

BirdVentures



14 Day Guided Ornithological Safari

- Day 1** Arrive Nairobi, met & transferred to Hotel, optional visit to National Museum, 1 o/n Safari Park Hotel
- Day 2** Safari briefing & drive to Meru National Park 2 o/n Leopard Rock Lodge
- Day 3** Full day exploring Meru National Park
- Day 4** AM Meru Park, PM drive to Mount Kenya, birdwalk, 1 o/n Mountain Lodge
- Day 5** Early breakfast & drive to Aberdare Mountains, picnic lunch on the moorlands, pm drive to Lake Nakuru National Park 1 o/n Lion Hill Lodge
- Day 6** Full day exploring Lake Nakuru Park, 1 o/n Lion Hill Lodge
- Day 7** Drive to Lake Baringo & cross by boat to Island Camp, 1 o/n Island Camp
- Day 8** Boat crossing to mainland & drive to Lake Bogoria with picnic lunch, pm return to Lake Baringo, 1 o/n Island Camp
- Day 9** Drive to Kakamega, Western Kenya, arriving late afternoon, 1 o/n Rondo Retreat
- Day 10** Spend full day exploring Kakamega Rainforest, 1 o/n Rondo Retreat
- Day 11** Scenic drive past Lake Victoria into Western Mara, 1 o/n Kichwa Tembo
- Day 12** Full day exploring western Mara eco-system, 1 o/n Kichwa Tembo
- Day 13** Traverse Mara plains eastwards to explore eastern Mara eco-system, 1 o/n Siana Springs Camp
- Day 14** Early breakfast & game drive across Mara plains, returning to Nairobi via Rift Valley

Day 1 - Nairobi

Day 1

- Arrive Nbo
- Meet & Greet at JKIA
- Transfer to hotel
- Safari Park Hotel
- Meal Plan: Bed & Breakfast



You will be met by an Origins Safaris representative and transferred to the Boulevard Hotel, opposite the National Museum of Kenya. The Museum is well worth a visit – it has a fascinating bird collection and formidable array of fossils and other exhibits and artifacts.

Conceived over 50 years ago, the **Safari Park Hotel and Casino** has grown from a British Army officer's retreat during the Colonial periods to what is now a sophisticated hotel and entertainment resort. Set in 64 acres of beautiful lush gardens and waterfalls, the Hotel combines traditional African styles of architecture and art with modern technology, comfort and ambience. The hotel has 30 deluxe suites and 174 luxury rooms.

All the rooms are spacious with hand carved four-poster beds and lavish marble bathrooms . There are a range of restaurants to cater for all tastes Chinese, French, Italian, Japanese, Indian and Continental, as well as a restaurant and entertainment pavilion serving traditional African '*nyama choma*' (roasted meat) .



Nairobi is a bustling city with numerous attractions. It's central feature is Uhuru Park – an open, public park bordering the city centre. In town some of the original 1930's architecture remains – such as the neo-classical McMillan Library, built in 1930, which memorializes Sir Northrup McMillan, who settled in Kenya in 1905 as one of the earliest pioneer farmers of the area. He later became a prominent figure in the city. Considered the father of the nation, Jomo Kenyatta served as the country's first president. His mausoleum, unveiled in 1968, includes a fine statue of the historically significant Kenyan after whom Nairobi's international airport is named.

In the suburb of Karen, is the Karen Blixen Coffee Gardens and Museum, former home of author Isak Dineson whose book 'Out of Africa' has launched a thousand safaris... The Coffee Gardens bar is a favourite local watering hole with live jazz most evenings and a popular evening out.

Also in the Karen/Langata suburb is the Giraffe Feeding Centre a sanctuary for orphaned giraffe that roam the grounds of the so-called Giraffe Manor. And of course Nairobi's principal attraction is the Nairobi National Park – a successful Rhino Sanctuary and host to plentiful plains game and their big cat predators bordering the city itself.

