIRPORT**

## **DAY 1 – DEPARTURE FROM YOUR HOME AIRPORT**

*To give you maximum flexibility in planning your safari, international air flights are not included, unless indicated otherwise in this itinerary. You may make your own arrangements or ask Safari Professionals to assist you in coordinating or purchasing your international flights. Travel insurance is strongly recommended and we can provide you a quote at your request.*

## **DAY 2 – ARRIVAL AT NAIROBI, KENYA (1 NIGHT)**

Your wildlife viewing safari in East Africa truly begins with your arrival at Nairobi's Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, where you are met by Tom LaRock and other members of the Safari Professionals team. They will take you to your relaxing overnight accommodations at the historic **Norfolk Hotel**, giving you a welcome respite from your overseas voyage. The Norfolk opened its door in 1904 and, since then, has graciously hosted thousands of visitors, including such notable dignitaries as Theodore Roosevelt and Winston Churchill. Now a member of the worldwide family of Fairmont Hotels, the Norfolk has undergone significant renovations, restoring it to its rightful place as one of Nairobi's finest hotels.



## **DAYS 3-5 – SAMBURU NATIONAL GAME RESERVE, KENYA (3 NIGHTS)**

After breakfast and your safari briefing, you are taken to Wilson Airport for your one hour flight north, past snow-capped Mt. Kenya and on to the region formerly known as The Northern Frontier. This dramatic volcanic landscape is comprised mostly of semi-arid scrub. Permanent sources of water provide nourishment for the Samburu people, the wildlife, and small stands of acacia trees and Doum palms.

Your destination is the Samburu National Game Reserve, which is named after the Samburu people, who still live here as traditional pastoralists. The Reserve and its sister, the Buffalo Springs National Game Reserve, are situated on either side of the Ewaso Nyiro River, where herds of elephants and scores of other animals come to drink. Except near the river, the land is dry scrub, interspersed with acacia trees and doum palms. Its volcanic origins make it one of the most dramatic landscapes of East Africa.



Elephants dominate the landscape, with herds moving from the nearby hills to the river each morning. Samburu offers the best elephant viewing in East Africa, allowing you a closer look at these giant pachyderms that you might usually experience elsewhere.





The wildlife is uniquely adapted to this dry, semi-arid habitat and you will find animals here that are not found elsewhere in your travels. The highly endangered Grevy's zebra is only known to survive in this area of northern Kenya. Gerenuk, slender antelopes with elongated necks, stand on their hind legs to browse the middle branches of acacia shrubs – the branches the reticulated giraffes leave alone. Another highly-adapted species is the Beisa oryx, a robust antelope with long straight horns, which are often assumed to be the origins of the legend of the unicorn. Africa's smallest antelope, the dik dik is also found here. Standing only about 16 inches high, pairs of these shy, monogamous antelope can be seen grazing on the lower branches of the vegetation growing along the river's banks.

During the dry season, the concentration of wildlife on the banks of the river brings the region's predators in search of food. Lion and cheetah are commonly seen within short distances of the water. This is one of the best places to search for the other major African predator – the leopard. With their nocturnal habits, leopards are notoriously difficult to find. Stanley will employ all his observational skills and knowledge of the leopard's behavior to help in your quest to be among the few who have the privilege to view this elusive feline while on safari.



Your home for the next three nights, Samburu Intrepids Club is nestled under the trees on the bank of the Ewaso Nyiro River and provides a wonderful introduction to safari life under canvas. Large, airy tents are mounted on wooden platforms, facing the river. Complete with four-poster beds and *ensuite* bathroom facilities, each tent becomes a comfortable hotel room with canvas walls. With only 27 tents, the Intrepids Club is among the smaller permanent camps in the area, providing an exceptional level of personal service. Each meal offers a variety of delicious choices, served under a thatched canopy or in the shadow of the tree canopy. A relaxing campfire offers a chance to relax after dinner and share stories of your wildlife adventures. B/L/D

### **DAYS 6-8– LEWA CONSERVANCY, LAIKIPIA, KENYA (3 NIGHTS)**

Leaving the volcanic terrain of Samburu behind, Stanley drives south today, toward the imposing peaks of Mt. Kenya and on to the region known as the Laikipia Plateau. Today's destination, the Lewa Wildlife Conservancy, has been the home of the Craig/Douglas family since 1922. Originally a cattle ranch known as Lewa Downs, Ian and Will Craig began to turn to wildlife conservation with the formation of the 5,000 acre Ngare Sergoi Rhino Sanctuary in 1982. In partnership with world-renowned rhino conservationist, Anna Merz, the sanctuary was expanded to 62,000 acres, including all of Lewa's property and the adjoining Ngare Ndare Forest Reserve. The Craigs have received international recognition for having made Lewa one of the most successful breeding centers for these highly endangered creatures.

