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trail riding worldwide

Offbeat Safaris

Weight limit: 95kg

Nearest airport: Nairobi

7 days / 6 nights / 7 riding days



Head to the wilds of Kenya to join this unrivalled mobile horseback safaris amongst big game. Riding up close to elephants, lions and buffalo, or galloping with wildebeest and zebra are exhilarating experiences. If you are a rider, there is no better way to see Kenya than from the back of a horse. This safari takes you across the Masai Mara, Laikipia, and Amboseli, over 5-10

days with a mobile tented camp that moves with you, this is the epitome of what a true wildlife safari is all about.

The Riding

The riding style is relaxed with loose reins and neck reining. All paces are used where the terrain permits including gallop. The terrain varies from thick bush, gullies and rocky hillsides but encompasses many wide open plains filled with game, ideal for faster riding. Riders are all given a full safety briefing and strongly encouraged to wear riding helmets. There are some long days in the saddle - up to seven hours, but equally a few days where you have the option to have the morning or day off and ride in the jeeps.

Guides & Group sizes

You'll be guided by experienced and qualified guides who will escort you through this big game country. The group size is between 2-12.



Horses and Tack

All the safari horses at this destination are thoroughbred and thoroughbred cross and have excellent stamina as a result. The standard of horses on this safari is well above average for Kenya and is a key point of this safari. The horses are all kind natured and very bush wise, sure footed, experienced safari horses. There is an excellent selection with 70 horses being available for the 12 riders, varying in size from 14.3hh to 16hh. All the horses are responsive and fit, great care is taken to match horses and riders and riders are welcome to swap horses throughout the week.

You will ride in English General Purpose Wintec saddles and leather saddles. Some Australian stock saddles are available on request. Seat savers are available and bridles are mainly fitted with snaffle bits. Saddle bags are provided to carry small items required en-route such as sunscreen, cameras and film or a sweater. Bottled water is also provided.



Level of riding and fitness

As you are riding with big game, competent riders with a secure seat and fit enough to enjoy up to seven hours in the saddle are required. There is no specific age limit and children who are fit and competent riders are welcome with their parents. The riding is at all paces and over uneven terrain so experience of riding out is required. The safari is fully supported by grooms and horse

handlers as well as two guides and help is always on hand for mounting, stirrups etc. A back up jeep can be called by radio at any time and the guides are experienced and armed for your safety. There have been no serious incidents giving rise to injury with mounted riders and game in the history of this horseback safari due to all the precautions taken.

Accommodation & Dining

You'll be staying in light mobile safari tented camps. The camp includes a mess tent for meals and spacious 9ft x 10ft sleeping tents with camp beds, mattresses, sheets & blankets. Towels, soap and torches are provided. There is a solar lamp in each tent, with hurricane lamps outside at night time. There is a long drop loo tent for every tent and hot safari bucket showers are always available.

All meals are freshly prepared and you will enjoy English breakfasts, light lunches and 3-course dinners. You'll often have picnics and eat in the open air if the weather is good. Ice cubes are always on hand. Bread is baked daily on open fires and your chefs are extremely good. All house wines, beers and spirits are included, except champagne.



On safari your accommodation is in large walk in tents with twin beds. The beds have mattresses and are made up with good quality bed linen and duvets. There is an ensuite short drop toilet for each tent and a hot shower. Each tent has a verandah section with chairs for you

to enjoy the view in quiet. Meals are served at the table laid with table cloths and on china. You are served by fully trained waiters and meals are 3-5 courses.



Meals can be served under the stars, in the shade of huge acacia trees or in a communal tent if the weather requires. Meals are all freshly prepared on site each day. Bread is baked in a portable oven, quiches, salads, beef and lamb are all meticulously prepared. The food on this particular safari is of an above average standard. Drinks are included in the cost, from aperitif's to wine with the meals and a good selection is available, even including ice in this remote wilderness. There is a laundry service, so you don't need to pack too many clothes.

Vegetarian or other dietary requirements can be accommodated with advanced notice.

Itinerary

Day 1

You will either be collected at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport and transferred to Wilson Airport for your flight to Naboisho. It is a beautiful flight passing over the fertile Kikuyu Highlands before reaching the Great Rift Valley. You will fly across the volcano studded floor of the Rift before reaching the Loita Hills and Naboisho Air strip. You will be met by your guide and there will be an hour's drive to camp. We reach our camp in a grove of acacia trees by a small

stream at the southern edge of the Loita Plains. Lunch will be served and you will have a little time to relax before meeting your horses and setting off on your first gentle evening ride.

