

# Rainforests and Reefs

## MAKE TRACKS FOR AFRICA

This information pack has been put together so that you can prepare for your overland tour. It has been developed over many years of experience overlanding. Please read it carefully.

### Departure dates for Rainforests and Reefs

Departs Kigali	Finish Dar es Salaam	Price
12 Aug 2024	29 Aug 2024	£2410
11 Sep 2024	28 Sep 2024	£2410
07 Oct 2024	24 Oct 2024	£2410
31 Oct 2024	17 Nov 2024	£2410
21 Dec 2024	07 Jan 2025	£2410
05 Feb 2025	22 Feb 2025	£2410
13 Mar 2025	30 Mar 2025	£2410
07 May 2025	24 May 2025	£2410
07 Jun 2025	24 Jun 2025	£2410
07 Jul 2025	24 Jul 2025	£2410
12 Aug 2025	29 Aug 2025	£2410
11 Sep 2025	28 Sep 2025	£2410
07 Oct 2025	24 Oct 2025	£2410
31 Oct 2025	17 Nov 2025	£2410
21 Dec 2025	07 Jan 2026	£2410
06 Feb 2026	23 Feb 2026	£2410

**Countries visited:** Rwanda • Uganda • Tanzania

**Highlights:** Mountain gorilla trek • The Genocide Memorial and Museum • Golden monkey trek • Dian Fossey's Grave • Orphanage visit • Batwa Pygmy village • Lake Victoria • The Grumeti Reserve • Serengeti National Park • Ngorongoro Crater • Maasai boma visit • Zanzibar Island • Spice tour • Snorkelling and scuba diving • Mnemba Atoll • Prison Island and the giant tortoise • Dolphin boat cruise • Red colobus monkey trek.

**Safari structure:** The Rainforests and Reefs commences in Kigali, the capital of Rwanda. It is a component of our main programme of safaris. Along the way you will meet travellers who may be doing longer or shorter components of this program. We finish on the Tanzanian coast, our last days being spent on the palm fringed white beaches of Zanzibar. If you wish to spend a few extra days on Zanzibar to relax after your safari we can extend your cottage bookings for you on the island.

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## Flights

When arranging your flights we suggest you arrive in Kigali, Rwanda, the day prior to departure. There is an international airport in Kigali.

You will find it most convenient at the end of your safari to fly either from Dar es Salaam or from Zanzibar Island. There is an international airport on Zanzibar island. Return flights should be arranged to depart from Zanzibar airport any time from 11am the day after the trip ends, or from Dar es Salaam from 4pm the day after the trip ends.

The usual flight arrangements for this trip are sometimes known as 'open jaw' flights. These allow you to fly in to one destination and out of another. If searching online these are often called 'multi city' or 'multi stop' tickets.

There are several airlines that fly into Kigali and out of Dar es Salaam including Kenya Airways, KLM and Air France. A number of airlines also fly between Nairobi and Kigali including Kenya Airways, Rwandair Express and Air Uganda.

For add on flights between Zanzibar and Nairobi or Dar es Salaam and Nairobi, Precision Air, Kenya Airways, KLM and Fly540 are airlines to consider.

Should you need to bolt on an additional flight from Entebbe to Kigali, Kenya Airways, Rwandair Express and Air Uganda offer flights on this route.

At certain times of the year, flight availability can become very limited and if you delay your booking, you might have to pay a higher price. It is best then to organise your flights as soon as you can once you decide to travel.

We can help you with a flight quote. Please feel free to call the office if you would like assistance.

*A friendly reminder – When purchasing your flights, check whether your flight ticket already includes departure tax (if applicable) for the country you are flying out of at the end of your trip. If it does not, remember to keep the necessary funds aside in USD to make this payment.*

Your safety and enjoyment when traveling with Absolute Africa are of the utmost importance to us, which is why it is essential that you have arranged adequate travel insurance to cover your whole trip.

We are happy to introduce you to specialist insurance brokers Campbell Irvine, underwritten by AWP P&C SA. The cover includes a 24-Hour Worldwide Emergency Medical Service who are expert in providing friendly and professional emergency help.

Click on the following link to the page on our website to find out more:  
[www.absoluteafrica.com/Insurance](http://www.absoluteafrica.com/Insurance)

*Do note that it is a condition of booking that you have contacted your insurers to confirm that the cover you have arranged is appropriate for ALL your requirements, taking into account the remote nature of overland travel, and that any hazardous activities you may intend to undertake are fully covered, including whitewater rafting on grade 5 rapids, scuba diving, trekking Kilimanjaro, volunteer work, tandem sky diving and bungee jumping.*

When selecting insurance carefully consider the cancellation policy, as well as cover for any valuables you might take. If you buy insurance in the UK you should check that your policy is valid if you are a non-UK resident and the provision for one-way travel if this is required.

Remember when traveling it is important to take all sensible precautions in regards to your security, safety and health, including taking precautions to avoid illness such as malaria. We advise you to make an appointment with a travel clinic as soon as possible after deciding to travel. Your travel insurance might also be affected by the relevant government's Travel Advice for the countries on your route. Do stay up to date with the latest official government Travel Advice.

## Visa requirements for Rainforests and Reefs

Your passport needs to be valid for at least 6 months after your trip finishes. Ensure also that you have enough pages in your passport for each country you visit. As a guide then, for the Rainforests and Reefs you will need to have a minimum of 4 blank pages (sides).

If you have dual nationality you can only use one passport for the entire trip, but bringing both passports is a wise back-up strategy. You can find more information in the different country listings on the FCO's website ([www.fco.gov.uk](http://www.fco.gov.uk)) under 'entry requirements'. Do be aware it can be illegal to travel in Africa on two passports.

**Please note for those nationalities that need to pay for a visa to Rwanda, the East Africa Tourist visa will offer the best value for time and money.** It is being charged at 100 USD. This can be purchased on arrival in Rwanda, at Kigali airport, and will give entry to Rwanda and Uganda, as well as re-entry back to Rwanda.

