

Tanzania Northern Highlights (Fixed Departure)

Available as: fixed departure open groups, departing Arusha weekly
or, as a private departure at a start day and date to suit you.
Please see last page for fixed departure rates.



The safari programme commences in Arusha. Please contact our office for help with booking your flights, airport transfers and – if required – arrival hotel. We also can provide end of safari airport transfers and beach extensions.

Day 1: Meet in Arusha and depart on Safari

You will be collected from your Arusha hotel this morning for the start of your Northern Highlights safari. After a short introductory briefing from your guide, depart Arusha for Lake Manyara National Park and the Great Rift Valley.

On arrival, check-in at Lake Manyara Serena Lodge for one night.

Lake Manyara Serena Lodge

It is difficult to imagine a more spectacular setting for Lake Manyara Serena Lodge. The hotel sits on the edge of the Mto Wa Mbu escarpment, from where it enjoys fabulous views of the Great Rift Valley and the Manyara soda lake.

Each of the 67 spacious rooms has an en-suite bathroom with shower facilities and a private verandah overlooking the lake. Inspired by the abundant bird life, the design of Lake Manyara Serena Lodge emphasises soft, geometric patterns.

The hotel's standout feature is its infinity swimming pool, positioned so as to make the most of the wonderful views.



This afternoon, after a late lunch at Manyara Serena, embark on a game drive in Lake Manyara National Park.

Lake Manyara National Park

Stretching for 50km along the base of the 600-metre high Rift Valley escarpment, Lake Manyara is a scenic gem, of which Ernest Hemingway once remarked that it was “the loveliest [region] I had seen in Africa”. Its ground water forests, bush plains, baobab strewn cliffs, and hot springs offer incredible ecological variety in a small area that is rich in wildlife.



The soda lake is a habitat for a huge array of bird life that thrives on its brackish waters. Pink flamingo occur in their thousands, colourful specks against the grey of the lake shore, while yellow-billed storks, herons, geese, grebes, ibises and kingfishers are also commonly sighted. Even reluctant bird-watchers will find something to watch and marvel at within Manyara National Park.

Lake Manyara’s tree-climbing lions are another rare attraction. These lions make Manyara’s mahogany and acacia trees their home during the rainy season, where they are often sighted ambling gingerly among the branches, in imitation of the much more graceful leopard!

As well as its rich birdlife and unique tree-climbing lions, Lake Manyara National Park is legendary for its baboon troops (Manyara is thought to hold the largest concentration of baboons anywhere in the world). The large baboon families, and their interactions with one another, make for very interesting game-viewing! Much more shy but equally fascinating is the blue monkey, often sighted in the tree canopies of Manyara.

Day 2: Serengeti National Park

Depart Manyara Serena Lodge after breakfast and journey into the Serengeti. This is a long but scenic drive, taking you through the Ngorongoro Highlands and on to the seemingly endless plains of the Serengeti. En route there will be an opportunity to visit Olduvai Gorge.

Optional Activity

A small canyon to the north of Ngorongoro Crater, Olduvai is the site where a team of international archaeologists, led by Mary and Louis Leakey, discovered the hominoid remains of a 1.8 million year old skeleton, one of the oldest known human fossils, as well as a complete series of hominoid footprints estimated to be over 3.7 million years old. Excavated fossils show that the area is one of the oldest sites of human habitation in the world. It is now the site of an exhibition centre.

