



## **An Overview ( updated on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022)**

### **PLANNING YOUR HOLIDAY - Budget according to Seasons.**

The parks in Kenya and Tanzania are unique in their own ways with others having more to offer compared to some. Combination of parks is done based on the number of days guests wish to be on safari as well as the mode of transport preferred and the seasons we choose to travel.

### **The main seasons in Kenya are as below:**

#### **High season – 05 Jan – 31 March**

Months of January, February and March mark the Green season for heavy rains in the Serengeti. This in turn marks the start of the calving season, where hundreds of thousands of wildebeest and plains game give birth to about 200000 babies. The rains also transforms the landscape into fields of green pastures and flowers, a very beautiful spectacle.

Low season – 01 April – 31 May (excluding Easter period)

Mid-season – 01 – 30 June

#### **Peak season - Migration Season - – 01 July – 31 October**

July to SEPT (Dry Season) is the most expensive time of year for a Great Migration safari, but the wildebeest crossings at the Grumeti river in Tanzania and the Mara river in Kenya are the highlights of the wildebeest migration.

Shoulder season – 01 November – 22 December

Festive/Peak season – 23 December – 04 Jan ( High Season)

Seasons also vary depending on properties with some having their low season extending to end of June while others have their peak season ending in September thus shoulder season starts in October.

e.g. If guests are on a road safari they cannot drive from Samburu/Laikipia/Nanyuki to Masai Mara (its over 10hrs drive) hence would have to break the journey at Lake Naivasha / Lake Nakuru / Lake Elementaita and proceed to Mara the following day.

Subsequently, there is an option for all fly package / combination of Road & air to various destinations within the Mara & Serengeti that can reduce your road travel & makes your journey less tiring and enjoyable.

There are also private conservancies that are offering exclusive high end properties/boutique camps.

The choice of lodge/camp category mainly depends on the guests budget and availability at the time of booking as well as the season.

### **Tanzania has three seasons as below;**

Peak season – 01 Jan – 28 Feb, 26 May – 31 October & 22 – 31 December

High season – 01 – 31 March and 01 Nov – 21 December

Low season – 01 Apr – 25 May

### **Accommodation & Budget**

Another factor that will determine the price of your safari is the camp or lodge that you stay at. Accommodation ranges from budget to luxury. Budget accommodation is by no means sub-par, the only difference being the variety of activities on offer, the level of service (for example, having a private butler) and the overall look and feel of the lodge. We can attest to the quality of every one of the accommodations we suggest in our itineraries, regardless of the level of luxury.

Your length of stay will also affect your safari cost. By tailoring your experience to suit your budget, you'll be able to create a well-rounded experience that will take you as close as you can get to the action.

### **Travel Documents**

- Passport validity – should be valid for at least 6 months after your departure date from Kenya.
- Visa (including any transit visas required)
- Vaccination booklets.
- Covid Vaccination Certificate
- Yellow Fever Vaccination Certificate.

A visa is required to enter Kenya for visitors from most countries. This can be either obtained in advance through the various Embassies/High Commissions abroad, or through an electronic visa application system. Citizens of some countries are exempted for visas, so it is advisable to enquire with us when booking your safari.

The Government of Kenya has implemented an electronic visa application system, known as E-Visa. To obtain an E-Visa you must apply online. For any Visa Assistance please feel free to contact African Escapade representative.

**The official Government of Kenya website for E-visa application is [www.evisa.go.ke](http://www.evisa.go.ke)**

Beware of sites that promise to expedite processing of visas.

E-visas to Kenya are issued directly to applicant's accounts created on [evisa.go.ke](http://evisa.go.ke).

Please be aware that E-Visas are valid for 90 days after the date of approval, therefore do not apply for an E-Visa too far in advance. Kenya is currently waiving visa fees for children aged 15 or younger. ( as on 01<sup>st</sup> January 2023)

### **COVID-19**

**Covid-19 Vaccination certificate** is required when travelling to Kenya and also for travel back home.

### **Airport information**

If you have booked airport transfers with us, your representative will greet you as you exit the Arrivals Hall. Look for the person holding the distinctive **AFRICAN ESCAPADES signboard**. Passengers cannot be met inside secured areas; this includes Immigration, Customs halls and Baggage Claim area. (Note: You can be met at the Baggage Claim area by special arrangement at

an extra fee).