**If you do not need to pay for a visa to Rwanda, you must then apply for a visa to Uganda ahead of time and this can be done online.**

Irish citizens do not require a visa for Uganda and so it is most cost effective to just buy a single entry visa for Rwanda at the border for 30 USD each time.

Most passport holders can then get the Tanzanian visa on arrival at the border. Visas bought on the ground can only be paid for in US dollars cash.

Below is an estimation of current visa requirements and their cost:



<b>Passport</b>	<i>Rwanda</i>	<i>Uganda</i>	<i>Tanzania</i>	<i>Total No.</i>	<i>Total in USD</i>
Australian	-	\$50	\$50	2	\$100
New Zealand	-	\$50	\$50	2	\$100
South African	-	\$50	-	1	\$50
Canadian	-	\$50	\$50	2	\$100
American	\$100	-	\$100	2	\$200
British	-	\$50	\$50	2	\$100
German	\$100	-	\$50	2	\$150
Dutch	\$100	-	\$50	2	\$150
Irish	\$60	-	\$100	2	\$160
French	-	\$50	\$50	2	\$100

The above information covers current visa requirements for British, New Zealand, Australian, Irish, South African, Canadian, American, Dutch, French and German passport holders only. If your passport is not detailed above please do not hesitate to contact the office if you would like further details of your visa requirements.

Be aware that visa requirements can change without prior notice. This information is given as a guide only. You are ultimately responsible for your own visa arrangements. We do ask that you also check your personal current visa requirements with the relevant embassies well in advance before you travel. For more information on visas check out [www.projectvisa.com](http://www.projectvisa.com)

## Pre and post safari information

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### Joining us in Kigali

We will arrange collection on day 1 of the tour from Kigali. We recommend booking online at Pili Pili Boutique Hotel or Yambi Guesthouse.

Please speak to us prior to booking any other accommodation so we can confirm collection will be viable from that location.

### Departing Kigali

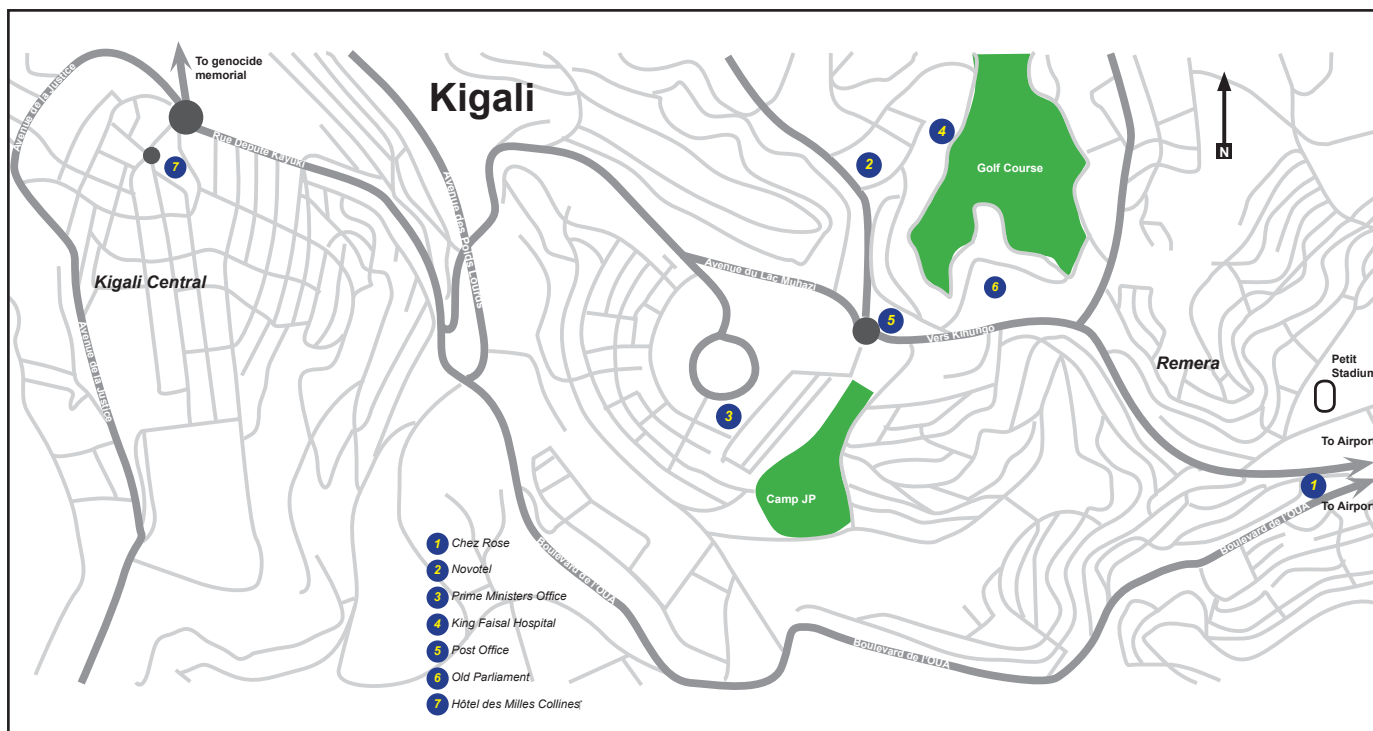
On Day One we usually collect you at 7.30am. From here we head towards the gorilla parks. The crew will aim to organise a meeting to go through all the basics you need to know about your safari, including health, hygiene, security and safety procedures on the first day of the trip. Please also ensure you read the relevant sections in this dossier carefully prior to departure. On day one your crew will also collect the local payment, organise rosters and tent partners, show you how to put up your tent, and of course answer any questions you may have. There will probably be many aspects of going on an overland camping safari in Africa that will be very new for you, so do listen carefully.

Your crew are there to do all they can to help. Feel free to discuss any matter with them. Remember you are on a group trip and it is as valuable to listen to other people's ideas as it is to contribute your own.

Your crew has been trained and do know your route. They will facilitate group discussions and will advise to the best of their abilities.