Days 2 & 3 – Meru National Park

Day 2

- **0730 Breakfast & safari briefing**
- **Drive to Meru National Park**
- **Accommodation: Leopard Rock**
- **Meal Plan: Breakfast, picnic lunch, dinner**

Day 3

- **Early breakfast**
- **Full day exploring park**
- **Picnic lunch**
- **Dinner at Bandas**
- **Accommodation: : Leopard Rock Lodge**
- **Meal Plan: Full board**



Your safari starts in Nairobi at 0730 am with an early morning breakfast & briefing at the hotel. Your specialist ornithologist guide will brief you and accompany the safari throughout. We depart for a day's drive through Kenya's central highlands and eastwards to Meru National Park.

The scenic drive takes you through a range of eco-systems, from the lush farmlands of central Kenya to the dry north-eastern border country. On arrival in Meru National Park you have time to stretch our legs and take a first look round this beautiful dry, balmy wilderness with over 500 species of birds recorded here including the smallest bird of prey, the Pygmy Falcon. On your second full day here you have time to explore the incredible diversity of this lesser visited but hugely rewarding park.



Meru National Park: This wild and beautiful wilderness, beloved of the late George Adamson and his wife Joy, straddles the equator, bisected by 13 rivers and numerous mountain-fed streams. Ranging from 1000 to 3000 feet altitude it has diverse scenery from woodlands on the slopes of the Nyambeni Mountain Range, north east of Mount Kenya, to wide open arid plains dotted with doum palms and baobabs.

Over 300 species of birds have been recorded here including the Peter's Finfoot which inhabits the Murera and Ura Rivers, the Pel's fishing Owl and many varieties of Kingfisher, Roller, Bee-Eater, Starling and Weaver birds.



Leopard Rock Lodge, Meru National Park: Within this most famous park there is one of the best lodges in heart of Born Free George and Joy Adamson's country.

The magnificent lodge offers altogether the real wilderness and a luxurious style of life. You will discover the mysterious river that crosses the Lodge and its hippos, crocodiles and many birds of various kinds – a beckoning river to baboons, buffalos, gazelles, you can see leopards, rhino, lions, elephants, and giraffes. The cottages with their natural ventilation are an exclusive luxury with Lamu style furniture.



Day 4 – Mount Kenya

Day 4

- **Early breakfast**
- **AM Meru Park**
- **Picnic Lunch on slopes of Mt Kenya**
- **PM escorted walk**
- **Overnight: Mountain Lodge**
- **Meal Plan: Full board**

After a morning spent in Meru National Park we take a picnic lunch and head off to the forested slopes of **Mount Kenya**. After lunch on the slopes of Mount Kenya in the afternoon we drive to our lodge, arriving in time for a birdwalk along the riverine forests where Black Duck, Hartlaub's Turaco, Crowned Hornbill, Paradise and up to eight species of sunbird may be found.



Mount Kenya/Aberdare eco-system: Kenya's highest mountains, snow-covered peaks, fantastic views and montane forest eco-system with lush bamboo forest leading into montane forest. The lower slopes are covered with dry upland forest leading to true montane forest at 2,000 metres. On the upper shoulders of the Mountain the forest gives way to alpine moorlands with giant lobelia and other endemic alpine flora.

The Mountain has great symbolism locally: for the Kikuyu tribe it is the home of the Supreme Being: Ngai, a name also used by the Maasai tribes. In Kikuyu the Mountain is known as Kere Nyaga: Mountain of Brightness. For the Kamba tribe it is Ki Nya (said to be the origins of the country's name) meaning Place of the Ostrich – considered a messenger of Ngai by the Kamba and Meru tribes.

Mountain Lodge, Mount Kenya: At 7,200 feet on the slopes of Mount Kenya, Mountain Lodge is ringed by a dense rain forest which comes alive at dusk: game viewing throughout the evening and night includes Elephant, Buffalo, Rhino and Waterbuck.



Connected to the lodge is a specially constructed viewing lookout offering spectacular close views of the wildlife at the waterhole.