**Note: The Government of Kenya has implemented a ban on plastic bags. The ban applies to “carrier and flat bags,” primarily targeting bags from shops and grocery stores, but also extending to duty-free bags and bubble wrap. If tourists have those types of bags visible while in the airport, they may be confiscated. Bags designed for multiple use, such as zippered cosmetic bags, are not included in the ban.**

On departure our driver/guide will drop you at the parking bay where you will collect a trolley for your luggage before you cross over to your departure terminal.

On departure, please also be aware that large wooden carvings / Artifacts may not be accepted by airlines as cabin baggage as they may not fit in the overhead cabin. Any wooden carvings purchased as souvenirs should be packed in your checked baggage, or packed separately as an additional luggage item.

Complimentary Wi-Fi is available at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (note: not always working!).

### **Climate**

It is often said that Kenya is a cold country with a hot sun, as the blend of high altitudes and tropical sun make for a unique and variable climate. This should be kept in mind when packing for your visit. Both temperatures and climate can vary drastically from region to region and even throughout a single day. Basically you should come prepared for hot, cold, wet and dusty conditions.

### **Health**

**Malaria** – It is endemic in some parts of the country (Coast, Western Kenya, Samburu, etc) and therefore a course of Malaria medication should be taken as per the instructions from your home doctor. You should continue the medication after leaving the country.

**Water** – You are advised against drinking tap water. A safer alternative is bottled mineral water, which can easily be obtained at hotels/lodges or from supermarkets in town centers en route. Most hotels provide complimentary bottled water in the rooms.

**Food** – As do all countries Kenya has its own authentic cuisine. However, it also offers a wide choice of restaurants and foods from other countries of the world. Kenya has a large variety of tropical fruits all year round. Most hotels will cater for special dietary needs – do let us know so we can notify them in advance.

Most camps, lodges or hotels cater specifically to tourists and serve Western-style food, ranging in standard, but generally are excellent. Game lodges tend to offer a daily set menu with a limited selection, so it is advisable to have your tour operator specify in advance if you are a vegetarian or have other specific dietary requirements. First-time visitors to Africa might take note that most game lodges in and around the national parks have isolated locations, and driving within the parks is neither permitted nor advisable after dark, so that there is no realistic alternative to eating at your lodge.

**Hospitals** – Nairobi and Mombasa, which are the major tour starting and finishing points, have several good specialized hospital facilities which can cater for international clients. Where emergency evacuation is required to Nairobi/Mombasa the Flying Doctors Service is at hand

24hours a day (Note: prior membership required, details available on request).

**Insurance:** It is always advisable to travel with overseas Medical Insurance.

**Sun** – The amount of time spent in the sun should be limited as the tropical sun is strong. At coast the cool ocean breeze can often be deceptive. To avoid dehydration and sunburn you are encouraged to take in lots of fluids such as mineral water, juices, etc. and to apply high SPF sunscreen.

### **Currency and Banking**

The currency of Kenya is the Kenyan Shilling (KES; symbol KSh) = 100 cents. Notes are in denominations of KSh1,000, 500, 200, 100 and 50. Coins are in denominations of KSh20, 10 and 5. Residents may import up to KES 500,000 and must declare if currencies exceeding US \$10,000. Non-residents may import local and foreign currencies without restrictions but amounts exceeding US \$10,000 must be declared.

You can exchange foreign money into Kenya Shillings at banks and forex bureau, which are located the airports and in towns and cities. Credit cards are generally accepted in hotels/lodges/camps and in city shops. Banks are usually open from 0900hrs to 1500hrs but the ones at the airports are usually open 24hrs. The exchange rates fluctuate and may differ slightly.

ATMs are common especially in major tourist destinations.

Mastercard and Visa Credit Cards are widely accepted; American Express and Diners Club less so. Major hotels accept payment by credit card, as do major safari companies, travel agencies and restaurants.

Very few banks or foreign exchange bureaus accept travellers cheques; when they do, they charge high commissions.