### Important pre-safari details

Upon booking this trip we provide you with a form on which you can advise us before departure of your arrival details into Kigali. You can also update us on this form of any change in your details and confirm your insurance details, if you don't know these when booking.



## Flight departure

Check in as early as possible prior to your departure time: your flight ticket will indicate how early you should check in. When checking in you may need to show your Booking Voucher to demonstrate that you will be leaving Rwanda on safari. Please remember to carry this with your personal documents. A booking voucher is issued upon receipt of final payment. It also has emergency contact details in the event you need assistance in transit.

## Arriving in Kigali International Airport, Rwanda

At the airport you will find signs are in English and there is also an exchange open for international arrivals.

**Travelling into Kigali:** The airport is 7 miles from the centre of Kigali. The easiest way to get into town is to use a taxi.

You should change up enough money for what you need until you meet the truck or can next get to a bank. We recommend that you change up about 50 USD into Rwandan francs at the airport. Do remember that you need to cover any meals you have prior to the trip start, including breakfast for the morning of the departure, as well as any accommodation and transfers.

*NB: For rough budgeting/banking purposes in Rwanda the current mid rate is approximately USD 1 = 1,314 Rwandan francs. (July 2024).*

## The end of your safari

Please note accommodation on the final night of the tour is included and so you should arrange flights for the day after the trip ends. Many tend to catch the ferry back to Dar es Salaam with the tour leader in the morning after the last day, but we can also arrange the ferry for a later time and/or date if you wish, as well as provide you with assistance with transfers and further accommodation if you would like. If catching the morning ferry, please do not arrange onwards flights from Dar es Salaam until after 4pm.

There is an international airport on Zanzibar and you can also fly out directly from Zanzibar at any time the day after the trip ends, or later if you wish to stay on.

Airport transfers are usually about 35 USD for the taxi to Zanzibar airport.

Alternatively, if you wish to spend a few more days on Zanzibar we can also arrange this for you, either by the beach at Kendwa in the north of the island or in Stone Town. Feel free to get in touch for further details.

If you need to spend a night or more in Dar es Salaam at the end of the trip we can book you accommodation at Sleep Inn on Mahiwa Street in the centre of the city. Sleep Inn has a restaurant, internet

access, satellite TV, air conditioning and laundry facilities.

Or alternatively we can book you in at Mikadi Beach Camp which is right on the beach, just outside the city centre, and has simple beach bandas. There is a swimming pool and also a restaurant/lounge area. Please return the form previously mentioned including your post-safari accommodation and transfer needs to the office 10 weeks before departure. Please also confirm your post safari requirements with your crew on the road.

## Health and immunisation

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Prior to departure it is essential that you contact a specialist travel medical clinic. Clinics in the UK such as one of Nomad's Clinics will provide you with the latest recommendations for travel in Africa.

You will need to have the required immunisations and start a course of anti-malarials prior to departure for this trip. Traveling to Africa will expose you to diseases and health hazards that you may not have come across before, such as malaria and waterborne parasites including bilharzia. You must consult a medical professional who specialises in travel medicine before you depart to discuss where you will be traveling in regard to the above, your immunisation schedule and any other requirements. Remember to start your vaccination program in good time, so that it is completed before you go. About six weeks is usually adequate, depending on how up to date you currently are.

Ensure you are well informed about any health concerns en route so you can stay fit and healthy to relax and enjoy your trip. The Lonely Planet publishes a medical travel guide for the region that may be of interest called 'Healthy Travel Africa'.

You may also like to check out the following websites:

[www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk](http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk)

[www.dh.gov.uk](http://www.dh.gov.uk)

### **Suggested travel clinics in the United Kingdom**

Nomad Travel Stores and Clinics

Tel: 01341 555 061

- 11 S Molton St, Mayfair, London W1K 5QP, UK
- 65 London Wall, London, EC2M 5TU

There are also Nomad clinics in Bristol, Cardiff and Manchester.

Visit [www.nomadtravel.co.uk](http://www.nomadtravel.co.uk) for further information.

If travelling from Australia, Fiji, New Zealand, South Africa or destinations in Asia we recommend you contact Travel Doctor/TMVC. Their websites are at:

[www.traveldoctor.com.au/](http://www.traveldoctor.com.au/)

[www.traveldoctor.co.nz](http://www.traveldoctor.co.nz)

[www.traveldoctor.co.za/](http://www.traveldoctor.co.za/)

There are travel clinics in many of the big centres in Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, as well as in Thailand, Singapore, Hanoi, Bali and Nadi.

### **Suggested immunisation requirements (This is only a guide!)**

The immunisations usually suggested for the countries visited on this safari are:

- Yellow fever – Vaccination must not be left any later than 10 days prior to departure and you must be able to show proof i.e. carry your certificate of vaccination with you.
- Typhoid
- Polio
- Tetanus
- Hepatitis A (three months)

- Meningitis
- Diphtheria
- Tuberculosis
- Other Suggested Immunisations – Hepatitis B, rabies.

It is essential to take a course of anti-malarials. It is best to discuss the type of anti-malarial medication you should take with a travel clinic such as Nomad. They will have the latest information on which medication is most effective in the countries through which you will be traveling. They can also advise on possible side effects and which drug might best suit you. Do follow all medical advice given with your prescribed medication. Do be aware that some anti-malarials can have negative side effects and also that your choice of drug needs to be appropriate to protect against strains of malaria specific to the regions in Africa through which you are traveling.

The choices usually suggested are:

Larium, taken x1 a week

Doxycycline, taken x1 a day

Malarone, taken x1 a day

Do think about how to set up a reminder system for yourself so you remember to take your medication, and complete the entire course. If you are taking a daily medication as an anti-malarial, remember also to carry it with you on the plane in your hand luggage.

As well as your anti-malarials, you will need to bring a number of other medical items in a simple Personal Medical Kit. Medical kits can usually be bought at travel clinics. Lists as to the types of items you are advised to carry can be found in the 'What do I need to bring on safari?' section on page 16.

