



GORILLA AND WILDLIFE IN EAST AFRICA
Led by James Makau



WILDERNESS ZONES SAFARIS
FOR MORE INFORMATION

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SAFARI ~ ITINERARY

B=Breakfast, Lunch=Lunch, D=Dinner

All times are estimated and are subject to slight variations.

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Day 1: Europe-Nairobi

Depart from your home country and upon arrival in Nairobi, you will be met by Wilderness Zones Safaris representative and transferred to a city hotel for overnight. **(BB)**

Day 2: Kigali, Rwanda

Met on arrival at airport and transfer to Kigali. Briefing will precede lunch after which you will depart for PNV at 2pm. The journey north goes through the beautiful terraced hillsides that characterize much of Rwanda's landscape, gradually climbing to the base of the awesome Virunga volcanoes, sometimes with as many as five peaks visible. **O/N: Mountain Gorillas Nest Lodge (FB).**

Day 3: Parc National des Volcans, Rwanda

Go gorilla tracking in Parc National des Volcans. Tracking the gorillas through the light mountain forest on the slopes of the Virungas is a magical experience. If you are lucky you can get to the gorillas, spend an hour with them, and be back at the base in time for a late lunch! Some gorilla families however are more elusive, and tracking can take a full day, especially when it is wet and muddy.

O/N: Mountain Gorillas Nest Lodge (FB).

Day 4: Parc National des Volcans, Rwanda

Go gorilla tracking again in Parc National des Volcans. **After lunch** Leave for Kigali. Time permitting; go for a tour of the city including a visit to the market, a pottery project, handicraft shops and the genocide memorial. **O/N: Kigali Serena (BB).**

Day 5 & 6: Amboseli National Park

After breakfast, you will be transferred to the airport for your morning flight to Nairobi. Upon arrival, you will be met by a representative from Wilderness Zones who will introduce you to your driver/ guide who will be your guide during your stay in Kenya. The drive to will take about 4 hrs on the main road from Kenya to Tanzania. Amboseli is known for its spectacular herds of elephants and the tallest free standing mountain in the world, Mt. Kilimanjaro. Meals and overnight at **Amboseli Serena Lodge or equivalent. (2B, 2L, 2D)**

AMBOSELI NATIONAL PARK

Amboseli National Park lies in the shadow of Africa's highest peak-Mount Kilimanjaro. The mountain dominates the landscape and is a stunning backdrop to the herds of elephant, wildebeest, buffalo and gazelle. Large cats such as cheetah and lion are also found in the park. Morning and afternoon game viewing drives, The Amboseli Serena Lodge sits in a grove of giant Acacia trees inspired by native Maasai architecture; the individual guest rooms feature authentic Maasai murals. Many types of wildlife are seen near the lodge. Two nights lodging at Amboseli Serena Lodge [BLD]

Day 7: Mt. Kenya

From Amboseli, we will drive via Nairobi where we will have lunch and proceed north to the base of Mount Kenya at the Serena Mountain Lodge (7000ft). Mt. Lodge has a bunker that allows you to view the wildlife at the water hole at a "close safe distance." Animals that frequent the waterhole include elephants, buffalo, bushbuck, waterbuck, black rhinos and leopard. Forest walking opportunities offered as well. **Serena Mountain Lodge (B, L & D)**

MOUNT KENYA NATIONAL PARK.

Mt. Kenya is an imposing extinct volcano dominating the landscape of the Kenyan Highlands, East of the Rift. Mt. Kenya lies about 140 km North, North-East of Nairobi with its Northern flanks across the Equator. The mountain has two main peaks - Batian (5200m) and Nelion (5188m). The mountain's slopes are cloaked in forest, bamboo, scrub and moorland giving way on the high central peaks to rock, ice and snow. Mt. Kenya is an important water catchment area,

supplying the Tana and Northern Ewaso Ngiro systems. The park includes a variety of habitats ranging from higher forest, bamboo, alpine moorlands, glaciers, tarns and glacial morains. The park, which is also an International Biosphere Reserve, covers 715 km², includes the Mountain and consists of all the ground above 3200m with two small salients extending lower down to 2450m along the Sirimon and Naro Moru tracks. Surrounding the park is Mount Kenya Forest Reserve with an area of approximately 2095 km²

