

24 day Gorillas, Game Parks & Zanzibar ND24 CAE0911

NAIROBI to DAR ES SALAAM

This trip starts in Nairobi and travels through Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania, finishing in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania.

In order to view the Gorillas we may do so in one of the countries bordering Uganda, ie. Rwanda or The Democratic Republic of Congo.

Please note that this trip departs Nairobi on a Sunday, early morning. Should you wish to spend extra time there an earlier arrival should be planned and additional accommodation booked.

Pre Departure Meeting: Held at departure point at 5:00pm the day before your departure.

Departure Point: Nairobi, Boulevard Hotel, Harry Thuku Road.

Check In Time: 8:45am

Departure Time: 9:30am

DAY 01: Nairobi to Masai Mara game Reserve

We will depart from the Boulevard Hotel and leave the hustle and bustle of Nairobi and climb the escarpment to our first viewpoint stop over looking the Great African Rift Valley. Descending into the Rift valley we enter Masai land, and these habitual pastoralists are seen quite regularly on the side of the road as they tend their cattle. We will arrive at our campsite – Acacia Camp - early evening in time to enjoy sunset on the Masai Mara. (L, D)

DAY 02: Masai Mara

Game drives through the Mara find us looking for the infamous big 5 as well as giving us the opportunity to see this 'garden of Eden' in a state nature intended it to be, huge plains, rolling hills and an abundance of game matched no where else on earth. Elephant, lion, cheetah, giraffe, zebra, waterbuck just to name a few of the animal that inhabit this wonderland. Sitting around a campfire and watching the sunset is the perfect way to finish a day's game viewing in the Mara. (B, L, D)

DAY 03: Masai Mara to Kisumu



Departing the Masai Mara early we will pass through the scenic tea plantations on our way to Kisumu, where we will stop for the night to re supply and shop. Kisumu is Kenya's harbour town situated on the banks of Lake Victoria – Africa's largest lake. (B, L, D)

DAY 04: Kisumu to Kampala

Today, we cross the border into Uganda and travel via the lakeside town of Jinja (the Source of the Nile) before reaching Kampala, Uganda's capital, for an overnight stay. Uganda is a small country of striking physical beauty. Its landscapes vary from the fertile green areas around the northern shores of Lake Victoria to the snow-covered Ruwenzori Mountains in the west and the semi-desert parts of the north facing the border of Sudan.

The political instability that haunted Uganda over a period of years has had the positive effect of leaving the country free of the over-commercialism so common in other parts of Africa. The current administration under President Museveni has devoted considerable effort and funds to regain Uganda's former glory as one of Africa's most prosperous and, from a tourist's point of view, one of the most appealing and interesting countries to visit. (B, L, D)

DAYS 05 & 06: Kampala to Kisoro

After an early morning departure from Kampala we drive further west on into the depths of Uganda and arrive at our base in Kisoro. (B, L, D)

From our Kisoro base, depending on where the gorilla permits are available, and where the gorillas are located, we will be viewing them in either the Magahinga or Bwindi National Parks in Uganda, the Virunga National Park in the DRC or at Ruhengeri in Rwanda. Due to the nature of the gorillas and their habits, viewing cannot be guaranteed. The gorillas themselves can tend to move around the locality quite a distance and the trek can be quite arduous. The cost to trek the gorillas differs from park to park and can range from US\$375 to US\$500, per 1-hour viewing.. There is also a cost for the local transport to take you to & from the starting point to trek the gorillas. This cost is normally US\$15 to US\$20 per person. Please note that Africa Travel Co is not in control of the price of gorilla permits and therefore cannot be held responsible for any increases in fees levied by the relevant authorities. National parks usually allow clients who fail to see the gorillas, a second chance to re-trek the next day if time and availability allows or they may refund your trekking fee. This is purely at their discretion. Although this is the general situation, the respective National Parks authorities will not put this in writing to any tour operator. Again the respective park authorities say that you are paying to trek the gorillas, not view them. Africa Travel Co is considered to be the main tour operator within the overland industry and we have a very high success rate of getting in and actually seeing these magnificent animals.

Please note: This is an optional excursion and visas to the DRC and Rwanda can be obtained at the border.

The mountain gorilla (Gorilla Gorilla Berengei) of whom only about 600 still exist, is one of our closest living relatives,

yet ironically, it is mankind that poses the greatest threat to its survival. To visit these noble creatures in their own environment is an experience you will never forget. Accompanied by a park guide and a bush cutter, we track these gorillas through the rain forest. The gorilla families have been habituated to tourists and their whereabouts are monitored daily by the guides and park officials.