### **General information on avoiding malaria**

The best way to avoid malaria is to guard against being bitten by mosquitoes and stick strictly to your chosen medication regime. To protect yourself from being bitten:

- Cover exposed skin thoroughly in insect repellent, such as DEET, from dusk to dawn, and reapply it regularly. If applying with sunblock apply it above the sunblock.
- Ensure you carry enough DEET with you to Africa. It is not easy to get hold of mosquito repellent once on the road.
- Cover up at the beginning and end of the day including wearing long sleeves, long trousers and socks.
- Always sleep under a mosquito net or in a secure tent with all zips zipped up.
- Wear impregnated wrist and ankle bands.
- You may wish to treat clothing with permethrin.

Do be aware also your insurance cover may well assume you are on a recognised course of anti-malarials. If you don't take a recognised anti-malarial, it may affect your cover.

### **Other medical issues**

You are reminded that the incidence of HIV AIDS is very high in the countries through which we travel. Sexual contact and dirty needles are the main ways that the disease is spread. Do take all necessary precautions. Use condoms. If you have to have any kind of injection, do ensure that the needle is unwrapped in front of you.

You are advised also that the waterborne bilharzia parasite is present in many bodies of fresh water in Africa including Lake Victoria. Bilharzia can be serious. Once diagnosed it is treatable but of course it is best to avoid getting infected. It is recommended also to have a medical check up including a blood test particularly to check for bilharzia upon your return from your safari as a precaution.

Please ensure you contact a travel health clinic prior to departure for the most recent professional medical advice. The above is given as a broad guide only.

Remember it is a condition of booking that you let us know upon booking or at the earliest opportunity if you have any medical conditions, and particularly if you are on regular medication.

It is wise to know your blood group particularly when travelling in the Third World. As this is the case, as a precaution on day 1 your crew will ask for your blood type can you please have this information available

for them.

## The Rainforest and Reefs itinerary

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### Day 1: Kigali, Rwanda, to Kisoro, Uganda

Meeting up at 7 am on our first day, we head from Kigali, the capital of Rwanda, to the Ugandan border. We arrive in Kisoro to check into a simple guesthouse, our base for the next two nights.

After meeting the rest of the group, you can head out on a coffee tour or visit a Batwa (Pygmy) village to start to soak up the local world around you and get to know others in your group. Some enjoy visiting Lake Mutande later in the day.

Alternatively enjoy having a look around this rural Ugandan town, enjoy a coffee in the coffee shop, or a beer in a local pub. Late in the afternoon we hold a group departure meeting and also go through arrangements for those trekking the gorillas the following day.

Distance: 136 kms

Est. Drive Time: 5 hours (depending on the border)

Meal: X1 Dinner

*Optional excursions:* Coffee tour or Batwa (Pygmy) village visit or Lake Mutande

### Days 2 - 3: Kisoro to Musanze, Rwanda

The critically endangered mountain gorilla population currently numbers around 1,000 individuals. The gorillas are found in two forested areas – Bwindi Impenetrable Forest in Uganda and the Virungas, which stretch from Rwanda and Uganda into the Congo.

Over these days we gorilla trek. The gorilla trek is our first big highlight.

Our trek starts early morning, and can take anything from an hour to many hours depending on where the guides locate the gorillas. When found, they are usually on the ground munching away. They keep in family groups of up to 35 individuals led by one dominant, older adult male, a silverback, named after the swath of silver hair that adorns his otherwise dark fur. The family structure of a gorilla group often also includes several other young males, known as black backs, as well as females and their offspring. The young ones particularly might be seen swinging from vines and trees and can be very curious as to their daily visitors.

There is a morning also for trekking the golden monkeys in Mgahinga National Park or some enjoy visiting a local orphanage.

By afternoon of day 3 we usually return into Rwanda, a country with a turbulent history now moving rapidly forward in an attempt to put their past behind them. This afternoon there is the option to learn how to make banana beer and do basket weaving, as well as head out on a bike tour.

Distance, Day 2: 0 kms

Est. Drive Time, Day 2: 0 hours

Distance, Day 3: 51 kms

Est. Drive Time, Day 3: 3 hours (depending on the border)

Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X2 Dinners

Included Wildlife Activity: Mountain gorilla trek Bwindi Impenetrable Forest, Uganda

*Optional excursions:* . Golden monkeys trek or orphanage visit. Batwa (Pygmy) village visit or a coffee tour. Lake Mutande. Basket weaving, banana beer making, bike tour.

Notes: If you also wish to trek the gorillas in Rwanda please let us know at the earliest prior to booking.

### Days 4 - 5: Musanze to Kigali

For those who fancy it, a visit can be arranged early this morning to the grave of Dian Fossey in



the Rwandan forest. Dian dedicated her life to protecting the mountain gorillas. Her life and work is remembered in the film 'Gorillas in the Mist'.

If you are not trekking, we head off early, making our way to the capital Kigali, a very European style city. For those trekking, a transfer is arranged for later in the day.

We spend the next two nights in Kigali, the modern capital of Rwanda and now a vibrant cosmopolitan city. Here, we visit The Genocide Memorial and Museum. Opened in 2004, ten years after the Genocide, the memorial is a sobering reminder of the horrors that occurred over a 100 day period from April to June 1994 during which up to 1 million Tutsis and moderate Hutu were brutally slaughtered.

Some also take time to visit the Nyamata Church Memorial, a Women's Centre, Hotel des Mille Collines (well known from the movie Hotel Rwanda) or wander in the local markets.

Distance, Day 4: 115 kms

Est. Drive Time, Day 4: 3 hours

Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X2 Dinners

*Optional excursions:* Trek to Dian Fossey's grave, Visit to the Genocide museum and memorial, Nyamata Church Memorial

### **Day 6: Kigali to Nyakanazi, Tanzania**

Today we are on the winding road out of Rwanda, heading south east via Rusomo Falls into remote rural Tanzania.

We stay tonight in a small local guest house across the border. The local children show us around this country village and the guest house owner's wife usually cooks us a simple traditional local meal.

