

Rift Valley and Maasai Mara walking safari - 7 Days

A relaxed walking, cultural and wildlife safari through Rift Valley and Maasai country that combines balanced easy walking opportunities, wildlife viewing and cultural interactions - an itinerary, which works well for Families and is ideal for both young and older travellers alike. A journey with relatively short distances between destination that is fun to be on and lets you discover varied sceneries, different wildlife environments and unforgettable culture experiences of the Kikuyu and Maasai tribes all at a relaxed pace. Accommodation on the moderate standard trip is in moderate standard lodges and tented camps and bush camps.

Upgraded accommodation is available on request for Premium Class trips and this is in luxury Lodges and camps (where available) and upgraded bush camps in the wilderness.

The same itinerary can also run as a moderate standard safari or a Premium Class. (See details below).

Detailed Itinerary:

Day 1: Journey by road from Nairobi to Lake Elementaita / exploration of lake surroundings / call on Kikuyu farms for cultural insights / overnight in moderate standard lodge. (Or Luxury lodge).

Journey through the Rift Valley to Lake Elementaita, a shallow soda lake on the floor of the Rift Valley arriving in time for lunch at **Lake Elementaita country Lodge**, (Or at a more luxurious **Sunbird lodge** or similar if on a premium class trip). Here we overnight for 2 nights in a lakeside resort with vantage view of the lake and scores of pink flamingos and pelicans on its edge. After lunch we leisurely explore the lakeside environment - options to bathe in hot springs; visit nearby Kikuyu farms and homesteads; tour an archaeological site with a large collection of stone tools made by early man. Tonight there is also a possibility of an overnight stay in a villager's house for interesting and personal insights into the lives of the local farmers, (no extra cost but advise in advance necessary). In the evening you watch a fabulous sundowner from the balcony of your room or the swimming pool.

Day 2: Nakuru Park visit for full day game viewing drives / return to Elementaita lodge for overnight.

Day trip to the nearby Lake Nakuru national park for informative game drives in the park. Though small in size the park is dramatic and picturesque with abundant wildlife and where there is an unmatched chance of seeing the elusive Leopard, the rare rhino (both black and white species) and as well as vast herds of buffalo and the unusual Rothschild's giraffe, lions, gazelles, eland, zebra and many more at very close range. The Park has also had nearly 400 birds species recorded within its borders among them the millions of flamingoes that paint the lake with its shimmering pink color. Other birds include pelicans, ostrich, marabou, ibis, eagles, vultures, woodpeckers, touracos, barbets, among others. After this visit we return to our lodge at the lakeside of lake Elementaita for a relaxed evening, dinner and overnight.

Day 3: Walking safari in Hells Gate Park / Gorge exploration / Overnight on shores of lake Naivasha in moderate standard hotel. (Or Luxury lodge)

Leaving early we drive for one hour and visit Hells Gate National park for a Game walk inside the park. On the walk today we have close encounters with herds of herbivores and bird species.



Later we explore the gorges intensively where fascinating sights of volcanic formations, geysers and hot springs, welcome us. Overnight at a moderate standard hotel on the shores of Lake Naivasha with a chance for an evening swim. (Or at the more luxurious **Simba lodge** if on a Premium Class trip).

Day 4: Morning boat ride on lake Naivasha / call on Maasai in Loita for cultural insights / overnight by Maasai village in tents.

