



Kenya 2010

9 day tour – Nairobi | Masai Mara | Lake Nakuru
9 – 17 January 2010

HIGHLIGHTS

- Big game watching in the world's premier game reserve, the Masai Mara – Lions, cheetah and zebra to name but a few.
- The spectacular view of flamingos on Lake Nakuru as well as white rhino and leopard.
- Living Planetarium Show from Dr. John Mason in the incredibly clear African skies.
- Luxury tented accommodation whilst in the Masai Mara, Luxury lodges for Lake Nakuru.

SUMMARY

For many who have not had a chance to travel Kenya, their impressions are often of rolling, lush savannas, hundreds of different bird species and herds of migrating wildebeest and zebra as well as the main attraction; the big cats. This safari embodies all of those fantastic images and does it in Luxury and style – a one off safari in a breathtaking part of the world.



When you only have a relatively short time in Kenya it is essential to maximize your time in the reserves and national parks. Our trip will concentrate on spending as much time as possible in the Masai Mara, and then traveling onwards to Naivasha before traveling to Lake Nakuru for the annular eclipse and more stunning wildlife.

Our expert astronomer Dr John Mason will once again be joining us, not only for the eclipse itself but he will also be running a Living Planetarium show, where we will have spectacular conditions for viewing the clear African skies.

This truly is a unique expedition taking in some of the most unforgettable African scenery with an annular eclipse observation in a stunning setting.

Please note that this itinerary is still provisional and is subject to change.

WILDLIFE

Wildebeest, zebra and Thomson's gazelle are all residents of the Masai Mara however the "Big Five" are the star attractions. Rhinoceros numbers may be severely threatened however they are still visible on a good day and hippopotami can be seen in large groups. Cheetahs are also to be found in the Mara's sprawling plains, along with territorial lion prides and, if very lucky, the occasional sightings of camera shy leopard. As in the Serengeti, the wildebeest are the dominant inhabitant of the Masai Mara.

Numerous other antelope can also be seen, including Thomson's and Grant's gazelle, impala, topi and Coke's hartebeest as well as large herds of zebra. The plains are also home to the distinctive Masai giraffe as well as the common giraffe. The large Roan antelope and the nocturnal bat-eared fox, rarely present elsewhere in Kenya, can be seen within the reserve borders. The Masai Mara is also a major research centre for the spotted hyena and additionally over 450 species of birdlife have been identified in the park, including vultures, marabou stork, secretary bird, hornbill, crowned crane, ostrich, long-crested Eagle, and African pygmy-falcon.



Lake Nakuru, a small (it varies from 5 to 45 square kilometers) shallow alkaline lake on the southern edge of the town of Nakuru lies roughly 160 kilometers north of Nairobi. The lake is world famous as the location of the greatest bird spectacle on earth - myriads of fuchsia pink flamingos whose numbers are legendary, often more than a million sometimes as much as two. There are two types of flamingo species: the lesser flamingo can be distinguished by its deep red carmine bill and pink plumage unlike the greater Flamingo which has a bill with a black tip.

But flamingo are not the only avian attraction, also present are two large fish eating birds, pelicans and cormorants. Despite the tepid and alkaline waters, a diminutive fish, *Tilapia grahami* has flourished after being introduced in the early 1960s. The lake is also rich in other birdlife; there are over 400 resident species on the lake and in the surrounding park. Thousands of both little grebes and white winged black terns are frequently seen as are stilts, avocets, ducks, and in the European winter the migrant waders. It is of course not only about the birds, Hippo, reedbuck, waterbuck, black rhino, giraffe, lion, leopard and bushbuck inhabit the area.

JOINING THE TRIP

Clients Joining the Trip in the UK

Duration: 9 days
Depart Saturday 9th January, return Sunday 17th January

Flight details

If you have booked a flight inclusive trip, your flight and ticketing information will be sent to you around 3 weeks before departure. Please check your ticket details for your baggage allowance. We use the services of a number of scheduled airlines – details of your flights will be posted with your invoice, however if you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact us.

Flight Route – Customers who choose to book a flight inclusive trip with us will be flying directly to Nairobi from the UK.

Arrival – on arrival in Nairobi, Kenya, you will be met by an Explorers representative who will show you to your vehicles for the transfer to the Masai Mara

Clients Joining the Tour in Nairobi (Land Only)

Duration: 8 days
Start: Sunday 10^h January

Clients will meet the rest of the party at Nairobi Airport.

Final Joining Instructions for All clients

Around 3 weeks before departure, we will send you your final joining instructions. These will detail all routine and emergency contact details, as well as names, addresses and contact details of the hotels in which you will be staying.

OUR ITINERARY



Day 1 of our itinerary is Sunday 10th January

Day 1 Start Nairobi, Kenya

Those on the group flight will arrive first thing on Sunday morning. Jonas, who will be your guide throughout your time in Kenya, will meet the group for the first time. He will provide a small briefing and breakfast before your departure for the great plains of the Masai Mara.

