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— TRANSFORMING DREAMS INTO MEMORIES —

12 Day Africa Safari – The Heart of Kenya & Tanzania



CELEBRITY HOSTED – YOUR FLEXIBLE INCLUSIONS DATES — 12 DAY ITINERARY

The names alone are magic: The Serengeti. Ngorongoro Crater. The Maasai Mara.

We're reminded that when we travel, we visit *names* as well as places—names with romantic heft, names that resound, names that may have captivated us for many years. Names like *Ngorongoro*. (Then again, if we'd never heard that sonorous name, and we made the exhilarating drive up the flank of the old volcano and reached its rim and suddenly beheld the green and animal-thronged crater far below, Ngorongoro would be just as utterly amazing.)

In less than two weeks, *The Heart of Kenya and Tanzania* introduces us—or re-introduces us—to places with famous names, but most of all, it brings us to *fantastic* places, fantastic in the sense that their like is to be found exactly nowhere else on earth.

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12 Day Africa Itinerary: Nairobi – Tarangire - Ngorongoro Crater - The Serengeti - Maasai Mara – Nairobi & Onward



Day 1 En-Route: **US – En-Route**

Day 2-3 Arrival Africa: **Nairobi**

After arrival at Jomo Kenyatta Airport, we'll be met by our Safari Director and driven to the classic Norfolk Hotel, for more than a century the world's preferred pre- and post-safari stomping ground.

The next day we'll tour the succinctly informative National Museum, consort with the world's tallest terrestrial animal at the Giraffe Centre, make a pilgrimage to the home of Karen Blixen—aka Isak Dinesen, one of Africa's supreme laureates—and have lunch at Lavington, home of Micato's founders, Felix and Jane Pinto (be sure to ask about Jane's adventures in the world of international table tennis).

Celebration

· ESCAPES ·

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Day 4 Africa: Nairobi – Tarangire



We fly from Nairobi to northern Tanzania's Kilimanjaro International Airport, gateway to the great game lands we're soon to see. After lunch, we fly onward to Tarangire National Park and the Tarangire Sopa Lodge, a classic example of unobtrusive, beautifully designed modern lodge architecture.

Tarangire is an apt place to begin a wildlife safari. Home to just about all the headliner beasts, including a large and robust elephant population, Tarangire also shelters such rarities as the fringe-eared oryx and the long-necked gerenuk, a particularly winsome and creatively constructed antelope.

Tarangire charms us with its exemplary African landscapes: acacia trees, brawny brown hills, sweeping vistas, clear nights of "soft velvet," as Elspeth Huxley wrote. "[Like] a warm conservancy whose great dome was encrusted with all the diamonds in the world, and all the scents in the world were there too, changing like currents in the sea."

Celebration

· ESCAPES ·

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Tarangire Sopa Lodge

tarangire, tanzania

Built to blend in with its vast and beautiful surroundings, Tarangire Sopa Lodge is hidden among the kopjes, ancient baobabs, and grasses of Tarangire National Park—home to the greatest concentration of elephants in Africa

(many of whom can be seen around the lodge, affording us close, respectful encounters). Tarangire Sopa's rooms—each with a private-entry lounge and mini-bar—are unusually 1spacious and refreshingly open to the pristine Tarangire air.

Day 5-6 Africa: Nairobi – Ngorongoro Crater



We drive from Tarangire up into the green Crater Highlands, weaving our way to our lodge, the Ngorongoro Sopa, perched at well over 7,000 feet on the rim of the fabled Ngorongoro Crater.

As geologic masterpieces go, Ngorongoro has had quite a career. It's been a gigantic peak, perhaps a rival of Kilimanjaro, and, after it blew its snowy top in what must have been a rather impressive explosion (our forefathers over at the nearby Olduvai

Gorge, busy getting their humanoid act together, probably saw it), Ngorongoro spent many millennia as an alternately quiet and occasionally bubbling lava lake. Now in an extended pacific mood, the crater is home to upwards of 25,000 personality-rich animals, who roam—as we will—over a sweetly lush area larger than 76 Central Parks.

Celebration

· ESCAPES ·

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Ngorongoro Sopa Lodge

ngorongoro, tanzania

Also set on the crater's rim, Sopa is an architectural marvel. Its suites include a large solarium overlooking the crater, and the lodge's overall design reflects the vastness of the Africa bush; huge walls of glass—in both the public areas and the stylishly decorated guest suites—frame and bring into the heart of the lodge ever-surprising views of the

Ngorongoro Crater
and its luminous sunsets.

Day 7-8 Africa: *Ngorongoro Crater – The Serengeti*



After stopping at Olduvai, the symbolic wellspring of our DNA, we drop down to the Serengeti, the known universe's largest (and, happily for us, most wonderfully watchable) collection of illustrious mammals: elephants, giraffes, tumbling pool-fuls of hippos, elegantly slinking serval cats, zebras with incredibly muscular haunches (leading us to wonder why they were never ridden— very weak backs, that's why), and scores of species more, all

of them going about their business unconcerned by the likes of us. ("But make no mistake," an old Africa hand once wrote, "these aren't theme parks.