The lodge is a comfortable 42 room stone lodge, each bedroom has a private shower and toilet and a spacious verandah with wonderful views of the rocky peaks of Mount Kenya.

Days 5 & 6 – Aberdares & Lake Nakuru

Day 5

- **Early breakfast**
- **AM drive to Aberdare Mountains**
- **Picnic lunch on the moorlands**
- **PM drive to Lake Nakuru National Park**
- **Accommodation: Lion Hill Lodge**
- **Meal Plan: Breakfast, picnic lunch, dinner**

Day 6

- **Early breakfast**
- **Full day exploring park**
- **Picnic lunch**
- **Dinner at Lodge**
- **Accommodation: Lion Hill Lodge**
- **Meal Plan: Full board**



Early breakfast is followed by a morning drive to fresher, cooler climes on the slopes of the Aberdare Mountains and upwards through the numerous vegetation zones of Cedar Forests, Bamboo and orchid/epiphyte festooned Hagenia trees and onto the meteorological station at 10,000 ft and on to the unique Afro-alpine moorland some thousand feet above where endemic plants such as Lobelia, Groundsel and Senecio all perfectly adapted for these unique climatic conditions, experiencing both summertime and wintertime temperatures in a single 24 hour period. After a picnic lunch on the Moorlands, we depart for the Great Rift Valley arriving in time for lunch.

We spend the afternoon birding around the shores of the Lake Nakuru. On our second day we drive across to the far end of Lake Nakuru National Park with a picnic lunch for a full day's uninterrupted birding in

this fascinating eco-system, renowned for its birdlife and as one of Kenya's most successful Rhino Sanctuaries.

Lake Nakuru: world famous for, and created a National Park to protect the stunning flocks of lesser Flamingo attracted to this beautiful soda lake year round. Its birdlife is world renowned, a beacon for leading ornithologists, scientists and wildlife film-makers. .

The park spans an attractive range of wooded and bush grassland around the lake, offering wide ecological diversity from the lake itself to Acacia woodland fringed with rocky escarpments and sheer cliffs



Lion Hill Lodge: Situated in the heart of Kenya's Rift Valley is Lion Hill Lodge, nestling on the banks of one of East Africa's most famous soda lakes, Lake Nakuru. Avid bird watchers can feast on the spectacular display of its famous flamingo residents. Lion Hill Lodge offers 64 chalet style rooms and enjoys a unique vantage point overlooking the lake and the distant hills.

Lion Hill also has one honeymoon suite and two luxury suites. There is an attractive bar terrace and meals are served in the Flamingo Restaurant. Every evening there is entertainment from local tribal dancers and drummers.



Day 7+8– Lakes Baringo & Bogoria

Day 7

- **Early breakfast**
- **AM drive to Lake Baringo**
- **Boat crossing to island**
- **Picnic Lunch**
- **PM optional nature walk or boat excursion**
- **Accommodation: Island Camp**
- **Meal Plan: Full board**

Day 8

- **Breakfast**
- **Boat crossing to mainland**
- **Drive to Lake Bogoria**
- **Picnic lunch at hot springs**
- **PM explore Bogoria**
- **Return to Baringo & boat to island**
- **Dinner in camp**
- **Accommodation: Island Camp**
- **Meal Plan: Full board**



We leave after an early breakfast for a drive through the Great Rift Valley to Lake Baringo. In the afternoon we take a boat ride to Island Camp: a delightful rustic tented camp nestling on the island cliffs and classed over many years as one of our visitors favorite places in Kenya.

The walks here take you through amazing volcanic landscapes, initially it appears barren to the eye then the wealth of birdlife and flora becomes apparent with some excellent sightings on the main island and the other smaller islands which you can cruise by boat. Scops owls and Verreaux's eagle owls are resident in the swamp area to the north of the lake – a visit here to the local Njemp village is worthwhile.



