

Southern Tanzania & Mafia Island

Safari and beach itinerary



Day 1: Arrive Dar es Salaam and fly to the Selous (3 nights, Impala Camp)

You will be met on arrival into Dar es Salaam and transferred to the domestic terminal for your flight to the Selous Game Reserve. (NB. Depending on your international flight schedule, it may be necessary to include a night in Dar es Salaam at the start of your itinerary.)

On arrival at Selous Mtemere airstrip, you will be met by your driver and transferred to Impala Tented Camp, where you stay three nights on full-board basis with game activities included.

Impala Tented Camp

Impala Camp is situated on a wooded stretch of the Rufiji River. The camp is simply though stylishly designed, with a breezy lounge and dining area that sits on spacious wooden decking and is open to the spectacular views across the river. It is a lovely spot to sit and watch the animals come down to the water to drink. There is also a swimming pool and open-air bar for relaxing between game drives.

Accommodation is in private Meru-style tents on raised wooden platforms. Each faces out onto the river and is furnished in vintage safari style with large beds and an en-suite bathroom.

When walking to and from your room at night you are escorted by askari as the camp is not fenced and wildlife does pass through. Safari activities at Impala Camp include game drives in

open sided 4WDs, and boat safaris along the Rufiji River and the lakes. For keen anglers, fishing on the river is also a possibility!



Days 2 & 3: Selous Game Reserve (Nyerere National Park)

The next two days will be spent exploring the Selous/Nyerere National Park.

Remote and wild, Nyerere National Park is the largest national park in Tanzania and contains some of the continent's greatest wildlife concentrations.



The Rufiji River is the defining feature of Nyerere National Park. It cuts its course through the reserve from west to east, joining with the Ruaha River before spilling out into the Indian Ocean not far from the park's eastern boundaries. Along its course are many lakes, lagoons and marshes, while the Rufiji Delta protects some of Africa's most impressive mangrove forests. As the largest water catchment area in the region, it attracts prodigious quantities of game to the northern region of the park, which is the focus for most safaris into the region.

Nyerere National Park is home to such a diversity of wildlife that it has been made a World Heritage Site. Some of Africa's last black rhino reside within the reserve, as well as healthy populations of wild dog, one of the continent's most endangered species. The waters of the Rufiji River and the Selous' many lakes are home to gargantuan pods of hippo and

equally large congregations of crocodile, while also attracting many species of water bird. Cheetah, lion, elephant, zebra, buffalo and an array of antelope species complete the picture.

In 2019, the northern section of the Selous, where the camps and lodges are concentrated, was declared a national park and given the name Nyerere, after Tanzania's founding president. Nyerere National Park is now the largest national park in Africa, though it only constitutes part of the greater Selous region.



One of the great advantages of the Nyerere National Park is that it allows for a wider range of activities than many of Tanzania's other wilderness areas. Boating safaris on the Rufiji River and the lakes of the park are as much a highlight as the game drives, allowing you to see the diverse life along the Rufiji River up close and in all its splendour. Walking safaris and fly camping are also permitted within the park, which isn't true of most of Tanzania's national parks, and provide an adventurous alternative to traditional 4x4 safaris.

Included during your stay at Impala Camp are twice-daily game drives and a boat safari on the (please note that drives and boat safari will typically be shared with other guests). Night drives and walking safaris can also be arranged, either in advance or on the ground, but are at additional cost.

Days 4-6: Ruaha National Park (3 nights, Mdonya Old River Camp)

After breakfast, you will be transferred to Mtemere airstrip for your flight to Ruaha, typically departing late morning.



Your driver/guide from Mdonya Old River Camp will be waiting at the Ruaha airstrip to greet you with a picnic lunch – ready to start your safari as soon as you land!

Ruaha is the second largest game park in Tanzania, and offers a game-viewing experience equal to its size. It has one of the largest populations of elephant of any park in Africa, while the densely forested environment also attracts various antelope, as well as plentiful giraffe and buffalo. The terrain is particularly

good for sighting predators, including lion, occasionally leopard, and very occasionally, African wild dog.