It may be necessary to trek for quite a while through the dense forest vegetation (up to 5 hrs) in order to reach the family designated for your visit.

As gorillas are sensitive to human diseases, the park authorities will not allow anyone they consider to be in poor health to visit the gorilla groups and children under 15 years of age are not allowed to visit.

You need not feel that you are exploiting these animals - for years they have been ruthlessly hunted for their hands and heads, which have been sold as souvenir ashtrays and lampshades. In addition, large numbers have been killed whilst trying to stop poachers stealing babies for sale to zoos, where they have never lived long. As a result, the ever-growing number of tourists to see them is an important factor in their survival. The gorilla fees help to set up and finance patrols that are instrumental in protecting the gorillas from poachers and their lethal snares.

DAY 07: Kisoro to Lake Bunyoni

A short drive through arguably some of the most picturesque scenery in Africa brings us to Lake Bunyoni. Lake Bunyoni is the deepest Crater Lake in Africa and is home to a large number of bird and fish species as well as otters. (B, L, D)

DAY 08: Lake Bunyoni

Today we have the whole day at leisure to enjoy the beauty of Lake Bunyoni. There is the option to swim, visit the local villages or just sit back, relax and enjoy the tranquil surrounds. A well deserved rest day! (B, L, D)

DAY 09: Lake Bunyoni to Kampala

After enjoying the peaceful surrounds of Lake Bunyoni we drive to Kampala for another overnight stay, and perhaps the chance to sample the nightlife. Today we will cross the equator for the second time and there will be ample opportunity for photos at the Equator crossing. (B, L, D)

DAY 10: Kampala to Jinja

Today we have the option to either white water raft the Nile or visit Ngamba Chimpanzee Sanctuary. For the

adventurous, you will be collected from Kampala and transferred to Jinja where you will experience some of the best white water rafting in Africa. For the less adventurous, you will have the morning at leisure or the option to take a full day excursion to visit Ngamba Chimpanzee Sanctuary before our departure to Jinja.

Our overnight camp is right on the edge of the Nile River where there is an abundance of resident bird life & some truly amazing photo opportunities from right outside your tent! (B, L, D)

DAY 11: Jinja to Nakuru

Today will be a full day driving back towards Kenya, we will cross the border before lunch and stop for supplies en route. Tonight we will overnight again in Nakuru. (B,L,D)

DAY 12: Lake Nakuru National Park

Today we move onto Lake Nakuru National Park, famous for the thousands of flamingo that inhabit the Lake's edge. The numbers vary depending on the level of the lake, and are more numerous when the water level is low. The Park has also been established as a sanctuary for black and white rhino, which are frequently seen in the Park, along with buffalo, giraffe, waterbuck, various antelope, leopard and the occasional hippo. After entering the park in the morning we will spend the rest of the day game driving. (B,L,D)

DAY 13: Lake Nakuru National Park to Lake Naivasha

Moving further east, we drive to Lake Naivasha where we make camp in peaceful surroundings beside the lake. The highest of the Rift Valley lakes, Naivasha lies at about 1880m above the lake is home to a multitude of bird life, pride of place must go to the African Fish Eagle. The afternoon is spent at leisure here and you have the opportunity (time permitting) to enjoy some **optional** excursions, such as a boat ride to the Crescent Island Game Sanctuary, Hell's Gate National Park or Elsamere, the retirement home of Joy Adamson ("Born Free"). (B,L,D)

DAY 14: Lake Naivasha to Nairobi

After breakfast, we leave Naivasha and return to Nairobi, arriving in the early afternoon. The truck will stop at the Boulevard Hotel for those staying there, and then continue to our campsite for the night. (B)

DAY 15: Nairobi to Arusha

We depart Nairobi and drive south, crossing the border into Tanzania at Namanga and continue to Arusha. This is a pleasant town situated at the base of Mount Meru and is the starting point for your **optional** excursion to Ngorongoro Crater and/or Serengeti.

We conduct these excursions in locally operated Land Rovers, which are specially adapted for safari use. Depending on which option you choose, you will be away from the Arusha campsite for either one or two nights. (L, D)

DAY 16: Serengeti (Optional)

If you take up the two-night/three day option you will depart Arusha in the morning with your vehicles and guides. The drive to the Serengeti National Park takes us through the Masai town of Mtu Wa Mbu (Mosquito River) and up into the Ngorongoro Reserve for a glimpse of the Ngorongoro Crater before descending down onto the plains of the Serengeti. The abundance of plains game in this area is truly astounding. The afternoon will be spent game viewing before setting up camp in the midst of the national park. With some luck we will be able to listen to the night time noises of the wildlife! (B, L, D)

DAY 17: Serengeti National Park to Ngorongoro Crater

After a full morning game drive in the Serengeti we will return to pull down camp and head back towards the Ngorongoro. Here we travel up to Ngorongoro Crater's edge for our campsite for the evening. We suggest you pack your winter woollies as it can get very cold on the rim of the crater during night times.

