



The Best of Adventure and Experiences in Kenya

Duration: 10 Days

Highlights: Nairobi, Suguta Valley, Melako Conservancy, Sera Conservancy, Masai Mara National Reserve

This adventure packed itinerary explores Kenya's northern frontier with a helicopter excursion in Suguta Valley and a quad bike safari in Melakao conservancy. Track rhinos on foot in Sera Conservancy and visit elephants at the Reteti Elephant Sanctuary before ending the safari in the Masai Mara where you float over the savannah on a break-of-dawn hot-air balloon ride.

Itinerary

Day 1 - Arrive Nairobi

On arrival at Jomo Kenyatta International airport and after clearing customs and immigration formalities, you are met by our representative and transferred to Giraffe Manor.

Giraffe Manor sits within 140 acres of indigenous forest in Karen, a pretty, leafy Nairobi suburb. Built in 1932, its design mimics that of a Scottish hunting lodge. That makes the manor unusual, but it's as home to endangered Rothschild giraffe which makes this place so distinctive. You won't be the only ones enjoying this little hotel's fine dining: twice a day giraffe stroll gracefully out of the forest to poke their noses greedily through the dining room windows to examine leftovers. There are only a few hundred Rothschild giraffes left in the wild, but the Manor works alongside nearby Giraffe Centre to run a breeding programme which aims to reintroduce the species back into the wild. Giraffe Manor, with its 12 individually styled rooms, spiral staircases, balconies and extensive, manicured green lawns, evokes 1930s Africa. Only 10 kilometers (6 miles) from Nairobi's city centre, the manor reclines in a restful location for you to enjoy the other fascinating attractions this lively city has to offer: explore the Karen Blixen Museum, adopt a baby elephant at nearby David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust or visit the neighbours at the Giraffe Centre next door.



Overnight: Giraffe Manor

Meal Plan:

Day 2 - Full day tour of Nairobi

Wake up to giraffes visiting the Manor and putting their heads through the dining room windows to be fed at breakfast. Take a tour of the surrounding area in the vintage car that Robert Redford drove in the movie "Out of Africa", including a tour of the author Karen Blixen's house. In the afternoon go for a private viewing at the David Sheldrick animal orphanage. To date the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust has successfully hand-raised over 150 infant elephants and has accomplished its long-term conservation priority by effectively reintegrating orphans back into the wild herds. Interact with the animals at the orphanage and meet the amazing keepers who look after them 24 hours a day.

Meet your private guide who accompanies you on the rest of your adventure.

The professional guide who accompanies you is one of the most important factors in the success of your journey. He locates wildlife, keeps a seasoned eye on all the workings of camp life and designs each of day to suit your own pace. On safari, his love for animals and bird life is unmistakable. From casual bush lectures to introspective discussions around the campfire, your safari guide is the perfect travelling companion who enriches your understanding of the land and the human cultures that have influenced the shaping of the land around you.

Overnight: Giraffe Manor

Meal Plan: B, L, D

Day 3 - Fly to Suguta Valley

Fly by private charter to Nanyuki where your helicopter is waiting to take you on a day tour of the Suguta Valley. The Suguta Valley is in many ways the last great frontier. Few have visited this part of the Great Rift Valley. It's about as far off the beaten track as you can get and makes for a particularly rewarding helicopter excursion. Located directly south of Lake Turkana at an altitude of just 1,000 feet (300 meters) above sea level, this is one of the places where mankind began.

From the vast caldera of the Silale Crater, carpeted with grasses and shrubs, the Suguta valley is characterized by a flood pan dominated by green algae, seasonal streams and dramatic rock formations. An area of fascination for geologists, the ancient sediments and fossils have enabled them to piece together the complex history of a lake which has risen and fallen multiple times over the past 18,000 years. Highlights of this helicopter excursion include weathered rock formations and contrasting shades of the Hoodoe and Painted Valleys, and the sand dunes of the Suguta Desert. The true emeralds in the dust however are Lakes Logipi and Turkana. Logipi is a seasonal saline lake that provides a crucial breeding ground for lesser flamingo, while Lake Turkana – the Jade Sea – exerts a magnetic attraction over artists and scientists alike.

Get dropped off for an overnight in your fly camp. Here, the staff offers drinks and hot showers, or maybe you would prefer a dip in the portable swimming pool. As the sun sinks, you might head out for a game walk or drive, and in the evening, be serenaded by the colourful nomadic tribes around a campfire. There is nothing like camping out in Africa, under a starry night sky to really feel connected to the bush and your surroundings.

Overnight: Fly Camp

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Meal Plan: B, L, D

Day 4 - Melako Conservancy

Today head out on a full day quad bike safari in Melako Conservancy.

A full safari expedition by quad bike or buggy is one of the most exciting adventures to be had. Melako is a very remote area of Northern Kenya, which lends itself to an unparalleled exclusive quad safari. Following century old elephant routes, guests follow tracks along sand luggas fringed with desert palms. A full day's expedition takes you further into the arid wilderness of this area, ending back at your beautiful lightweight fly camp.