### **Phones**

Cellphone coverage is widespread and SIM cards and pay-as-you-go (pre-paid) top-up cards from the two main operators, Safaricom and Airtel, are inexpensive and widely available. If you are travelling from India you may check the best suitable plans available with your service provider.

### **Time**

There is little variance in sunset and sunrise times, which are approximately 1840hrs and 0620hrs respectively. The time in Kenya is 3 hours ahead of GMT. **ie : 2.30 Hrs behind IST**

### **Tipping/Gratuities**

Our driver/guides are well experienced and knowledgeable. They have the special responsibility to look after the client. They take pride in their work and will do all they can to make your safari enjoyable and memorable. It is customary at the end of the safari to show appreciation by tipping your driver/guide. The guidelines for tipping are USD 8 - 10 per person per day (depending on the size of your party). For hotel staff a token of appreciation may also be extended depending on the service received. Some lodges/camps have a general tipping box (to be shared by all staff) at the reception. However tipping is left to your discretion.

### **Language**

Although there are over 40 different dialects spoken in Kenya, with Kiswahili being the national

language, most people are able to communicate in English.

### **Luggage**

If you are traveling extensively throughout the country ensure that you bring suitable luggage that is able to withstand plenty of handling and dusty conditions. Note that on charter/scheduled flights to the game parks, baggage allowance is limited to 15kgs per person, ideally in soft bags.

Please ensure you have adequate travel insurance to cover any loss/damage to your luggage during your safari.

### **Clothing**

Cotton, linen dresses, light slacks, short-sleeved shirts are recommended. You will need a pullover/cardigan and a fleece /jacket as night and early morning game drives can be cold. Special safari clothes can be bought in local shops at reasonable prices (we can give you some suggestions if required). Animals see mostly in black and white so avoid those colours for day time clothing. Neutral tones of clothing from green, blue, khaki brown are recommended. Avoid bringing delicate clothing as most laundry on safari is done by hand.

If you are visiting a luxury lodge, pack a nice set of clothes for dinner is recommended.

Comfortable footwear is important. We recommend trainers rather than actual hiking boots which are heavy. A pair of flip flops for cooling off in the heat of the day is an added advantage. Smart casual wear is generally accepted in most hotels and lodges for meals. Do not forget swimwear, sunglasses, hat or scarf for protection against sun and dust. Remember that the tropical sun is strong and burns skin quickly. Wide-brimmed hats are preferable to caps for sun protection. Both sunglasses and good quality sunscreen (rated SPF30 or higher) should be used.

### **Recommended Packing List**

#### **Clothing**

- Soft hold all type bag (not hard cases) and padlock
- Shorts
- Long sleeved shirt/ T-shirts
- Lightweight trousers - 3/4 length trousers / Track pants
- T-shirts
- Long sleeved shirt for evening
- Skirt / Trousers for evening
- Warm jersey / Fleece
- Lightweight jacket
- Waterproof Jackets ( light weight)
- Comfortable Walking Shoes
- Rafting shoes/ flip-flops
- Sun hat / cap
- Swimsuit

#### **Miscellaneous**

- Malaria pills if travelling to a malaria prone area
- Personal medication and mini first aid kit
- Sun screen
- Reading book/journal
- Insect Repellent

- Binoculars
- Camera, Batteries and Memory Card
- Head torch/torch
- Sun glasses
- Toiletries
- Day pack for camera, sunblock etc.
- Zip lock bags for sunblock etc. to prevent spillage

### **Shopping**

Bargaining while shopping is a way of life in Kenya. Visitors may be hesitant to try it, but in the market place it is not only acceptable but also expected. However, malls and hotel shops generally have fixed prices so bargaining is not appreciated.