For those taking the one-night/two day option you will be collected from Arusha today in the afternoon and transferred to the town of Karatu for the evening. Tomorrow we will join the rest of the group for your Ngorongoro game drive. (B, L, D)

DAY 18: Ngorongoro Crater to Arusha

This morning we descend into the Ngorongoro Crater with its 600 metre walls and 20-kilometre width is a natural wonder, and offers a spectacular view from the rim. The true size of this caldera is only appreciated from the floor itself and the abundance of its animal inhabitants becomes apparent. It is home to nearly every species of African animal and offers a chance to view an incredible concentration of East African mammals, such as elephant, rhino, buffalo, hippo, lion, and plain's game. After spending the full morning in the crater you will return to the campsite near Arusha for another night. Both optional excursions will follow the same schedule today. (B, L, D)

DAY 19: Arusha to Pangani

We leave Arusha and head towards the warm Indian Ocean. Travelling through the town of Moshi we cross the southern slopes of the highest mountain in Africa, Kilimanjaro. There is also an opportunity to view the snowy summit, weather dependant. This calls for a photo stop! Continuing south we pass the Usambara Mountains where we encounter vast sisal plantations on our way to Dar es Salaam. (B, L, D)

DAY 20: Pangani to Dar es Salaam

Today is another long days drive through beautiful lush scenery and palm trees. We set up camp for the night. On arrival in Dar es Salaam, we spend the night at a beach hotel/campsite that is situated to the north of the city, and prepare for our departure to Zanzibar the next morning. (B, L, D)

DAY 21: Dar es Salaam to Zanzibar

A ferry from Dar es Salaam takes us to the "Spice Island", where we will spend three nights on this legendary island. Zanzibar is steeped in history and was one of the major starting points for most East African explorers in their quest for new lands. (B)

Please note: From our experience our clients have felt the need to explore the island on their own, therefore accommodation and food is for client's own account whilst on Zanzibar, but our trip leader accompany clients to the island and will be able to book accommodation and tours on the island

DAYS 22 & 23: Zanzibar

History aside, Zanzibar offers a wealth of experiences for the visitor. Today the quiet streets of the old Stone Town still retain their Arabic influence, from the Medina-like shops to the palaces of the Sultans, who founded their vast empires on the spoils of the slave and ivory trade. The island is still famous for its spices, and tours around a spice plantation can be organised. Other options include a trip to the nearby Prison Island with its giant tortoises, and beautiful beaches to enjoy. Or perhaps you would enjoy the opportunity to hire a motorbike and explore the more remote areas of the island.

Zanzibar is a seafood lover's paradise. Numerous restaurants offer a great variety of the freshest catch from the ocean - giant lobsters being a popular speciality. Alternatively, joining the locals for dinner in the waterfront market is an experience not to be missed. The market stalls offer an unusual selection of fast food African style at a very reasonable cost.

DAY 24: Zanzibar to Dar es Salaam

Leaving Zanzibar, we take the ferry back to the mainland and Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania's first city with its colonial buildings and palm-lined port, where we end our safari.

Local Payment: US\$515



Optional Excursions:

White Water Rafting, River Nile	US\$95
Gorilla permit	US\$375 – US\$500
Serengeti/Ngorongoro Crater option (3 day)	US\$380
Ngorongoro Crater option (1 day)	US\$200

*Although traveller's cheques are accepted for Serengeti/Ngorongoro payments, they are subject to a minimum surcharge of 5%.

Zanzibar Accommodation	US\$20p/p/n
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(Prices subject to change)

On enquiry a full list of Optional Extra's will be sent to you.

Please note: This itinerary should be used as a guide only and may vary from day to day depending on road conditions, weather, political situations, and group decisions. Due to new tourism laws in some of the countries we operate in there may be a truck and crew change during the trip. All prices & Local Payments are subject to change with prior notice.

Free Trip

Please note that when you book this trip you are entitled to receive a free 3 day Masai Mara Safari. The Local Payment is still applicable for the trip. This offer must be taken up when booking your main trip. Please ask us for details. Conditions apply.

The staff and management look forward to welcoming you aboard and trust that you will enjoy your trip with us.

"Safari Njema"

07/2007