Distance: 260 kms

Est. Drive Time: +/- 10.5 hours (depending on the border)

Meals: X1 Breakfast, X1 Dinner

### **Day 7: Nyakanazi to Mwanza, Lake Victoria**

Today's travels through rural Tanzania bring us to Lake Victoria and a ferry crossing to Mwanza, Tanzania's second largest city. Surrounded by hills with picturesque large boulders, the city is set beside the lake.

Distance: 275 kms

Est. Drive Time: 9 hours incl. ferry journey, lunch and shopping stop

Meals: X1 Breakfast, X1 Dinner

### **Days 8 - 9: Mwanza to Ngiri, Central Serengeti**

We leave Mwanza to travel to Bunda where we relax before starting on our game drives in Tanzania's world famous northern game parks the following day. It's great to stretch your legs between the drives with a 2 hour climb up the large hill near camp to enjoy the stunning views.

We then head into the African bush to camp and enjoy Tanzania's world famous game parks. Transiting through Grumeti brings us to the Serengeti, quite simply one of the best wildlife sanctuaries on the planet.

Here we start our game drives into an expanse of vast vistas, a world of rolling savannah plains of the Serengeti National Park. The park varies from open grass plains, savanna with scattered acacia, and wooded grasslands to extensive woodlands and clay plains. The Serengeti grass plains dominate the southern half of the park. The rich volcanic soil here nourishes the grasslands which attract the migratory herds. The wildebeest follow the seasonal rains and head south each year, settling on the Serengeti Plains anytime from late November onwards, having spent the dry season in the Mara and the wetter northern woodlands of the Serengeti.

The herds regularly calve here from late December through to February. More than a million wildebeest, hundreds of thousands of plains zebras, and thousands of Thomson's gazelles can be found across the grasslands when the migration is in residence. Large predators including lions, cheetahs, and hyenas are drawn to the area also by this abundance of prey.

The large rivers in the park, whilst dry for most of the year, flow and flood during the wet seasons in

December, then from March to May. Even during the dry season though, the water table is higher along the rivers and because these areas have more water, a dense riverine forest of evergreen trees grow here, and create a special habitat for other plants, insects, birds and animals.

We set up camp in the heart of the park and enjoy an evening around the camp fire listening to the sounds of the wild.

Distance to Bunda, Day 8: 156 kms

Est. Drive Time, Day 8: 3 – 4 hours incl. lunch stop

Distance to Ikoma Gate, Serengeti, Day 9: 160 kms

Est. Drive Time, Day 9: 5 hours to Ikoma Gate incl. slow transit through Grumeti.

Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X2 Dinners

Included wildlife activity: Afternoon game drive, Serengeti National Park

Vehicle for game drive: Overland truck

*Optional excursion:* Hill walk

### **Day 10: Ngiri, Serengeti to Ngorongoro Conservation Area**

We are up early this morning for further game drives in the Serengeti before traveling around lunchtime into the famous Ngorongoro Conservation Area, another wildlife paradise beside the Serengeti. Some too take the opportunity to balloon very early to float silently over the ancient plains.

The sweeping landscapes of the Great Rift Valley will continue to impress today as we head up to the Crater rim. With the Serengeti, the Ngorongoro is designated a World Heritage Site and Biosphere Reserve due to the biodiversity and range of animals represented across this eco-system.

The Maasai live throughout this region. We stop over to visit a Maasai village and school en route to enjoy some traditional dancing, the Maasai warriors being famous for their leaping movements, which are part of a mesmerizing sequence of movements and song designed to work the group into a state of trance.

We enjoy an evening meal and overnight camp on the Crater rim beneath a blanket of stars for our last night in the bush.

Distance: 161 kms

Est. Drive Time: 5 hours

Meals: X1 Breakfast, X1 Dinner

Included wildlife activity: Morning game drive, Serengeti. Afternoon slow transit drive, Ngorongoro Conservation Area

Vehicle for game drive: Overland truck

*Optional excursions:* Balloon safari, visit to a Maasai Boma, Olduvai Gorge Museum depending on road conditions. Please note if you wish to visit Olduvai Museum you must let the office know prior to the tour departure.

### **Day 11: Ngorongoro Conservation Area to Arusha**

Early morning we descend 2,000 feet into the Ngorongoro Crater, the world's largest extinct volcano. Ngorongoro Crater is a park that never disappoints. Travelling in customised land cruisers with a local guide we can find rhino, hippo, lion, elephant, hyena, buffalo, zebra, impala, wildebeest, cheetah, monkey, ostrich and, depending on the season, flamingo, feeding in Lake Magadi.

After our morning game drives we travel onto Arusha and civilisation, to hot showers, as well as supermarkets! There is usually time for some market shopping for items such as Tinga Tinga paintings, beaded jewellery, carvings and other local crafts on the way.

We have a fun barbecue at camp tonight.

Distance: 195 kms

Est. Drive Time: 3 - 4 hours

Meals: X1 Breakfast, X1 Dinner

Included wildlife activity: Morning game drives, Ngorongoro Crater.  
Vehicle for game drive: 4x4 landcruiser with pop up roof

### **Days 12– 13: Arusha to Marangu**

We spend the morning in Arusha to shop and explore the town. After lunch we travel to Marangu at the foot of Kilimanjaro, Africa's highest mountain at 5,895 metres, the highest free-standing mountain in the world.

The next day there is the option for a day hike in Kilimanjaro National Park to Mandara hut along the start of the Marangu route. This is a beautiful walk through tropical forest and on clear days there are exciting views of both the Kibo and Mawenzi peaks of the mountain.

Alternatively take a day tour of the Marangu area to visit the village to learn more of local life, to visit a coffee plantation and a nearby waterfall.

Distance, Day 12: 120 kms

Est. Drive Time, Day 12: 3 hours

Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X2 Dinners

*Optional excursions:* Kilimanjaro day hike, Marangu day tour

### **Day 14: Marangu to Bagamoyo or Dar es Salaam**

We head south towards the Indian Ocean coast today, where we park up for a night to make final preparations for our four day stay on the tropical spice island of Zanzibar.

We retire tonight lulled to sleep by the sound of the waters lapping nearby and the breeze in the coconut palms.