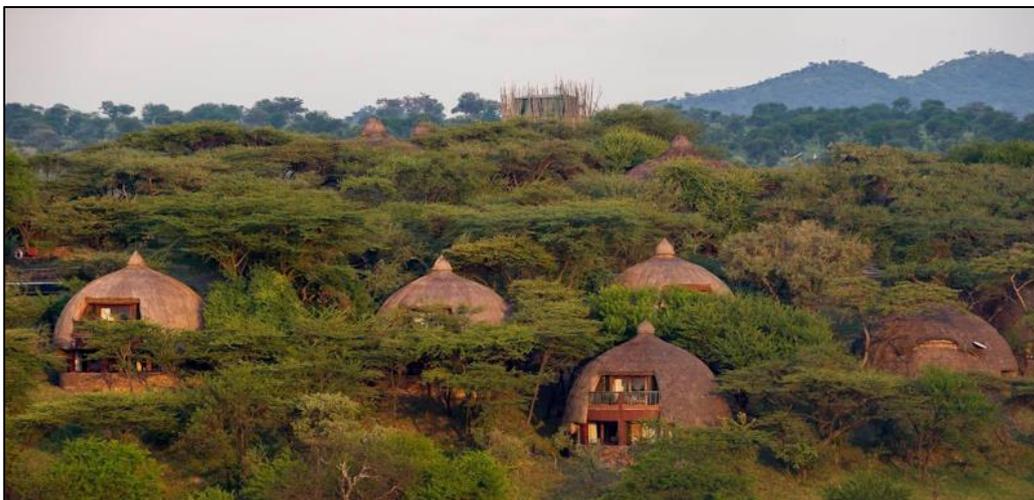
Please note that there is an additional charge of US\$35 to visit Olduvai Gorge – please let us know in advance if you would like to visit.

As you travel west, the beautiful Ngorongoro Highlands will gradually give way to the savannah grasslands of the Serengeti. You'll catch sight of isolated plains game as you approach the perimeter of the park, but soon after the large herds for which the Serengeti is famous will come into view.

You can expect to arrive at your destination, Serengeti Serena Lodge, late this afternoon.

Serengeti Serena Lodge

The Serengeti Serena Lodge occupies a stunning location, high on a tree-clad ridge commanding impressive views over the Serengeti plains. Drawing its inspiration from the circular 'rondavel' dwellings and winding paths of a traditional Masai village, Serengeti Serena Lodge features thickly-thatched, stone-built rooms, spaciouly set amongst groves of indigenous trees.



There are 66 rooms in total, all en-suite and heated. Each room is housed within a traditionally-thatched 'rondavel', featuring natural stone bathrooms, wildwood balconies, rope-lashed staircases, leopard-print drapes and intricately carved furniture.

Day 3: Serengeti National Park

A full day game drive with picnic lunch is planned for today, with game-viewing focused on the Seronera region, the heart of the Serengeti.

Serengeti National Park

Simply teeming with game, the Serengeti is one of the largest and best game parks in all of Africa, unequalled for its natural beauty.

The name Serengeti is derived from the Maasai word “serengit”, meaning ‘endless plains’. It’s the perfect name for this magnificent area of over 6,000 square miles, where both the plains and the herds of game that populate them really can appear limitless.



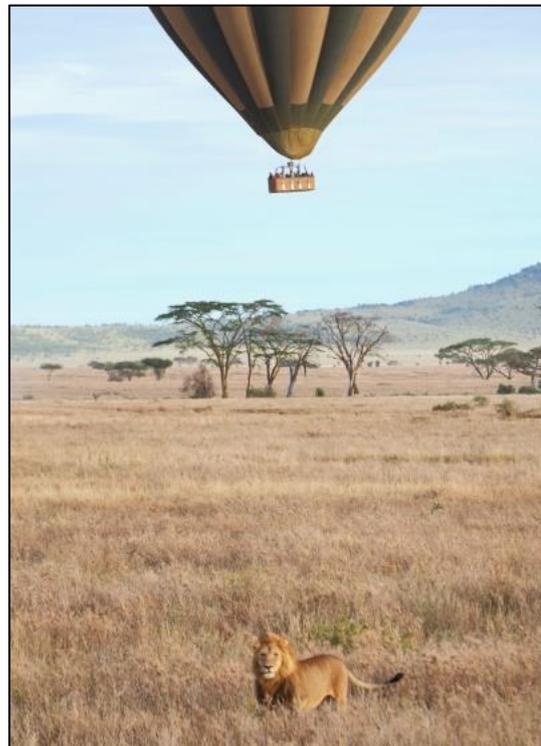
These plains are the defining feature of an ecosystem that is among the oldest on earth; one in which the essential features of climate, flora and fauna have barely changed in the past million years.