### **On Safari**

- **Carry your passport in person** as it will be required at check-in at the hotels and at all the parks you will be visiting
- Protect your camera and lenses from dust.
- A good quality pair of binoculars is essential for game viewing. Please bring your own as most hotels do not provide them due to Covid protocols.
- Carry a current map of the areas you are going to visit.
- Please be punctual for all departures and game drives so as to make maximum use of your safari time.
- Drink plenty of fluids to keep from getting dehydrated.
- If you wish to spend more time viewing a particular animal during a game drive, please let your driver/guide know. They will do their best to accommodate your request within the park rules.
- For client's safety and in adherence of Traffic Laws, our driver/ guides are not allowed to exceed a speed of 80 KPH on the tarmac (main roads).
- For any extra excursion or activities not included in the itinerary that you would want to purchase please contact your Tours Consultant (shown at the bottom of your itinerary) for arrangements.
- It is illegal to own or carry government trophies (wildlife parts and products, seashells, etc).

**Check-in/check-out policy from bank to bank and banks to forex bureau. You can also change money at hotels but expect a less favorable exchange rate. We recommend that you change some money initially on arrival at Nairobi airport depending of course on personal spending habits.**

### **Photography**

**Please note that it is forbidden to photograph the presidential motorcade, state house, military installations, beggars in streets and the local people, especially the Maasai, without their consent. Your driver/guide can assist in this regard.**

A camera with a good telephoto lens is ideal for wildlife photography.

### **Electricity**

If you have a battery charger or other electrical items, bring your own converter/adaptor if needed. The electricity supply is 240 Volt, 50 Hz with a square 3 pin 13 amps plug (UK style).

### **Safety and Security**

For security purposes, valuable possessions should be kept out of sight or better yet stored in the hotels/lodge's safes. While walking in town avoid carrying around large amounts of cash or wearing jewellery. In case of going out of the hotel at night it is recommended that you use a taxi

even for short distances. While on a beach holiday, beware of vendors selling souvenirs or offering low safari prices, as many tend to operate illegally or inefficiently. Many hotels have an area set aside for the beach vendors to operate from, to avoid them hassling tourists enjoying the beach.

All travel documentation should be kept together securely. This should include Tickets, Passports (with appropriate visa entries), Vaccination Certificates, and Travel Insurance.

### **Yellow Fever Vaccination Requirements for Kenya**

Kenya requires a valid yellow fever certificate from all foreign visitors and citizens over 1 year of age **travelling from an infected area or having been in transit through infected areas (>12 hours)**. This rule applies to travellers from the following countries: Angola, Argentina, Benin, Bolivia, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central Africa Republic, Chad, Colombia, Congo (Republic of), Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ecuador, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, French Guyana, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria,

However, **Kenya itself is a yellow fever-endemic country**. While yellow fever is not known to occur in much of the eastern portion of the country and the cities of Mombasa and Nairobi, it has been known to occur in the rest of the country. If your itinerary will take you out of these eastern, yellow fever-free zones, it is absolutely recommended that you be vaccinated.

### **Yellow Fever Vaccination Requirements for Indian Citizens**

Most countries will require proof of vaccination against yellow fever upon entry for all travellers who have recently been in Kenya.

If you are travelling directly from Kenya, **it is recommended you take** vaccination. Please see the CDC link for more information. If you are travelling from Kenya directly to another country, for example, South Africa, **it is required** that you take the yellow fever vaccination. The vaccination is not required for airport transits of less than 12 hours.

More details at: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/kenya>

### **Yellow Fever Vaccination Requirements for Indian Citizens**

All visitors travelling from India to Kenya are **required** to be vaccinated against yellow fever with an international certificate proving so. While there is no health check on departure from India, you will be checked upon your return. Thus, it is mandatory to be in possession of a valid international vaccination certificate of yellow fever before your departure. This certificate must be issued from an approved vaccination centre.

For Yellow Fever Vaccination Centres in INDIA please click on the below Link.

[https://ihpoe.mohfw.gov.in/vaccination\\_centres.php](https://ihpoe.mohfw.gov.in/vaccination_centres.php)

The yellow fever vaccination needs to be given at least ten days before arriving in a yellow-fever-endemic area and must be administered at an approved yellow fever vaccination centre.

### **Oral Polio Vaccination Requirements for Indian Citizens**

All visitors travelling from India to Kenya are required to undergo a dose of Oral Polio Vaccine (OPV). This requirement is also necessary for travellers coming from polio-endemic (Afghanistan, Nigeria,

Pakistan) and countries with poliovirus in circulation following importation (Kenya, Ethiopia, Somalia and Syria) to India.