Lake Baringo: a freshwater lake in the Great Rift Valley renowned for its enormous variety of bird species, crocodiles and incredible changing colours. The Rift Valley forms part of the Gregorian Rift: the world's largest fault, 2,500 feet deep, 30 kilometres wide, 2,500 kilometres long.

On your second, full day here you cross Lake Baringo by boat and take to the road for a short trip to spend the day viewing the bird species and other wildlife which frequents the alkaline lake and hot springs of

Lake Bogoria.

We make a day of it with a picnic lunch overlooking the hot springs of **Lake Bogoria:** The lake is spectacular. A seasonal haunt of Flamingo attracted by the vivid blue-green algae. Fantastic birding with 135 species of birds recorded, with many waterbirds dwelling in the papyrus swamp along the northern shoreline.

The surrounding bushed grasslands are home to a number of animals including the rare Greater Kudu, Buffalo, Zebra, Impala, Dik Dik, Baboon sheltering in the Acacia-Ficus woodland and rugged cliffs on the southern shores



Days 9 & 10 – Kakamega Rainforest

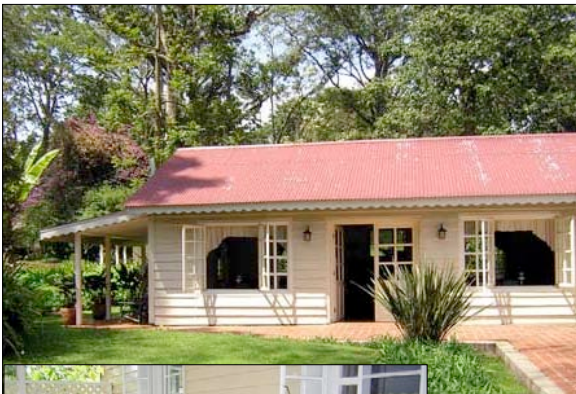
Day 9

- **Early breakfast**
- **AM drive across Tugen Hills & Kerio Valley**
- **Picnic lunch en route**
- **Late afternoon arrive Kakamega Forest**
- **Dinner at Guest House**
- **Accommodation: Rondo Retreat**
- **Meal Plan: Breakfast, picnic lunch & dinner**

Day 10

- **Breakfast**
- **AM explore Kakamega Rainforest**
- **Lunch at the Guest House**
- **PM Walk in Forest**
- **Dinner at the guest house**
- **Accommodation: Rondo Retreat**
- **Meal Plan: Full board**

You leave after an early breakfast for a full day's scenic drive over the Tugen Hills, through the Kerio Valley and Serikwa plateau and finally onto Kakamega Forest.



You stay at Rondo Retreat just inside the Forest. Originally a respite retreat for missionaries, this delightful haven is now open to other visitors: the peaceful gardens are an ornithologist's dream, alive with different species of bird, including Great Blue Turacos, Hornbills, and Joyful Loveleaves. We spend our days exploring Kakamega Forest National Reserve.

Rondo Retreat: built originally by a sawmiller in the 1920s for his wife who asked for her home to be the base of "the biggest tree in the forest." She got her wish the Elgon Olive still stands in the gardens. It has been a youth centre, an orphanage and the setting for the film *The Kitchen Toto*. Today it is designed as a place of retreat and refreshment.



Just inside Kakamega Forest, the peaceful gardens are an ornithologist's dream, alive with different species of bird, including Great Blue Turacos, Hornbills, and Joyful Loveleaves. Accommodation is four double rooms in the main house, four doubles in Turaco Cottage, two double in Colobus Cottage and one double and one triple in the Founder's Cottage. The public rooms are furnished with beautiful antiques and local painting, crafts and fabrics..



Kakamega Forest: The eastern most remnant of the great west African rain forests that once stretched the width of Africa. With an altitude ranging from 4,000 to 7,000 ft the sheer size and grandeur of the indigenous trees, some over one hundred years old is impressive and includes some of Africa's greatest hard and soft woods. 380 species of plant including rare and colourful orchids; butterflies and snakes and snake-eating birds normally only found in West Africa.