The truest owners of these lands are the animals who roam them free and, if that's their nature, fiercely.") We'll soak up the essence of the Serengeti from the Sopa Lodge, set on an escarpment overlooking the seemingly limitless plains, enjoying a sundowner after a game drive, watching clouds build up as "look like you could scoop them up with a spoon," Elspeth Huxley wrote.*

Celebration

· ESCAPES ·

— TRANSFORMING DREAMS INTO MEMORIES —



Serengeti Sopa Lodge

serengeti, tanzania

Magnificently styled after a traditional Maasai *manyatta*, or village, Sopa Lodge fits in with the Serengeti's sun-bleached colours; floor-to-ceiling Windows bring the spectacle of the savannah into the lodge, and guest suites contain private sitting areas and balconies opening over the "warm ocean of life" that is the Serengeti.

Day 9-10 Africa: *The Serengeti – Maasai Mara*



We fly back to Kilimanjaro International, then to Nairobi, and on to the Kenyan section of the Serengeti–Maasai Mara ecosystem, a world treasure, one with no counterpart,

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· ESCAPES ·

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anywhere. (During humanity's tenure, the closest any place on earth has come to equaling the Serengeti's incredible wealth of wildlife may be paleolithic Siberia, with the ancient North American Plains another contender.)

The size of Vermont (with Liechtenstein thrown in for good measure), the Serengeti–Maasai Mara ecosystem is, amongst much else, famed for the dramatic migration of its 1,000,000-plus wildebeest and 750,000-or-so zebras (and the intense attention that migration gets from predators, both mammalian and reptilian). Though the migration reaches seasonal crescendos, the movement of animals—north after the Long Rains, south as the rains return to nourish the southern plains—is more or less continual, and the sight of a two or three-mile-long train of animals on the movies extremely memorable.

Up here in the system's north, the landscapes are grandly varied but tend to be more green (which is why the migration heads up here, in search of water), with somewhat less savannah than in the south. We'll be staying in a characteristically attractive tented camp, either Kichwa Tembo or Fairmont Mara Safari Club, both of which take advantage of the Mara's scenic mix. Kichwa is set in riverine forest on the banks of the Sabaringo River, and the Mara River nearly wraps around the Mara Safari Club. Both camps offer balloon excursions; wafting over the Mara in the piercingly fresh and golden morning, floating over elephants and hippos, feeling a mild and worthy intoxication-by-grandeur, is one of those things that, having done, we wonder how on earth we ever contemplated not doing.



Kichwa Tembo

maasai mara, kenya

This romantic camp reflects the ambience of Kenyan safaris of the 1920s and '30s. Set in a lush riverine forest in the midst of a game-rich private conservancy, Kichwa's tented suites are classically elegant. Each has a private deck overlooking what we think is one of Kenya's most stunning landscapes (which is saying a very lot), and the camp's pool, airy main lodge, and exceptional service add

luster to Kichwa's terrific reputation.

Celebration

· ESCAPES ·

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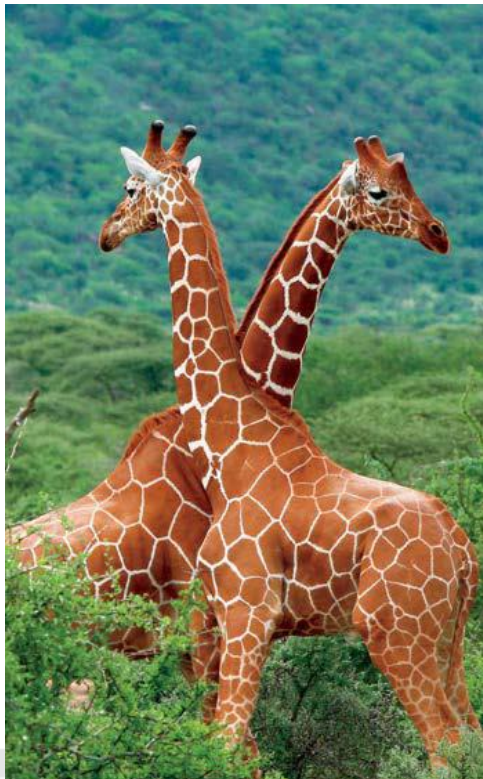
Fairmont Mara Safari Club

maasai mara, kenya

Surrounded on three sides by the bustling Mara River, on the edge of the great game lands of the Maasai Mara, the Fairmont Mara Safari Club is an exemplar of tented charm. Named a Top 20 Luxury Resort by *Travel+Leisure*, the Fairmont hosts a number of fine dining, safari, and outdoor activities. With fourposter, pillow-top beds and a veranda overlooking the hippo- and crocodile-

filled river, each of the 50 tents at Fairmont Mara Safari Club is superbly and comprehensively furnished.

Day 11-12 Africa: *Maasai Mara – Nairobi & Onward*



We fly back to Nairobi in the morning for some relaxation and maybe a swim or a nice lunch on the Lord Delamere Terrace at the Norfolk, and perhaps a visit to the Micato-AmericaShare Harambee Centre, a guaranteed spirit-lifter before our late evening flights.

We will be transferred to the airport at the appropriate time to meet our international flight for the US and Home.

End of Services.