Distance: 485 kms (545 kms if to Dar)

Est. Drive Time: 9 – 10 hours incl. lunch stop (11 – 12 hours if to Dar)

Meals: X1 Breakfast, X1 Dinner

### **Days 15 – 18: Zanzibar Island**

The last few days on tour allows us time on the exotic spice island of Zanzibar. We make core arrangements well ahead of time so we are assured our groups are comfortable in popular beach cottages to the north of the island and for a night in a simple local lodge in the traditional capital. The tour leader travels over to the island with the group to ensure that all runs smoothly. Other excursions available include snorkeling excursions to Prison Island, famous for its giant tortoise, as well as Mnemba Atoll; a trek in Jozani forest to see the red colobus monkeys, and fishing. Scuba diving can be arranged from the Dive Centre near the beach cottages.

Day 15 we travel by ferry in the morning to Stone Town, the ancient capital of Zanzibar Island. We head north, straight to the beach at Kendwa for a three-night stay in beach cottages. Zanzibar's coastline offers superb white, palm-fringed beaches. Out from our beach cottages, we can swim in warm waters, much less susceptible to the tides than on the east side. The smooth beaches and white sand make for dazzling days in the sun. There is beach volleyball and fun beach bars.

There are also different excursions to enjoy. You can take a walk in the Jozani Forest, home of the red colobus monkeys or head south to swim with the dolphins off Kizimkazi Beach. There are also opportunities to visit Prison Island with its giant tortoise and to snorkel in crystal clear coral waters. Mnemba Atoll is a boat ride away just off the north east coast, and has superb corals and gorgeous schools of reef fish. Turtles who breed on the island, and dolphins, can be seen with a little luck. Seasonal whale shark and humpback whales can be seen gliding past.

For the final night, we check into a lodge within Stone Town. Stone Town was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2000. With its classic Swahili architecture of towers, courtyards and narrow alleys fronting onto shops, houses and mosques, the old town will catch your imagination. Mainly built of coral stone in the 19th century, the buildings have large verandahs with wooden balustrades and elegantly decorated balconies, and distinctly ornate wooden doors often with brass studs.

A Spice Tour on the island allows you to test different spices and fruits as well as find out a little of the island's history. You can enjoy sundowners at Africa House whilst watching the traditional dhows sail in the harbour against the sunset and wander the evening food markets for Zanzibar pizza and other seafood delicacies.

Distance, Day 15: 60 kms Bagamoyo to Dar es Salaam

Est. Drive Time, Day 15: Up to 2 hours Bagamoyo to Dar es Salaam

Meals, Day 15: X1 Breakfast

*Optional excursions:* City tour, Snorkeling, Scuba diving, Mnemba Island, Turtle Sanctuary visit, Prison Island with a visit to the Aldabra tortoise, Jozani Forest to view the red colobus monkeys

### **Zanzibar Island finish**

You can fly out at any time from the island the day after the tour ends or spend extra days here. We can also arrange the ferry back to Dar es Salaam for you should you fly out from there. Contact the office for more information as to arrangements at the end of the tour.

Extra accommodation can be arranged for those who would like more time on Zanzibar Island

**Please note safari itineraries are given as a guide only. A safari is a journey and true journeys in Africa unfold and are of an adventurous nature. The unexpected can arise, so do allow for this.**

## **Other Information**

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### **Gorilla trekking**

On your trip we travel to one of the gorilla parks to trek the mountain gorillas. We book the gorilla permits for your safari ahead of time to visit either Bwindi National Park or Mgahinga National Park, depending on availability.

#### **A few things to note about your gorilla trek**

Trekking the gorillas is undoubtedly the highlight of most passengers' safari and on average 30 to 40 people trek successfully with us each month in the gorilla parks. In order to protect the gorillas, only eight people trek to see them at a time so, to help you and avoid difficulties at the parks, gorilla permits are booked and paid for in advance. Our aim is always to obtain booking slots back to back to avoid delays and so that the group has the best possible itinerary. Do be aware that permit availability can become very difficult and permits are in high demand.

Trekking the mountain gorillas is one way of channelling essential and much-needed funds towards protecting this endangered species. Gorilla numbers remain dangerously low and trekking allows you to view these extraordinary creatures whilst also helping them survive. Tourism is making a difference to the gorilla's survival and it is vital that trekking continues to be supportive of this.

The gorilla parks are small and your actions in them have a real impact. Please take note of the following to ensure that trekking continues to impact positively on the gorillas and their environment:

- We will only take part in official walks with a guide. No more than 8 people trek at a time. You will have an hour with the gorillas. Please do not walk alone in the park.
- Coughs, colds and other viruses including diarrhoea are easily transmitted to the gorillas. If you are sick with a cold, flu or contagious illness please do not visit the gorillas. We do ask for your cooperation here.
- When you are with the gorillas do stay together in a tight group and don't surround them. You are asked to keep your distance, a minimum of 7 metres (22 feet). If approached by a gorilla, back away slowly to keep the 7 metre separation.
- Go quietly in the parks. Keep your voice down. Do not wave your arms or point as this can be seen as a threat. Move slowly.
- Please do not use flash. Make sure your flash is switched off. It can frighten the gorillas.
- Please do not smoke, eat or drink with the gorillas or within 200 metres of the gorillas. If you do need to



cough or sneeze cover your face and turn away from the gorillas.

- If you need to go to the toilet, dig a 30 centimetre hole and bury it. Take all litter home and please do not pick or remove any plants or wildlife.

Do be aware there can be delays at the gorilla parks and that the gorillas are wild animals roaming in densely forested terrain. To find the gorillas you will trek in their forest home, up steep inclines and in dense jungle. The park guides are experts at finding them and at helping the gorillas feel comfortable and at ease with their visitors. Your guide and the trackers do everything possible to locate the gorillas quickly on your trek but it can be sometimes a long (but very beautiful!) hike. Bear in mind at other times they can be found within an hour.

Whilst your trekkers work very hard to enable you to see the mountain gorillas and 99.9% of clients do see the gorillas, a sighting is never guaranteed.