Today, it is the migration for which the Serengeti is most famous. Over a million wildebeest and 200,000 zebras flow south from the northern hills to the southern plains for the short rains every October and November, and then swirl west and north after the long rains in April, May and June.

But it’s not just the wildebeest that use the Serengeti as a migratory pathway. The adjacent reserves of Maswa and Ikorongo, the Ngorongoro Conservation Area, and the Masai Mara Game Reserve in Kenya (all of which are unfenced) allow a multitude of species free range of movement to follow their seasonal migrations. Indeed, in the wake of the wildebeest and zebra migration, many of the less attention-grabbing features of the Serengeti are often overlooked.

Alongside the Migration, the Serengeti is notable for being home to all of the 'Big 5' (lion, leopard, buffalo, elephant, and rhino), while other common species found in the park include eland, impala, waterbuck, baboon, monkey, warthog, topi and a rich variety of birdlife (over 400 species have been recorded).

Your game drive today will take you into the heart of the Serengeti, as you explore the central Seronera region in search of the best game sightings.



In addition to traditional 4x4 safaris, hot-air ballooning over the Serengeti plains has become a safari rite-of-passage for travel enthusiasts. The flights depart at dawn over the plains and take passengers just overhead of the awakening herds of wildebeest and zebra, gazelle and giraffe. The extra altitude allows guests to witness the striking expanse of savannah plains, punctuated only by kopjes, that is the Serengeti's defining feature. Up in the sky, you have Africa all to yourself.

Optional Activity – Hot air ballooning

Hot air ballooning over the vast Serengeti plains is the ultimate game-viewing experience. Arriving at your launch site before dawn, you'll take off as the sun rises over the hills. During the journey, you'll have a bird's eye view of the savannah plains and wildlife – the migratory herds present an even more stunning spectacle when viewed from above. The ride lasts forty to sixty minutes, after which you are met by the ground crew for a traditional "champagne toast" followed by a magnificent bush breakfast, cooked and served on the Serengeti plains.

The balloon ride is US\$600 per person. Availability is limited, so please contact us well in advance of travel to make your booking.

Return to Serengeti Serena Lodge for dinner and overnight.

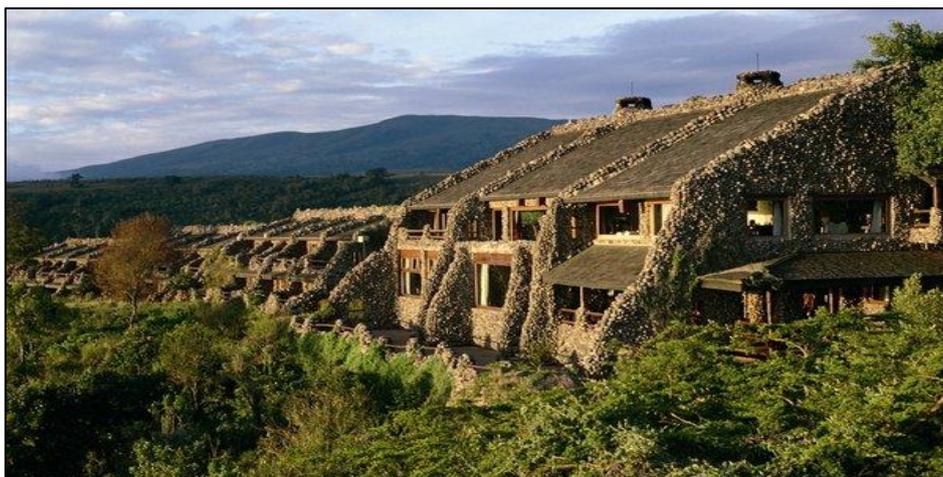
Day 4: Ngorongoro Crater

After a leisurely breakfast, depart the Serengeti and make the return journey into the Ngorongoro Highlands. Expect to arrive at Ngorongoro Serena Lodge in time for a late lunch, with the rest of the day at leisure to enjoy the views and acclimatise to the altitude.