More than 120 rhinos of both African species – the black rhino and the white rhino – make their home here. And you may have the opportunity to track some of these quiet, but powerful, creatures as they go through their daily routines of finding the choicest places to eat. Black rhinos are grazers – they eat the leaves and branches of shrubs and small trees, while their cousins, the white rhinos, are grazers, eating the grasses that grow throughout the ranch.

While Lewa is home to a wide variety of species that are easily approached in your safari vehicles, you have a unique, optional opportunity to enjoy a more intimate experience with some of the wildlife by riding horses among the giraffe and zebra. As you quietly ride by, some of them may look up to see who has arrived. After a quick look, they turn back to browsing on the shrubs and trees, apparently having accepted you as a normal part of their daily lives.

Lewa Safari Camp serves as the perfect base for exploring this extraordinary location. It sits in a stunning location, with outstanding game viewing, and spectacular views to Mt. Kenya to the south and arid lowlands to the north. Each of its 12 tents has a thatched roof, verandah and full en suite bathroom, very much in the unique 'Lewa' style. The central areas have delightful gardens with a large sunny verandah and a swimming pool to enjoy during the day, and cozy log fires in the lounge and dining room for the more chilly evenings. B/L/D



### Days 9-12 – MAASAI MARA NATIONAL GAME RESERVE (4 NIGHTS)

Driving overland to the Maasai Mara requires nine to ten hours of often bone-jarring travel. Therefore, you fly in light aircraft to the Mara, taking just about 90 minutes to arrive. Known as the “Kingdom of the Lions,” the Maasai Mara is famous for its population of the “King of beasts.” These great predators rule over an area of rolling grasslands, woodlands, and riverine forests that exceeds 200 square miles.



The Mara is the northern extension of the Serengeti ecosystem. During June, the leading edge of the renowned Great Serengeti Migration may be arriving. The movement of the herds is always unpredictable but, with luck, you may witness a classic river crossing as some of the herds congregate on the banks of the Mara River, a barrier they eventually have to cross.



But the most important reason for visiting the Mara is its amazing diversity of other wildlife, including elephant, Maasai giraffe, impala, Cape buffalo, topi, hartebeest, Thomson’s gazelles, and Grant’s gazelles. It is this abundance of species that allows lions to proliferate. Some of the largest lion prides ever sighted have been found in the Mara. And, of course, other predators such as leopard, hyena, jackals, and eagles share in the bounty.



With its open grasslands, the Mara is one of the best places in Africa to follow a cheetah in anticipation of watching this sleek cat stalk its next meal. With persistence and a bit of luck, you may witness the stealth and the exciting burst of speed of the world's fastest land animal in pursuit of its next meal.



The Mara is also the ideal location to experience the thrill of an optional balloon safari over the rolling grasslands and riverine woodlands. Lifting off just after dawn, you gently drift over the rolling hills of the Mara, observing the wildlife from this unique perspective. Upon landing, you are treated to a delightful champagne breakfast in the bush.

Here you may also visit with the local Maasai community. The Maasai, perhaps the best known and most colorful East African tribe, still follow their traditional ways as semi-nomadic pastoralists. Young warriors carry spears and decorate themselves with red ochre, and the women wear elaborate and beautiful beadwork. The social life of the Maasai makes them a fascinating and special people and you will see their herds and villages along your travels.

Sitting above a sweeping bend in the Talek River, at the confluence of the Maasai Mara's four game-viewing areas, the Mara Intrepids Camp enjoys one of the most spectacular locations in the entire Mara ecosystem. Honored by Conde Nast Traveler magazine in its "Best in the World" issue, it is one of the finest tented camps in the Mara, offering a remarkable level of service and attention. Intrepids is our favorite location from which to explore Kenya's most visited wildlife destination, the Maasai Mara. B/L/D



### **DAYS 13-14 – NAIROBI, DEPARTURE & RETURN TO YOUR HOME AIRPORT**

After saying kwaheri (Swahili for "farewell") to Stanley, you fly back to Nairobi, the starting point of your safari, where you have a dayroom at the Ole Sereni Hotel, close to the airport. After lunch at the world-famous Carnivore Restaurant, you may rest and finish preparing for your evening departure or, if there is time, make an optional visit to local attractions such as Karen Blixen's house or Kazuri Beads, a women's cooperative that has gained world-wide fame for its colorful ceramic beads. You may also visit MatBronze, the studio and gallery of our friend, Denis Mathews, one of Kenya's top sculptors of African wildlife. In the evening you will be escorted to the airport to begin your journey back home, having enjoyed the hospitality and wonders of this magical part of Africa. B/L



B = Breakfast; L = Lunch; D = Dinner