Indian residents travelling from India to the seven polio infected countries are required to receive a dose of OPV at least 4 weeks before travel, regardless of age and vaccination status.

## **Tanzania - Banking and Currency**

### **Currency**

In Tanzania, the unit of currency is the Tanzanian Shilling, which is divided into 100 Cents. Notes are issued in denominations of 500, 1000, 2000, 5000, and 10000 Shillings. Coins are issued in denominations of 50, 100 and 200 Shillings.

Tap water in Tanzania is generally not safe to drink, and most travellers try to stick to mineral water. Filtered and bottled water can be difficult to find if you are travelling outside of main town and so it is advisable to stock up. Most camps, lodges and hotels have bottled water readily available.

Please note that, as of 2016, Tanzania has banned the use of plastic bags in a bid to tackle pollution and protect the environment. Travellers' to Tanzania will no longer be allowed to bring plastic carrier bags into the country. This ban targets all plastic bags that are imported, exported, manufactured, sold, stored, supplied and used.

### **Climate and Weather**

Just south of the equator, Tanzania is huge and its sheer size means that the climate varies considerably within it. However, generally the main rainy season, or the 'long rains', lasts during about March, April and May. Afternoon tropical downpours are the norm – which are heavier and more predictable beside the coast and on the islands. The humidity is high and daily temperatures reach the low-mid 30°s. The long dry season lasts throughout June, July, August, September and October is when rainfall is unusual, even on the islands. Temperatures vary hugely with altitude and location, but it's usually a fine, clear sky and sunny weather – it's a great time to visit Tanzania. During November and December there's another rainy season: the 'short rains'. These are much lighter than the main rains and less reliable. If it has rained during the short rains, then it normally dries up for a few months, January and February, which is Tanzania's 'short dry season', before starting to rain again in earnest in March.

### **Clothing and Dress Recommendations**

It never gets really cold in Tanzania so lightweight clothing, preferably cotton or linen, is recommended. While on a game viewing safari, avoid brightly coloured clothing, stick to whites, beiges, khakis and browns. There may be long days sitting in safari vehicles, so it is advisable to wear light comfortable clothing such as short sleeved shirts and cotton/linen trousers or shorts. Denim will become too hot and extremely uncomfortable. Walking shoes and socks will be required.

The evenings will be chilly, so long sleeved shirts and trousers should be worn. A sweater may be needed. These will also prevent you being bitten by insects. A hat should be worn at all times outside. The sun may sometimes not feel hot, but it can still easily burn, especially if it is cloudy and overcast.

If visiting Zanzibar or any coastal town don't forget to take a swimsuit, as it is invariably warm. Ladies are recommended to take cotton skirts, blouses and dresses. Sandals are a must for this

environment! On the beaches and within the confines of hotels, normal swimwear is acceptable but nudity is not.

As over a third of the population in Tanzania is Muslim, it is therefore not etiquette for ladies to walk around in public displaying their legs and shoulders. Remember to dress modestly as short shorts, miniskirts, vests and tank tops will be frowned upon.

### **Internet Availability**

Tanzania has good Internet Service Providers with email and internet services offered by many hotels and lodges (free / paid). In most towns there are plenty of private business centres and cyber cafes offering email and internet access, although the speeds might be somewhat slower than what you are used to.

### **Electricity and Plug Standards**

Electrical sockets in Tanzania are one of three: Type G (BS-1363) and Type C (CEE 7/16 Europlug) and Type D (BS-546) electrical socket types: If your appliance's plug doesn't match the shape of these sockets, you will need a travel plug adapter in order to plug in. Travel plug adapters simply change the shape of your appliance's plug to match whatever type of socket you need to plug into. If it's crucial to be able to plug in no matter what, bring an adapter for all types.

Electrical sockets in Tanzania usually supply electricity at 230 volts AC / 50 Hz frequency. If you're plugging in an appliance that was built for 230 volt electrical input, or an appliance that is compatible with multiple voltages, then an adapter is all you need. If your appliance isn't compatible with 230 volts, a voltage converter will be necessary.

Wi-Fi is readily available in major cities and hotels, as well as in luxury game lodges.