Ngorongoro Serena Lodge

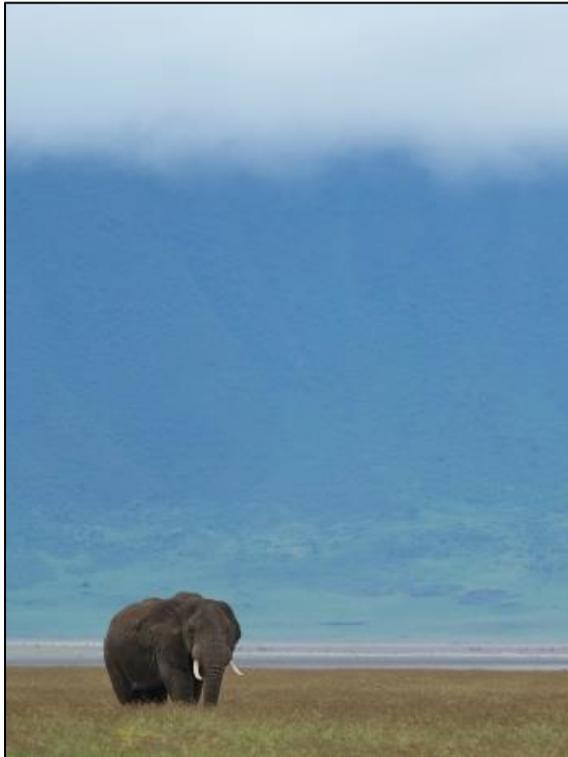
Ngorongoro Serena Lodge perches on the jagged rim of the crater, wreathed in morning mist, camouflaged in river-stone and cloaked in indigenous creepers. Well positioned so as to enjoy the best views of the crater below, Serena's boulder buildings hug the crater rim, linked by timber walkways that skirt the buttressed roots of ancient, liana-hung trees.

The 75 rooms offer lots of space and private balconies with a fabulous view of the Crater.



Day 5: Ngorongoro Crater

You'll set off early this morning for what will almost certainly be one of the highlights of your safari, as you descend 2,000 feet to the floor of the crater for a full-day of game viewing with picnic lunch.



Ngorongoro Crater

Often called the eighth wonder of the world, the Ngorongoro Conservation Area covers a diversity of landscapes, wildlife, people and archaeology that is unsurpassed in Africa.

Extending far beyond the crater itself, it is a huge area that encloses the archaeological site at Olduvai Gorge, huge expanses of highland plains, scrub bush, and forests that cover approximately 8300 square kilometres. As a protected area, only indigenous tribes such as the Maasai are allowed to live within its borders. Lake Ndutu and Masek, both alkaline soda lakes, are home to rich game populations, and surrounded by a series of peaks and volcanoes which create a stunning backdrop. Of course, the crater itself, actually a type of collapsed volcano called a caldera, is the main attraction.

After a dramatic descent down the crater rim, passing lush rainforest and thick vegetation, the flora opens to grassy plains that stretch across

the crater floor. The game viewing is truly incredible, as is the topography and views of the surrounding Crater Highlands.

The Ngorongoro Crater and the Ngorongoro Conservation Area are without doubt some of the most beautiful parts of Tanzania, steeped in history and teeming with wildlife.

Day 6: Tarangire National Park

Depart the Ngorongoro Highlands after breakfast and drive to Tarangire National Park, arriving at your accommodation, Tarangire Sopa Lodge, in time for lunch.

Tarangire Sopa Lodge

Tarangire Sopa Lodge occupies a secluded location among kopjes (boulder hills) and ancient baobab trees in northern Tarangire National Park.



A safari lodge rather than a traditional bush camp, guests at Sopa are accommodated in spacious rooms, each with two queen sized beds, mosquito nets, a private lounge and mini bar. Ceiling fans keep the rooms cool, while glass sliding doors open out on to a balcony overlooking the surrounding bush.