Enjoy a short game drive en route to Mdonya Old River Camp, a small bush camp set in the centre of Ruaha, and your home for the next three nights.



Mdonya Old River Camp

Mdonya Old River Camp is a classic tented bush camp, situated within the heart of the Ruaha and close to a number of prime game-viewing spots. The facilities, it should be noted, are limited, with no electricity, but the atmosphere and location are marvellous.

Mdonya Old River Camp allows you to get very close to the wildlife – animals, including lion, are known to wander close to camp (there are staff on hand to escort you to and from your tents at night for safety). The tents are spread out over a large area, under the shade of sycamore figs, and nestled in the curved banks of the Ruaha sand-river. They are traditional safari tents, comfortably furnished with double or twin beds. All of the tents at Mdonya Old River have ensuite bathrooms with dressing areas, open-roofed showers and separate flush toilets.

At either end of Mdonya Old River Camp are two game-viewing hides, where you can sit and watch the wildlife between game drives.

Guests are invited to relax around the campfire in the evening. The dining and lounge tents are under acacia and sycamore fig trees, overlooking the mostly-dry river bed. Weather-permitting, dinner is taken outdoors under the stars—the experience of dining by candlelight to the sound of crickets and the occasional hyena or lion is unforgettable! Other guest facilities include a comfortable lounge tent with a small library.



Daily game drives are included during your stay at Mdonya Old River Camp, with the option for either full-day drives or morning and afternoon drives returning to camp for lunch. Walking safaris can also be arranged, but are at additional cost.

Days 7-11: Fly to Mafia Island (5 nights, Butiama Lodge)

This morning, there will be time for a further game drive or if preferred a leisurely start, before you transfer to the airstrip for the afternoon flight to Mafia Island via Dar es Salaam.

On arrival on Mafia, meet with your driver and transfer to Butiama Lodge, where you stay 5 nights in a Sea View Room on half-board basis.



Butiama Beach Lodge

Butiama Beach Lodge offers 15 stone and thatch bungalows. Each bungalow is decorated in a relaxed, bohemian style. The furniture is crafted locally and where possible makes great use of reclaimed wood from old dhow boats. The colourful fabrics and soft furnishings are also locally sourced and used to great effect, adding a burst of colour to the rooms. Beds are large and comfortable with ceiling fans and mosquito nets. Each bungalow has a large veranda with seating and hammocks from which to take in the fabulous ocean views and sunsets.

The secluded beaches of Mafia Island receive only a small number of visitors compared to neighbouring Zanzibar, yet they are just as beautiful. Much of the Mafia archipelago constitutes a marine park - Tanzania's first - which protects a rich variety of sea life, including endangered species such as giant turtle and dugong. The diving is superb and the island offers the best opportunities for whale shark swimming between November and February.

Optional activities such as diving, kayaking and dhow boat excursions can be arranged locally via the hotel.

Day 12: Mafia to Dar es Salaam; international departure

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast before transferring to the airstrip for your flight to Dar es Salaam.

In Dar es Salaam, connect with your international flight home.



Price Guide:

The cost of this itinerary is **£5,220** per person in high season (June to October; mid-Dec to early-Jan) or **£4,685** in low season (mid-Jan to June; Nov to mid-Dec), based on two travellers in twin/double accommodation. For more information, or if you would like to enquire about a tailor-made holiday combining part or all of the above itinerary, please [contact us](#).

Includes:

- Accommodation as described (full-board basis at Mdonya Old River and Impala Camp; half-board at Butiama)
- Activities as outlined (daily game drives at Mdonya; game drives and one boat safari while at Impala)
- All transfers as outlined in itinerary
- Domestic flights (Dar-Selous; Selous-Ruaha; Ruaha-Mafia; Mafia-Dar)
- National park fees

Excludes:

- International flights
- Drinks with meals
- Lunches while at Butiama
- Optional activities while on safari, including walking safaris and night game drives
- Activities on Mafia Island are payable locally
- Personal expenses and tips
- Travel insurance