Days 8 & 9: Samburu Game Reserve

After breakfast, head north in time for lunch to Samburu/Buffalo Springs Game Reserve. On this drive you will cross the Equator as you travel through rapidly changing landscapes from open grasslands, through highland farmlands (8500 ft) and finally beginning a descent of approx. 5000ft down to the harsh semi-arid Samburu/Buffalo Springs Game Reserves, yet home to unique species like the unusual reticulated giraffe, grevy's Zebra, Beisa, oryx, gerenuk. These species are rarely found elsewhere. The birdlife is especially notable. For the next two days you will be doing morning and afternoon games. Optional visit to Samburu villages (extra). Meals and overnight at **Samburu Game Lodge or similar.** (2B, 2L & 2D)



SAMBURU GAME RESERVE.

Samburu National Reserve lies 325 km north of Nairobi in the hot and arid fringes of the vast northern region of Kenya. The Reserve is within the lands of the colourful Samburu people, close relatives of the Maasai, and harbours a number of wildlife species rarely found elsewhere in any numbers. These include Grevy's zebra, the reticulated giraffe and the Beisa oryx all species found only north of the equator. The long-necked gerenuk is a graceful antelope which spends much of its time in a bi-pedal stance seeking succulence among the withered scrub which dots this harsh terrain. Scenically and faunally dramatic, for most of the year Samburu is sere under the unsympathetic equatorial sun. But relief comes from the wide swathe of the Ewaso Ngiro River which rises some hundreds of kilometres to the west on the foothills of the Aberdares and which vanishes beyond Samburu in the recesses of the Lorian swamp. The river is at its best in the Reserve, broad and sluggish with a large population of crocodile seen on sandbanks at almost every bend. In the lower reaches, where permanent pools have formed as a tributary joins the river, are hippo. The river is fringed with giant acacias, figs and doum palms all of which provide shade and sustenance to the wildlife, which comes to water. Elephant roam the gaunt hills, which punctuate the scrubland and where occasional clusters of the vividly coloured

desert rose challenge the arid surroundings. These elephant seek solace and contentment in the shallow waters of the river and from time to time a visitor finds herds bathing and drinking in a spectacle of unconscious pleasure.

BUFFALO SPRINGS NATIONAL RESERVE .

Buffalo Springs National Reserve is separated from the Samburu Reserve by the river; less hilly and less dense than its neighbor it is equally as attractive. The Reserve takes its name from an oasis of limpid crystal clear water at the western end of the sanctuary. In addition to the wildlife found in Samburu the common zebra is also an attraction often marching with its cousin the Grevy, although they do not interbreed. An unexplained phenomenon is why the common zebra is not found on the north side of the river. Bird life, too, is prolific with the Somali ostrich dominating the plains. Larger than its southern relative the Maasai ostrich it is more easily distinguished by its indigo legs and neck. Next in size is the kori bustard that stands a meter high. His behavior is unpredictable, at times running or crouching at the first sign of danger and at others completely fearless of humans. The male has a remarkable display inflating his neck and neck feathers until the head seems to disappear then raising his tail until it lies along his back

Days 10 & 11: Lake Nakuru - Lake Naivasha

Depart Samburu after breakfast and proceed south to Lake Nakuru, which is often referred to as the pink lake for its great masses of pink flamingos. Arrive in time for lunch. Lake Nakuru is one of Kenya's foremost rhino sanctuaries and is home to other wildlife including leopards, waterbuck, impala, Buffalo, and hundreds of the once threatened Rothschild giraffe. Afternoon game drive is taken. **Dinner and overnight Sarova Lion Hill or equivalent. (2B, 2L, 2D)**

LAKE NAKURU NATIONAL PARK.