This afternoon, after lunch at the lodge, explore Tarangire National Park on a guided game drive, before returning to the lodge for dinner.

Tarangire National Park

Covering 2,600 sq km, Tarangire abounds with a wonderful diversity of game. Birding is particularly good here, with the Tarangire swamps, tinged green year-round, providing a habitat for approximately 550 bird species.

As for the bigger game, Tarangire is perhaps most notable for its elephant herds, who roam the park in huge stampedes. Large antelope, including oryx, kudu and eland (not commonly seen elsewhere in northern Tanzania) are also regularly spotted in Tarangire, while sightings of hyena, leopard and even python, who make a home of Tarangire's iconic baobab trees, are not uncommon.



Tarangire is at its finest during the dry seasons (Jun - Oct and Dec - Mar), when the Tarangire River and the adjoining swamplands act as a magnet for thirsty wildlife from across the region, though game-viewing is good throughout the year.

Day 7: Homeward or continue with beach extension or other activity

After breakfast at the lodge, depart for Arusha.

Your tour ends in Arusha after lunch at a centrally-located hotel. Depending on the time of your international departure, we can arrange for a hotel day room or overnight stay in Arusha as necessary. Onward transfers and beach extensions may be booked through our office.

Please see price guide on next page.

Prices for small group departures leaving Arusha twice-weekly

The minimum group size for small group departures to run is 2. The maximum group size is 7. The rates in the price chart below are applicable for all group sizes from 2-7 – there is no small group supplement. If you are a solo traveller wanting to join an existing departure, please [contact us](#) for details on confirmed departure dates that you can join.

NORTHERN HIGHLIGHTS Safari Choices	Accommodation Category 1 <i>Tloma Lodge, Kati Kati Camp, Ngorongoro Farmhouse, Lake Burunge Camp</i>	Accommodation Category 2 <i>Manyara Lake View Oasis, Serengeti Zawadi Camp, Pembeni Rhotia, Tarangire Osupuko Camp</i>	Accommodation Category 3 <i>As per above itinerary: Tarangire Sopa Lodge; Ngorongoro, Serengeti and Manyara in Serena Lodges</i>
01 Jan 25 to 28 Feb 25 **	In 2025/26, the above camps/lodges will be available for private departures only – please see here for rates.	£2,290 per person £205 single supp.	£3,280 per person £380 single supp.
01 Mar 25 to 31 Mar 25		£2,160 per person £190 single supp.	£2,575 per person £380 single supp.
01 Apr 25 to 25 May 25		£2,160 per person £190 single supp.	£2,410 per person £300 single supp.
26 May 25 to 25 June 25		£2,290 per person £205 single supp.	£3,190 per person £650 single supp.
26 Jun 25 to 31 Oct 25		£2,350 per person £295 single supp.	£3,240 per person £660 single supp.
01 Nov 25 to 15 Dec 25		£2,190 per person £190 single supp.	£2,525 per person £300 single supp.
16 Dec 25 to 31 Dec 25 **		£2,350 per person £295 single supp.	£3,240 per person £660 single supp.

**** Please ask for Easter, Christmas and New Year supplements.**

Includes:

- Accommodation and meals as outlined
- Transportation in a 4x4 vehicle (guaranteed window seat)
- Services of an English-speaking driver & guide
- Park entrance fees and all currently-applicable Tanzanian taxes and levies
- Safari accessories in each vehicle: First-aid kits, wildlife books, cool box

Excludes:

- International flights
- Airport transfers
- Drinks
- Porterage
- Travel Insurance – ask us for a quote
- Items of a personal nature
- Tips
- Visa fees

At Gane and Marshall, we specialise in both tailor-made and affordable small group itineraries. We use our expertise and a great deal of care to suggest a suitable itinerary for you, hopefully in line with your budget. If you find an alternative quote, then please let us know so that we have an opportunity to respond or price match.

The lead image of the lionesses at the head of this itinerary, taken in northern Tanzania in 2024, is used with the kind permission of Esther Huggins.