Forest mammals include Bushpig, Grey Duiker, Civet, Suni, Clawless Otters, excellent primate viewing including Black & White Colobus, de Brazza Monkeys, Blue Monkey, Olive Baboon and Red Tailed Monkey as well as fascinating nocturnal game: Ground Pangolin and Porcupines



Days 11 & 12 – West Maasai Mara

Day 11

- **Early breakfast**
- **AM drive past Lake Victoria to Mara**
- **Picnic lunch en route**
- **PM arrive in camp**
- **Dinner at Camp**
- **Accommodation: Kichwa Tembo**
- **Meal Plan: Breakfast, picnic lunch & dinner**

Day 12

- **Breakfast**
- **Full day exploring western Mara eco-system**
- **Dinner in Camp**
- **Accommodation: Kichwa Tembo**
- **Meal Plan: Full board**

We leave Kakamega after an early breakfast for a scenic drive past Lake Victoria and onto the north west boundary of Kenya's famous Maasai Mara National Reserve. We spend our days driving or walking in this amazing eco-system which borders Tanzania's Serengeti Reserve



Maasai Mara National Reserve: The Mara is undoubtedly Africa's finest game viewing areas with over 400 species of birds and a great diversity mammals, insects, spiders, fungi, & plants. An immense array of wildlife, notably large predators; Leopard, Lion, Cheetah, Serval Cat, Spotted Hyenas, Jackals and occasionally the endangered Cape Hunting Dog.

The Maasai Mara is undoubtedly the Jewel in the Crown of East Africa, forever to be associated with vast numbers of game. This is almost Hollywood Africa, grass plains interspersed with *Migunga* and *Croton* thickets, rolling hills and small kopjes, islands in the sea of grass abound. Small rivers feed massive fig trees on their banks. This is the northernmost extension of the Serengeti ecosystem and is a microhabitat in its own right.

Here during the months of July to December you will witness the spectacle of the **Great Migration** of a million and a half Wildebeest and Zebra, with all their attendant carnivores, Lion, Leopard, Cheetah, Hyena and possibly Wild Dog.



The rest of the year is no less exciting as the Lion and Leopard remain resident and are commonly seen hunting plains game that include Thompson and Grants Gazelle, Coke's Hartebeest, Topi, Eland, Waterbuck, great herds of Wildebeest and groups of the ballerina like Impala.

Kichwa Tembo Camp: Meaning "Head of the Elephant" overlooks the vast, game-filled plains, shaded by dense riverine forest and fed by the Sabaringo River, The lodge nestles below the Oloololo (meaning "zigzag" in Swahili) Escarpment of the Rift Valley on the western boundary of the Masai Mara Reserve.

Spacious safari tents afford views over either the magnificent grasslands or the Sabaringo River. The 40 tents have en-suite bathrooms and private verandas.

There is a generously proportioned swimming pool set in lush gardens, from which guests can game-watch while cooling off. Delicious bush breakfasts, cultural visits to Maasai villages, sundowners on the rim of the Great Rift Valley, and dramatic candlelit dinners beside the Mara River can be arranged.



Day 13 – East Maasai Mara



Day 13

- **Early game drive**
- **Breakfast**
- **AM gamedrive across Mara**
- **Lunch at Camp**
- **PM explore Eastern Mara eco-system**
- **Dinner in camp**
- **Accommodation: Siana Springs Tented Camp**
- **Mealplan: Full Board**

Our grand finale is in the eastern Maasai Mara where we can seek Africa's largest bird of prey - the antelope hunter - The Martial Eagle.

Siana Springs:

Siana Springs is situated on the eastern edge of the Masai Mara National Reserve. Built on a site chosen by 1950's game warden Major Lyn Temple-Boreham, this grand-scale tented camp was established in partnership with the neighbouring Maasai, who continue to graze their cattle in harmony with the wildlife.