Lake Nakuru is a very shallow strongly alkaline lake 62 km² in extent. It is set in a picturesque landscape of surrounding woodland and grassland next to Nakuru town. The landscape includes areas of marsh and grasslands alternating with rocky cliffs and outcrops, stretches of acacia woodland and rocky hillsides covered with a Euphorbia forest on the eastern perimeter. Menengai crater to the north, the bahati hills to the northeast bound the lake catchment, the lion hill ranges to the east, Eburu crater to the south and the Mau escarpment to the west. Three major rivers, the Njoro, Makalia and Enderit drain into the lake, together with treated water from the town's sewage works and the outflow from several springs along the shore. Lake Nakuru was first gazetted as a bird sanctuary in 1960 and upgraded to National Park status in 1968. A northern extension was added to the park in 1974 and the lake was designated as a Ramsar site in 1990. The foundation of the parks food chains is the cyanophyte spirulina platensis is which can support huge numbers of lesser flamingo.

Days 12 - 14: Maasai Mara Game Reserve

Leave Kisumu, we head for Maasai Mara National Reserve which is famous for its great herds of wild game. All animals found in Kenya among the "big five" are found here. Arrive in time for lunch. For the next five days we will be doing morning and afternoon game drive. While here you can visit the Masai villages (extra cost). The three nights you will be at the Keekorok Lodge. Meals and overnight at **Keekorok Lodge or equivalent. (3B, 3L, 3D)**

MASAI MARA NATIONAL RESERVE.

The Masai Mara is considered by many to be one of Kenya's finest game reserves. The rolling grasslands offer ideal game viewing and photographic opportunities and rocky outcrops, which are favourite midday resting places for lion, for which the Mara is famous, break the grassy plains. Some of the other animals, which can be seen in and around this 700 square mile conservation area, include elephant, black rhino, buffalo, leopard, cheetah, wildebeest, zebra, and gazelle. Hippo and crocodile abound in the muddy brown waters of the rivers, which traverse this Reserve. One of the Mara's main attractions each year is the astonishing spectacle of the annual migration of up to two million wildebeest, thousands of zebra and an escort of carnivores from the Serengeti plains, following the rains and succulent new grass. A costly trek as many of the lame, laggard and sick will fall prey to the ravening pack of predators and many more will die in the swirling flood waters trying to cross the Mara River. Once the rains have ended and the grass begins to wither the wildebeest turn south and head back to the Serengeti and beyond. The reserve with an area of 1510 km² forms the northern part of the Serengeti-Mara ecosystem and is famous for vast assemblages and migration of plains game and their associated predators. The park's southern boundary is contiguous with Tanzania's Serengeti National park.



Day 15: Masai Mara-Nairobi-Europe

From Masai Mara, we head back to Nairobi arriving early afternoon. There will be dayrooms booked at the Fairview to refreshen before the transfer to Jomo Kenyatta International airport for your scheduled flight back home via Europe. There is an optional early dinner at the Carnivore or a place of your choice (extra). (BB)

TOUR INCLUSIONS:

- All airport transfers (Kenya and Rwanda), transportation while on safari in Kenya in exclusive use of 4 x 4 landcruiser or minivans while in Kenya.
- Vehicles equipped with photographic roof hatch, sliding windows, ice chest and driven by an English-speaking safari driver/ guide.
- Meals as specified in the itinerary;
- Accommodations as specified in the itinerary;
- Return flight from Kenya to Rwanda,.
- 4 Days Rwanda Gorilla program, * You can opt to do one permit as opposed to the two included.
- All park/ reserve/ conservation entrance fees;
- Flying Doctors' Insurance – within a radius of 1000 kms from the Wilson Airport in Nairobi (includes one free medical emergency air ambulance evacuation to the nearest medical center. It, however, does not cover any medical bills).

TOUR EXCLUSIONS:

- Tips to safari Driver/ Guides.
- Meals outside of those specified in the itinerary;
- Passport and visa fees;
- All items of a personal nature such as laundry, telephone calls, drinks, etc.