Day 2

After an early morning ride we will come back to camp for a light breakfast and then set out for a game drive and walk up a hill nearby called Oloiburmut returning to camp for a brunch/lunch. There will be time for a siesta and at around 4pm we will drive up the hill to visit the local Masai Village.

Day 3

Our first moving day and you'll leave camp in good time as it is the longest ride of the trip covering nearly 50kms. You will meet the vehicles to break the ride with a picnic breakfast and lunch along the way. Riding across the rolling open plains the game generally becomes more plentiful as we approach the Mara ecosystem. You can see herds of zebra, topi, giraffe, wildebeest, gazelle and there is a good chance of seeing elephant and buffalo before reaching our camp on the edge of the Masai Mara Game Reserve on the Olare Orok lugga late afternoon.

Day 4

A full day of morning and evening rides from camp with the option of driving into the game park for some good photographic opportunities. From the landrovers we can get much closer to lion, elephant and buffalo than we are able to do from the horses.

Day 5

The second moving day; you'll head west across the Mara plains and reach the Mara River on the Park boundary. You'll hopefully ford the river (unless in complete flood) at one of the famous wildebeest crossings and then head south-west across the Mara Triangle where you can have a picnic lunch before ascending the Soit Olololol Escarpment to reach camp in a forest glade overlooking the whole Mara ecosystem.

Day 6

Today we will descend the escarpment again and ride through the Triangle once more to the same wildebeest crossing on the river. Riding to the north west and after a picnic lunch you'll find the final campsite set up on the banks of the Mara River. Close by there are some hippo pools and their grunting at night is a special feature of this camp.

Day 7

With a full day camped on the river you'll follow the same morning and evening ride routine and often take the opportunity to cross the river close to the hippo which is an exhilarating

highlight. A walk or drive will be on offer after breakfast, providing another good opportunity to take photographs.

Day 8

Enjoy a final early morning ride before breakfast and after saying goodbye to your horses we will drive to the airstrip to meet your flight back to Nairobi at around 11am in time to do some shopping in town and relax before your evening flight or in good time to reach your onward destination.



International flights & Airport transfers

You will either be collected from Jomo Kenyatta International Airport or if you have arrived earlier, from your Nairobi hotel, and transferred to Wilson Airport for your 10am flight to Mara North in the Masai Mara.

What to bring

Layers of clothing - this is the best option as mornings and evenings can be chilly but the middle of the day can be very hot. Safari clothing should ideally be in muted safari colours such as beige and khaki.

- Riding hat
- Jodhpurs/riding trousers
- Half chaps and gloves
- Riding boots
- Long sleeved shirt
- T-Shirts
- Jumper/fleece
- Lightweight waterproof jacket
- Evening/day wear
- Hat/cap
- Comfortable shoes/boots/trainers for walking
- Swimming costume
- Holiday reading
- Binoculars
- Camera and charger
- Toiletries
- Sun block
- Sunglasses
- Mosquito repellent
- Copy of your passport/visa/travel insurance

Please note that there is a 15kg weight limit for the light aircraft transfers and luggage should be packed in soft bags - not hard suitcases.

Climate

Due to the altitude (Nairobi is at 6500 feet) Kenya has a pleasant temperate climate year round. There are rains in April/May and again in November/early December. June, July and August can be a little colder particularly at night and July can herald some cloud cover which is not unpleasant for riding.

Health

For health and vaccine recommendations, please consult your healthcare provider at least 8 weeks before your trip.

Country specific information can also be found at the National Travel Health Network and Centre website: <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>.

Travel documents

For entry requirements to Kenya for UK citizens, please visit the Foreign Travel Advice website: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/kenya/entry-requirements>

For any other nationalities, please contact your local embassy to check entry requirements.

Having the correct travel documents is entirely your responsibility.

Currency & Tipping

This safari is all inclusive although you may wish to have some local currency available for any souvenirs. Tips can be paid in dollars, we recommend a tip of US\$20 per day of the safari.

Cancellation policy

Payment & Cancellation Terms

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Holidays are confirmed with a 20% non-refundable deposit. The full balance is due 56 days before the start date.

If you cancel your booking less than 56 days before the start date of your trail we are entitled to receive full payment, less refunds as follows:

42 days or more before booking date - 50%

30 days or more - 30%

less than 30 days - nil

Book with confidence – Covid Guarantee:

If the ride operator is closed or you are unable to travel due to lockdown:

1/ The deposit is reissued as a rebooking voucher to rebook anytime.

2/ Any balance payment will be refunded to you in full within 1 week of departure date.

Insurance

All saddletravel.com customers are required to take out appropriate travel insurance that covers horse riding and holiday cancellation. Proof of insurance details will be required during the booking process.



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