After early breakfast we explore lake Naivasha by boat – a freshwater lake, famed for it's hippos and bird life particularly fish eagles, love-birds and pelicans. Leave mid morning for Loita Plains part of the vast savannah country inhabited by the Masaai tribe. Then into the bush to a small Maasai eco-camp on the northern tip of the Loita hills for insights into their fascinating way of life - Loita hills and plains form the wildlife corridor between Maasai Mara and the Narok region and hosts a great deal of wildlife through out the year. Over the years we have formed a special bond with the local people here and we set camp near their villages - here we find a **pre-set bush camp** put up for us (**large safari tents, beds and en suite for premium class**). You get a privileged chance to visit and spend time in an authentic Maasai Boma (homestead) to witness the work and life of women and children. We also see and learn a thing about making beadwork jewellery and offer support by buying few as souvenirs. In the evening we take a short stroll for a bathe in the natural hot springs or just deep you toes in. Overnight camp under giant euphorbia trees, dinner under starlit skies, story telling round camp fire and doze to the sounds of the African night - often lions roaring and hyenas laughing nearby - don't panic! Our camp is guarded by watchful Maasai warriors all night long.

Day 5 Walking Safari with Maasai warriors and cultural insights / Transfer to Maasai Mara park / overnight Mara Simba Lodge.

Start an early morning hike led by Maasai Morans (warriors) and trek to the Loita plains or hills - along the way you enjoy striking views while spotting wild animals and birds and also to get to learn about healing herbs used by the locals – the Maasai have folktales on virtually all plants, animal and landmarks you come across. On return to camp we are engaged in varies warrior training activities such as body decoration, wilderness survival tactics - making fire from rubbing sticks, folk dances, spear throwing, Arrow shooting etc. If schools are in session you may visit a local school cum rescue centre for the Maasai girl child from early marriages. After lunch we head to Maasai Mara wildlife park - Masai Mara is perhaps the best game reserve in East Africa and on our evening game drive here we will most likely see elephants, buffaloes lions, zebras, giraffes and a whole ark-full of other animals and birds in their natural habitat. Dinner and overnight for the moderate standard safari is at **Mara Springs Camp**. (Or **Mara Simba Lodge** or similar for Premium Class).

Day 6 Explore Masai Mara in greater detail.

A day to enjoy full time game viewing in Maasai Mara game reserve. Now the seventh wonder of the modern world, Maasai Mara is a country of breathtaking vistas, vast rolling plains and rounded hills, acacia woodlands, dense thickets of scrub and the riverine ecosystem of the Mara River. It's vast plains teem with endless herds of grazing Game together with the associated predators, it is perhaps the only region left in Kenya where the visitor may see animals in the same super-abundance as existed a century ago - our expert naturalist guides and sturdy vehicles ensure you have the best chance of seeing them all and understand their habits. Return to camp or lodge in the evening and overnight once again.



Day 7 Early morning game drive / return to Nairobi by road.

An early morning game drive (6am) in the Mara trying to spot any animals you may have missed the previous day. For bird watchers this is best chance to see the numerous bird species of Maasai Mara. Then return to camp/lodge for breakfast and drive back to Nairobi to arrive by lunchtime.

Safari costs per person are valid through 2011- but subject to any changes in park fees:

MODERATE STANDARD SAFARI IN A 4X4 LAND CRUISER (max. 6 clients per Landcruiser)

<p>Rates for Private departures</p> <p>2 pax - US \$2,300 per person 3 - 4 pax - US \$1,800 per person 5 - 6 pax - US \$1,700 per person 7 - 8 pax - US \$1,600 per person 9 -10 pax - US \$1,400 per person 11-12 pax - US \$1,300 per person Single room occupancy supplement US \$180.</p>	
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PREMIUM LODGE SAFARI IN A IN A 4X4 LAND CRUISER (max. 6 clients per Landcruiser)

<p>Rates for Private departures</p> <p>2 pax - US \$3,100 per person 3 - 4 pax - US \$2,600 per person 5 - 6 pax - US \$2,500 per person 7 - 8 pax - US \$2,400 per person 9 -10 pax - US \$2,200 per person 11-12 pax - US \$2,100 per person Single room occupancy supplement US \$350.</p>	
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Children below the age of 13 years accompanying their parents will get a 10% discount on the sale price.

Other optional extra costs.

- Balloon Safari in Masai Mara. US\$ 460 per person extra