Do be aware the gorillas are located in an area that is subject to some ongoing political unrest. The Rwandan and Ugandan Armies work very hard to maintain security in the region. Gorilla tourism is an important contributor to the Ugandan and Rwandan economy. There is a significant army presence on all borders and much visible security at all Parks and the campsites. Plain-clothes and uniformed security personnel patrol local roads and in the local communities. Do be aware also that armed guards trek with visitors to the gorillas. We are confident that everything possible is being done to ensure security in the area. Our top priority must be the safety and security of our passengers and crew. Security in this region will be of ongoing concern for a while and can never be completely guaranteed as the park is on the border with Democratic Republic of Congo. Do be aware also that if we do perceive any increased security risk in the region we will immediately re-route your safari.

## Zanzibar Island

As part of your safari we spend three nights in beach bungalows to the north of the island and then one night is spent in a lodge in the traditional ancient capital, Stone Town. We also organise a spice tour which provides a fun and fascinating glimpse of the history of the island. We visit the ruins of the Maharubi palace and plantations where exclusive fruits and spices are grown, the island's history being based around the spice trade. Otherwise the time on the island is yours to relax, enjoy the beach, warm waters and fresh seafood. There is a scuba diving centre beside the bungalows and snorkeling is also easily arranged from here.

Please note accommodation on the island is booked in shared accommodation in doubles/twins or triples. Singles are also available, for which there is a supplement payable by 6 weeks prior to departure. Please do advise if you would like to upgrade to a single room.

## Money and budgeting

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**When costing an overland safari the areas you need to consider are:**

*Before you go...*

1. Your price
2. Your airfare
3. Immunisation and anti-malarials
4. Gorilla permit
5. Zanzibar stay
6. Insurance
7. Equipment
8. Visas required ahead of time

*Step off the plane in Africa with...*

9. Spending money – This is very individual and often depends on how much you drink, shop and wish to upgrade. A suggested budget would be 380 - 455 USD.
10. Local payment – 380 USD
11. Optional excursions – A traveller who wishes to do most optionals on the trip will spend an average of between 150 - 350 USD.

12. Visas on the ground: Up to US\$200 depending on nationality
13. Pre and post safari costs

*Please note: You need to carry money with you out to Africa to cover Items 9 to 13 (i.e. for your spending money, local payment, optionals, visas on the ground and pre and post safari costs). The figures above are conservative estimates for average spending per person on safari. There is a lot of variation in how much spending money individuals need as it is dictated by personal choice, as is your budget for optional activities.*

*We have no control over local operators' charges and new or other options that become available after our date of printing. Nor can we control exchange rate fluctuations, which can impact on budgets as some items are only payable in USD or are cheaper when purchased in USD. USD often tends to be the preferred currency. Figures quoted are based on regular information we receive from operators, passengers and crew in the past 12 months. You are advised that prices do go up and down very regularly. Our aim is to keep you informed of the most recent prices. In general you will often find that whilst some prices are underestimated at other times they are overestimated.*

### **How do I take this money to Africa?**

We strongly recommend that you organise the money you are wanting to take to Africa *before* you leave for your trip. Note that you may well have some ATM access on this route. You will also need to have other options though as ATMs are only of limited use. Clients are currently organising their money including cash for their safari as follows:

#### **USD cash**

We are finding that clients find it most convenient to take approximately USD 600 - 800 cash on this trip. This includes money for your local payment, visa payments, some optionals and occasionally to buy local currency when you can't get to a bank or forex bureau, assuming you are also carrying some sterling cash or Euro to use for purchasing local currency for spending money as well.

Please note that in general USD notes need to be dated post 2009 or later and in good condition. When arranging your USD cash a range of is probably the most convenient including a few 5 USD and 10 USD notes as well as 20s, 50s and 100s.

Remember that, for some passport holders, you will need USD for your visa when you land at Kigali. Also do have suitable notes organised to pay the exact amount for your local payment if at all possible. Your local payment is payable on Day One of the trip.

#### **Pounds Sterling or Euro cash**

You may also like to carry up to 300 GBP or EUR cash as well if your money is currently in sterling or euro. This can be useful to buy local currency when you can get to a bank or regular forex bureau. If you are not in sterling or euro, you should carry more USD cash.

When arranging your cash remember small denominations can be useful but the larger denominations will give a better exchange rate. You should also request that your notes are not torn, written on or damaged in any way.

Sterling and Euro is best carried as 20s and 50s to be used to buy local currency when you can get to a bank or forex bureau. Please note also that Scottish pound notes are not accepted.

When you arrive in Kigali, you should change up enough money into Rwandan francs to cover all your personal needs such as accommodation, transfers and meals including breakfast for the first day before you meet the truck. Please note breakfast is not provided on the first day of the safari. We would strongly recommend you change up 40 GBP/EUR at Kigali airport when you arrive. Otherwise change the equivalent in USD.

When you land in Kigali there is a bank open for international arrivals.

Cash is carried at your own discretion and should be organised before you leave for Rwanda.

#### **ATM Access and Paying by Card**

Note that it will be possible to access ATMs en route if you have a debit (Maestro) card or credit card (Visa and master card)

Do be aware where ATM access is available you can usually only draw local currency which cannot be used for all your costs. Many of your costs such as the local payment, visas and some of the optionals can only be paid in USD cash. Please note as well that Visa is the preferred card to use for payments.

Travel cards and cash passports are not well known and not widely accepted so not recommended to bring.

Do note that ATMs are not always reliable as they can be out of money, broken or the power could be out so do not solely rely on ATMs.

### **Other things to note in regards to organising your money for Africa**

It is not often possible to obtain many of the relevant African currencies prior to going, and where it is possible the rate is usually poor.

Your crew will let you know where is best to change up into local currency as you enter each country. It is best not to organise any local currencies prior to arriving.

For your information the currencies you will meet are:

Uganda	Ugandan Shillings
Rwanda	Rwandan francs
Tanzania	Tanzanian shillings

Your crew can advise you as to what you will need, where exchanges/banks are available etc. as you travel. You will need to consider as you travel what optionals you will wish to do as well as how much you'll require for your personal needs.