There are 38 safari-style tents shaded by indigenous trees offering complete privacy in the lush, unspoiled setting. A convivial dining area offers hearty cuisine, while the swimming pool is an irresistible oasis on hot days.



Day 14 – Depart - Nairobi

Day 14

- **Early breakfast**
- **AM game drive**
- **Drive across Rift Valley Floor**
- **Picnic Lunch en route**
- **Late afternoon arrive Nairobi**
- **Optional flight Mara – Nairobi (supplement applies)**

After an early breakfast & morning game drive, return to Nairobi via the Rift Valley. Alternatively book a single flight Mara/Nairobi, departing 1100, arriving 1215. (a small supplement is charged for this option).





Safari Arrangements

Included in the price of your safari

- **ALL accommodation and meals as indicated in this itinerary (meal plan)**
- **Bottled drinking water in all Origins Vehicles and with meals**
- **ALL government hotel taxes and service charges**
- **ALL Land transfers and transport as indicated in the itinerary**
- **ALL National Park, entrance fees & nature walks**
ALL Negotiations and entries to Maasai Tribal Manyattas
- **ALL Origins administrative, development and operational costs**
- **ALL portorage and airport assistance**
- **Incredibly knowledgeable Ornithological Guide (KPSGA Silver Rated)**
- **Temporary Membership of AMREF medical emergency evacuation plan (to Nairobi)**

Not included:

- **International Flights**
- **Visa fees**
- **Beverages**
- **Laundry**
- **Personal expenses/purchases**
- **Tips to bar staff for beverages or room service**
- **Gratuities to driver / guides**

Birdlist



Mount Kenya / Aberdare Specialities

Olive & Bronze-naped Pigeon
Silvery-cheeked Hornbills
Ruppell's Robin Chat
White-starred Forest Robin
Mountain Greenbul
Waller's Starling
Abyssinian Crimsonwing
Tacazze Sunbird
Green-headed Sunbird
Amethyst Sunbird
Black Duck
Hartlaub's Turaco
Crowned Hornbill

Paradise Flycatcher
Giant Kingfisher
Northern Double-collared Sunbird
Collared Sunbird
Long Tailed Widowbird
Thick-billed Seedeater
Verreaux Eagle Owl
Scaly Francolin
Crowned Hornbill
White-browed Crombec
Montane Whiteeye
Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird

Lake Nakuru Specialities

Lesser & Greater Flamingos
Great White Pelican
Black-winged Stilt
Avocet

Narina's Trogon
Arrow-marked Babbler
Red-headed Weaver,
Hilderbrandt's Francolin
Montane and Dusky Nightjar

Lakes Baringo & Bogoria Specialities

Spotted Morning Thrush
Beautiful Sunbird
Grey-headed Bush Shrike
Brown-tailed Rock Chat
Bristle-crowned Starlings
Verreaux Eagle Owl
Spotted Eagle Owl

Northern Red Bishop
Northern Masked Weaver
Goliath Heron
Jackson's & Yellow-billed Hornbills
Dark Chanting Goshawk
Silverbird Fish Eagle
Cliffchats

Kakamega Rainforest Specialities

Great Blue Turaco
Emerald Cuckoo
Blue-headed Bee-Eater
Black & White Casqued Hornbill
Black-billed Weavers
Vieillot's Black Weavers

Chubb Cisticola
Joyfull Greenbul
Luhder's Bushshrike
Turner's Eremomela
Uganda Woodland Warbler
Honeyguide Greenbul
Yellow-bellied Wattle-eye
Chestnut Wattle-eye.

Maasai Mara Specialities

Open-billed Storks
Temminck's Courser
Yellow-throated Sandgrouse
Usambiro Barbet
Denham's Bustard
Tabora Cisticola
Red-fronted Barbet
Paradise Flycatcher
Ashy Flycatcher

Black Flycatcher
Blue Flycatcher
Red-throated Tit
Saddle Billed Stork
White-headed Vulture
Ruppell's Griffon Vulture
Egyptian Vulture
Hooded Vulture

