

# *Celebration* · ESCAPES ·

— TRANSFORMING DREAMS INTO MEMORIES —

## 15 Day Africa Rafiki Safari – The Friends Safari



CELEBRITY HOSTED – YOUR FLEXIBLE INCLUSIONS DATES — 16 DAY ITINERARY

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“So, let’s say you have a friend who owns a magnificent little camp looking out at one of the world’s most impressive mountains, a camp tucked under cloud-forested hills— those same green hills Hemingway wrote his book about. Or you know someone who loves to bask in nature and treats it gently, and who created a ravishingly luxurious small camp on a hill overlooking the greatest wildlife sanctuary on earth. And your friends say, “Karibu nyumbani!” Come visit our home! We created this Friends Safari, this Rafiki Safari, around the idea of friends inviting friends to their— it just so happens, unforgettably extraordinary—East African homes.

Your Hosts, Jane & Felix Pinto “

## 15 Day Africa Itinerary:

Narobi - Chyulu Hills - Laikipia Plateau - The Maasai Mara - The Serengeti – Nairobi



15 days Departs Saturday, returns Saturday

**Day 1: En-Route : USA**

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## Day 2 - 3 Arrival Africa : USA - Nairobi

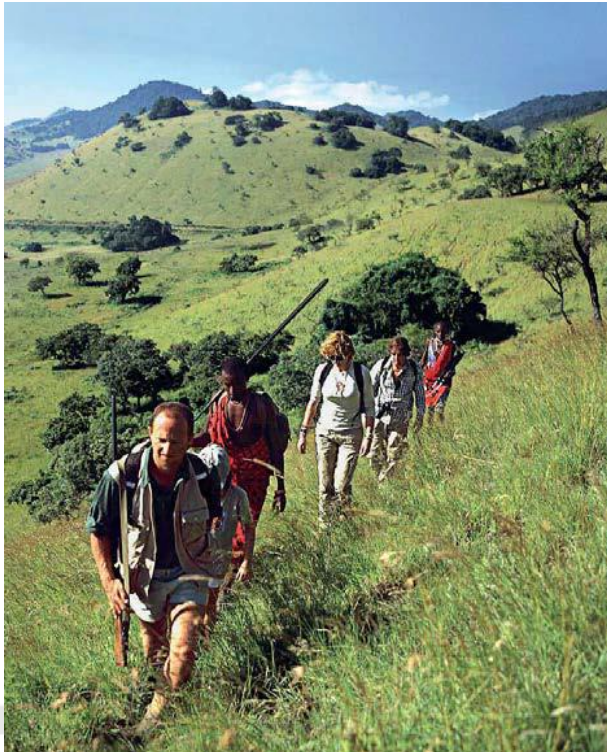
Our base of operations during our stay in Kenya's hard-charging capital is the new, suburban, surpassingly genteel (its views of the Ngong Hills are superb)—and very *bashash* (friendly, cheerful)—Hemingways Nairobi, which has created a major stir for its welcoming grandness.

Nearby is the home, now a museum, of *Out of Africa* author Isak Dinesen (or Karen Blixen, if you prefer, as most Africans do). We'll visit the Daphne Sheldrick Wildlife Sanctuary and be charmed to the core by its orphaned elephants and the intelligence and love with which they're cared for by the Sheldrick Trust.

And we'll have lunch at Lavington, home of Felix and Jane Pinto, Micato's founders, incarnations of *ukarimu* (welcoming kindness, in Swahili).\*

\*Not to nitpick, but, strictly speaking, we should call East Africa's lingua franca *Kiswahili*; Africans do amongst themselves. Swahili are the people who originally spoke the language, and saying Swahili instead of Kiswahili is like asking someone if they speak England.

## Day 4-5 Africa : Nairobi – Chyulu Hills



We fly south to Campi ya Kanzi, one of our favourite lodges in all of Africa. Created by Luca and Antonella Belpietro and their Maasai partners, ya Kanzi is nestled in peaceful isolation at the base of the Chyulu Hills, the very Green Hills of Africa that so captivated Hemingway.

Ya Kanzi's superbly designed tents look to the south at frequently snow-dusted Kilimanjaro, just across the border in Tanzania. Game drives here are especially intimate, and walking in the mystic cloud forest above camp, looking through vines and mossy branches at the great mountain, is a rare and indelible experience.\*

\* We remember a Christmas Eve dinner at ya Kanzi. Antonella and crew prepared a candlelit

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Afro-Italian feast. Kilimanjaro gleamed in the moonlight. And after dinner a group of Maasai came to visit. The warriors seemed as tall and as beautiful as the Christmas tree.



### *Campi ya Kanzi*

#### **chyulu hills, kenya**

Owners Luca and Antonella Belpietro are warmhearted hosts, and the unique partnership between this dynamic Italian couple and a conservation-conscious Maasai community has resulted in a stunning camp, constructed entirely of local materials, with luxe touches and grand style imported from Italy. Walking safaris, game drives, and sundowners in wildly spectacular settings with the Belpietros make for an unforgettable stay. A personal favourite of the Pinto family, Campi ya Kanzi is a true ever-

memorable and bright gem.