Day 2 and 3 Masai Mara

2 full days of game drives in the Masai Mara. There will be an opportunity to go on game walks, early morning and night drives as well as observe the African skies with John Mason who will treat us to a live planetarium show.

Day 4 Masai Mara / Overnight Naivasha

After breakfast you will head out of the reserve to Naivasha for lunch and a free afternoon. There are various activities for you to participate in during the afternoon. Overnight in Naivasha.

Day 5 Lake Nakuru

We will make an early start for Lake Nauru and arrive in time for lunch before enjoying our first game drive in the Lake Nakuru national park, one of the world's premier destinations for bird watching as well as game viewing. This evening John Mason will provide the group with an eclipse briefing before heading to bed for an early night in preparation for an early start the following morning.

Days 6 Eclipse day / Lake Nakuru

We will rise early for a quick breakfast before heading to our eclipse viewing location, on the shore of Lake Nakuru. We will get a chance to see an annular eclipse not only in a stunning location but also its effect on local wildlife which will be at its most active first thing in the morning.

We will then enjoy leisurely game drives or a game walk that afternoon before heading back to camp for a well earned dinner and relaxing evening.

Day 7 Lake Nakuru / Nairobi

Morning in Lake Nakuru before making our way back to Nairobi. Those flying with Explorers will overnight in Nairobi before heading back to the UK.

Days 8 Nairobi / London

The Explorers group flight will depart that morning, heading back to the UK.

Please Note – this itinerary is strictly provisional at this stage. It may not be possible to follow the itinerary exactly as stated in our brochure, on our website or in our Expedition Notes. This can be for example due to weather, political or logistical reasons. Where we have to make changes to the itinerary, we make the best alternative arrangements possible under the circumstances. We would ask you to keep a flexible outlook and remember that any changes are all part of the experience.

USEFUL KENYA TRAVEL INFORMATION

Kenya Weather

There are two rainy seasons in Kenya. The short rains normally occur from late October through November and the long rains from March through to early June. Rain usually falls in the late afternoon preceded by bright, sunny and fresh days. In the western Rift Valley, western Kenya and the Lake Victoria region there is no dry season although rainfall is at its lowest in **January** and **February**.

Local Time - GMT + 3 hrs

Language – Kiswahili / English

Kenya Currency Information

The value of the **Kenyan Shilling** fluctuates so it's best to check in with a currency converter just before you go. Traveler's checks (US dollars) are probably the best and safest way to take money with you, otherwise US dollars will suffice and are most practical when out on Safari. Don't change too much money at one time and use the banks not the money changers if possible. Major credit cards are only accepted at the more expensive shops and hotels.

Kenya Shilling banknotes are issued in the following denominations: 50, 100, 200, 500, and 1000 Shillings; smaller values are issued as coins with 1 Shilling = 100 Cents. Notes of 10 and 20 Shillings are being replaced by coins.

Day to Day Costs

All your meals will be provided whilst out on Safari, however lunch and dinner in the hotel on the last night is not included in the costs as well as alcoholic drinks whilst in camp. Some dollars may also prove useful if you wish to visit a Mara village or make an excursion whilst in the Lake Nakuru game reserve.

Tipping

Tipping is important to supplement the income of those who will be looking after you whilst out on Safari. Although local staff are fairly paid and looked after tipping is part of their way of life.

Passports and Visas

All nationalities require a full passport that must be valid for 6 months beyond the intended length of stay.

UK nationals must obtain a visa before traveling to Kenya. We recommend using the services of Travcour (UK) who can be contacted on www.travcour.com or Tel: 020 7223 5295. They will advise the cost of the Visa and how you can apply. You will need to complete an application form and provide a passport photo and your passport. The visa is valid for 3 months from the date of issue.

Vaccinations and Health

Travel health can often be something people forget about before going away, but a little preparation and knowledge can go a long way to help you stay fit and healthy while abroad. We recommend that you be vaccinated against typhoid, polio, tetanus and hepatitis A. Malaria is Widespread throughout this area, and anti-malaria tablets will be needed. Please consult your doctor or vaccination centre for up to date information. The above information can change at short notice; as we are not qualified to answer all your questions in regards to travel health we strongly recommend you contact your GP or a Travel Health Clinic at least 8 weeks prior to departure for up-to-date information.

Insurance

It is a condition of joining this trip that you must be insured against medical and personal accident risks. We offer comprehensive AXA travel insurance please contact us for a quote.

Tour Leaders and Guides

Throughout your time in Kenya you will be accompanied and guided by Jonas and his team as well as John Mason who travels on all our trips.

Your Accommodation

Whilst in the Masai Mara we will be staying in luxury tents in the Sarova Mara Camp for our one night in Naivasha we will stay in Naivasha Sopa Lodge. The Sarova Lion Hill Lodge will be our home whilst in the Lake Nakuru game reserve and finally we will be based at the Sarova Pan Afric Hotel in Nairobi.

Food and Meals

All meals are provided on this trip apart from lunch and dinner at the hotel on the last day.

Vegetarians: Please let us know when booking if you are a vegetarian so that we can make the necessary arrangements for you whilst on this trip.