Overnight: Fly Camp

Meal Plan: B, L, D

Day 5 - Fly to Sera Conservancy

From Melako Conservancy, board your helicopter and transfer to Saruni Rhino in the Sera conservancy. Saruni offers guests a scintillating, 'thrill-of-a-lifetime' experience: a walking safari tracking black rhino on foot, accompanied by an expert Saruni guide and a highly trained Sera Community Conservancy ranger, equipped with a transmitter correlating to the GPS whereabouts of the 11 rhinos throughout the 54,000-hectare sanctuary. The vast rhino sanctuary has been fenced in what is one of the most advanced conservation projects in Kenya. Operational only throughout certain hours of the day for maximum protection, the use of the transmitter allows us to game drive our guests a tracking distance away from the nearest rhino, leaving the vehicle and continuing on foot (very lightly to not give away your presence) to stand close to the grazing rhino. The tension is palpable as you come across the rhino in such close proximity for the first time; heart beating, pulse racing, curiosity and excitement mounting – it doesn't get more thrilling than this!

Overnight: Saruni Rhino

Meal Plan: B, L, D

Day 6 - Sera Conservancy

The adventure doesn't stop there. Following your 'up close and personal' encounters with 'the supreme rhino of Sera', the conservancy provides further plentiful wildlife opportunities and experiences; game drives to spot the Samburu specials (oryx, gerenuk, ostrich, Grevy's Zebra, reticulated giraffe), buffalo, elephants, antelope and a plethora of birdlife.

Sera is also home to The Fifty Wells, 'Kisima Hamsini', a series of (50!) springs where local pastoralists take their livestock to water, digging up water from the wells to fill up holders and troughs. The Singing Wells are also a driving distance away and can be visited with some notice – a rare treat to see the local community singing proprietary songs recognizable only by their own cattle, to encourage them to come to the wells to drink.

In addition, you can pay a visit the opened The Reteti Elephant Sanctuary in Namunyak Wildlife Conservancy located in the remote Mathews Range nearby, providing protection for orphaned and abandoned elephant calves with an aim to release them back into the wild herds adjoining the Sanctuary.

Overnight: Saruni Rhino

Meal Plan: B, L, D

Day 7 - Fly to Masai Mara National Reserve

Fly by private charter to the world famous Masai Mara National Reserve where your own private 5* luxury mobile camp awaits.

Our “Private Camping” safari refers to the private tented camps that are pitched in foremost wildlife areas for your group alone. Your camp is a private sanctuary where the panorama of the bush bursts into view every time you step out of your tent and as you walk around camp. Our long-standing reputation and history as the most respected safari outfitter in Africa give us exclusive access to private camping concessions in East Africa’s most beautiful and wildlife-rich territories. This is the ultimate and most authentic form of safari, and your camp is tailored to suit your individual needs and tastes.

Take an evening game drive around the area to try to spot the “Big 5”. End the day sipping a drink while you watch the sun slip past the horizon.

After dinner a Masai mock ambush is organized. This is an amazing guest experience. In a mock attack, as the guests enjoy a variety of sumptuous dishes, they suddenly hear a warrior ‘s introductory songs in the air. The Maasai rush out of the bushes carrying their traditional weapons as they head towards where the guests are seated. The guests are often engulfed by a mix of shock and excitement! Singing and dancing follows, and the guests are allowed (often encouraged) to join in the jumping dance.

Overnight: Private Camping

Meal Plan: B, L, D

Day 8 - Masai Mara National Reserve

Take a front seat collaring an elephant with the Mara Elephant Project. Currently, Mara Elephant Project (MEP) has 23 collared elephants that they monitor via Google Earth daily. MEP focuses on candidates that gather useful spatial data meaning elephants in border areas, areas of conflict or areas outside conservancies or national reserves. They are also looking for candidates that represent crop raiding elephants. The collared elephants in most cases represents a whole herd that may be at risk. MEP’s 23 collared elephants provide data that is being used daily to mitigate human-elephant conflict, inform ranger deployment and anti-poaching work, and promote transboundary cooperation within the wider ecosystem.

You get the chance to follow an elephant collaring operation from start to finish. Depending on the number of people guests either fly in the MEP helicopter or follow the operation in a chartered helicopter. You get to see the collar before it’s put on, meet the DSWT/KWS vet that’s going to do the darting, help take measurements of the elephant while it’s asleep, take plenty of photos and watch the elephant then get up and walk away with its brand-new collar. A private photographer is a nice touch to really capture the moment.

Overnight: Private Camping

Meal Plan: B, L, D



Day 9 - Masai Mara National Reserve

Start the day hot air ballooning over the savannah at dawn. Departure is from a perfect natural launch site, flames from the hot air balloon burners light the darkness as the crews inflate their craft. The first, pink tongues of sunlight flicker across the skies as the hot air balloon fills, then rises. Suspended in a basket beneath the rainbow-coloured canopy, you're off for a wildlife viewing adventure with an entirely different perspective. What amazes most first-time balloonists is the absolute stillness: the silence as you float above the plains, the forest and the rivers of the Masai Mara. Even if you've flown elsewhere, this is a unique experience.

The flight lasts an hour or so, drifting wherever the air currents take you, and with ample opportunities for photography and video filming. Then your Kenyan hot air balloon safari finishes with a flourish. In the time-honored tradition of balloon flights the world over, you toast your return to earth with a champagne breakfast, cooked wherever you land.

Overnight: Private Camping

Meal Plan: B, L, D

Day 10 - Fly to Nairobi and depart

Fly to Nairobi to depart back home with a whole new collection of memories to last a lifetime.

Overnight:

Meal Plan: B