### **Day 6-8 Africa : Chyulu Hills – Laikipia Plateau**

On to much-celebrated Lemarti's Camp, named for its owner, Loyapan Lemarti, and designed with exquisite, innovative taste by his wife, fashion designer Anna Trzebinski. If there were an African edition of *Vogue*, Lemarti's would be featured in every issue. Yet, for all its stylishness, Lemarti's is deeply African; its design, furnishings, and artworks are all brilliantly expressive and authentic.

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Arriving by air, we're greeted as cherished friends, in accordance with Lemarti's Samburu culture. The camp is situated amidst classically grand game lands, in a remote grove of palms and fig trees on the banks of the Ewaso Nyiro River.



It's magic."

Hippos gambol, passing herds of elephants wait patiently in line for a playful dip, and, lounging on our veranda, we may hear a splash and watch the undulating progress of a monitor lizard as it swims across the river on a reptilian errand.

Lemarti's inspires intense devotion; we know a veteran bush pilot who says, "Listen, mate, people's whole lives get changed by that place.

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### *Lemarti's Camp*

#### **laikipia, kenya**

A stunning blend of authenticity and stylish panache, Lemarti's is an intimate, five-tent camp set on the lush banks of the Mara River. The creation of Loyapan Lemarti, a veteran Samburu safari leader, and his fashion designer wife Anna Trzebinski, Lemarti's is one of Africa's most elegant and beautiful camps—and, at the same time, one of its most genuine; its loving, artful appreciation for Africa

has earned it an international reputation.

### **Day 9-10 Africa : Laikipia Plateau – The Maasai Mara**

Winging to the game-thronged Mara, we are based in one of two superb tented camps, both high on our list of favourites. Kicheche Bush Camp is set amongst whistling thorn acacias in the Olare Motorogi Conservancy bordering on the Masai Mara National Reserve, about 40 minutes from the Ol Kiombo Airstrip. Its six ingeniously designed, ecologically apt tents bring us into connection with the Mara's savannah landscapes, which support an unusually large lion population.



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Ngare Serian, reached by a well-constructed and enlivening rope bridge across the Mara River, is an especially intimate camp, created with a deep sense of African history. We think it's the kind of camp other camps aspire to be: warm, beautifully sited next to the river, open to Africa's soothing airs (and to superb game viewing on foot and by vehicle). Tennis great Martina Navratilova, who must have visited just about everywhere of earthly note, is another Serian fan: "A one-of-a-kind entrance to a one-of-a-kind experience," she wrote in the camp's bubbling-with-praise guest book.



## *Kicheche Bush Camp*

**maasai mara, kenya**

Located in the Olare Motorogi Conservancy, a model of East Africa's burgeoning conservancy movement, Kicheche is a small camp (six wonderfully airy tents) that accurately notes, "Game viewing starts at your doorstep." We think of Bush Camp as ideal for travelers seeking a tranquil, classic safari experience that combines extraordinarily rich and uncrowded game viewing

with an old-school sensibility, which includes some of the friendliest and most accommodating staff we've met in our long African experience.

**Day 11-13 Africa : The Maasai Mara – The Serengeti**

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We fly to Tanzania and the Serengeti via Nairobi and Arusha, ending with a final three safari nights at the wonderful Dunia Camp, in the southwest corner of the Seronera Valley, the heart of the Serengeti (hence, in the center of the world's hands-down greatest assemblage of wildlife).

Another of the *Rafiki Safari's* brilliantly hospitable small camps, Dunia and its eight tents are set on the lower slopes of Nyareboro Hill, looking out at the oceanic Serengeti. Close by are the classic Moru Kopjes, on which lions laze and plot their next foray.

It's often possible to watch the cyclic migration that more or less constantly churns its way around the Serengeti–Maasai Mara from our tents' verandas, and a game drive—prairie-schoonering on the golden plain, stopping to picnic under a kopje's acacia trees—is a serial revelation: elephants moseying along contentedly; zebras resting their heads on each other, giving them a collective 360-degree view of the lion-stalked plain; wildebeest forever and famously looking like a collection of cast-off parts; rhinos; crocs and gigantic hippos; elegantly sauntering giraffes; and perhaps 50 or more *other* large mammal species, including leopards, which we often see in the lush forest on the banks of the nearby Seronera River, a predator's and a predator watcher's paradise.



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## *Dunia Camp*

**serengeti, tanzania**

Intimate, cannily designed, and marvelously located near primary migration corridors, Dunia Camp is set slightly above the Serengeti Plain on Nyareboro Hill, giving us the famously vast view that is—luckily—so difficult to forget. All the camp's eight spacious tents, designed with safari history in mind, feature en-suite bathrooms (of course) and a veranda from which to gaze out at everentrancing sights.

## Day 14 Africa : The Serengeti – Nairobi – Flights Towards Home



Back to our *marafiki*—friends—at Hemingways, where we'll have a room to relax and regroup before our late evening flights homeward.

Perhaps we'll simply sit by the pool and scroll through our impressions of an extravagantly scenic and deeply friendly African safari.

Private transfer to the airport for our flight towards home.

## Day 15 Africa : Flights Towards Home – Europe Connection - US & Home

We connect in Europe for homebound flights, perhaps a little *kusikitisha*—sad—maybe already a little homesick for Africa.

**End of Services.**