This trip is structured so that some of your costs are 'pay as you go' in style. This allows you to control your budget and only pay for those things you wish to do. Overland trips have been costed this way for many years and for the following reasons: prices for some optionals can vary a lot month to month; some optionals are quite seasonal; different clients like to do different options; banking in Africa is quite difficult. By doing it in this way, you know that your money is regularly going directly to local operators in Africa. Do remember also to carry what you need for before and after the safari on top of the above budget.

### **What we cover from the price and local payment**

GAME DRIVES IN BIG GAME PARKS AS WELL AS OTHER WILDLIFE RESERVES AND HIGHLIGHTS Incl.

- The Serengeti
- Ngorongoro Crater
- The Grumeti Game Reserve
- Lake Victoria
- Kigali - Genocide Memorial

### **WE ALSO INCLUDE**

- A fully equipped and diesel expedition truck/vehicle including all camping and cooking gear, a fridge, gas cooker, tents, sleeping mats etc.
- Services of a driver and safari leader
- The ongoing advice and back up from The Absolute Team
- All road tolls and taxes are paid

### **CAMPING, BREAKFAST & DINNER WHILST TRAVELLING ON THE TRUCK i.e.**

- Breakfast (x18) & dinner (x14) whilst travelling on the truck including some pre-prepared bbqs and local meals
- 11 nights camping, 3 nights dorm accommodation in a lodge or similar, & 4 nights B/B accommodation on Zanzibar Island
- Transfers on the island and a Spice Tour

### **WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED**

- Flights including taxes
- Optional excursions as listed
- Pre and post tour Add Ons as well as airport transfers and accommodation

- Lunch and drinks throughout except where detailed in the inclusions
- Other incidentals including for tips, internet use, upgrades from camping and the occasional cheap excursion such as local walks
- Visas
- Extra equipment including sleeping bag, torch and medical kit
- Personal travel insurance
- Vaccinations and anti malarials as required

### Personal spending money

We find that you are wise to allow 380 - 455 USD approximately for personal spending money. This amount is individual and variations in budgets depend largely on how much you spend on souvenirs and drink, as well as on lunch and snacks. The spending money is also calculated to cover those times when you don't eat dinner on the truck whilst on Zanzibar Island. You may also need to spend on personal costs such as email, toiletries etc. It is a regularly updated average that has been provided by the crew and recent clients. Some weeks you will spend more and other weeks less. Allow an extra 30 USD per week approximately if you think you might want to occasionally upgrade your accommodation to stay in chalets, which are available at some campsites.

For those who enjoy shopping or even browsing there are many different items to tempt you – Tanzanian makonde carvings and stone chess boards, kangas and kikois, beads and jewellery to name just a few.

Regularly 'smallish' optional activities costing under 20 USD also arise and these will also be covered by this spending money.

**Tippling:** You may like to consider tips for good service, particularly at some of the main highlights such as after your gorilla trek or at Ngorongoro Crater. You may find that you want to organise these tips as a group or individually.

If eating out in restaurants, a 10% tip is a good guide to follow.

Crew tips are certainly not expected although the Absolute crew do work incredibly hard and often much of this work is done behind the scenes, before or after the group is up and about. A tip or small gift is always appreciated and is also a way to show your appreciation of their efforts if you have had an enjoyable trip.

Do budget carefully to ensure you have adequate spending money to cover all eventualities and enjoy all you wish to do once out in Africa, bearing in mind that it is very difficult to access money from overseas once you are on the trip. Remember also to budget for whatever pre and post safari arrangements you might also have in mind.

### Optional activities

These excursions are paid for in Africa with the exception of the gorilla permit and the Zanzibar Island stay, which are booked and paid for in advance in London if you wish to do these options. Do note these excursions are run by local operators on the ground. They are not run by Absolute Africa.

Please contact us if you would like further information about any of these activities or excursions. Many of the optionals are payable in Africa in USD (cash). A few may be payable in local currencies. (Prices are given as a guide only as at July 2024)

#### UGANDA

##### *At the gorillas*

Suggested tip for your gorilla guide	10 USD
Golden monkeys entrance	90 USD
Transport to Golden Monkeys	50 USD/vehicle
Orphanage visit	10 USD
Batwa village visit - visiting a tribe in their relocated village, inc. transport, minimum number 3 people	Not available at this time
Sunset canoe trekking – Lake Mutanda	10 USD
Coffee tour	35 USD

#### RWANDA



• Genocide Memorial and Museum - Audio Guide	Free 25 USD
• Dian Fossey's grave	100 USD
• Transport to Dian Fossey's grave	100 USD/vehicle
• Banana beer making, depending on numbers	13 - 35 USD
• Basket weaving, depending on numbers	14 - 30 USD

## TANZANIA

• Kilimanjaro NP day hike to first camp incl lunch, guide and park fees	125 USD
• Marangu village tour with visit to coffee plantation, waterfall, local traders etc incl lunch and guide	60 USD

### Zanzibar Island

#### Scuba Diving

• Double tank dive (local)	115 USD
• Single dive (local) from	65 USD
• Discover scuba diving	99 USD
• PADI open water diver (3 days + needed)	499 USD

#### Snorkeling

• Kendwa from	15 USD
• Tumbutu half day from	25 USD
• Mnemba (inc lunch) from	45 USD
• Prison Island Entry and transport (depending on numbers)	from 25 - 35 USD
• Fishing off the reefs	40 USD
• Deep sea fishing, boat (takes 5 people), half day	from 450 USD
• Turtle Aquarium	20 USD
• Sunset cruise	30 USD

### Jozani Forest – to visit the red colobus monkeys

• From Stone Town (depending on numbers)	from \$30 - \$120
• From North	from \$40 - \$160

## Further information about optional excursions and spending money

Paying for excursions in Africa allows you to decide what you wish to do as you travel. Bear in mind that some activities also can be seasonal. Please note also that prices constantly fluctuate in Africa, partly due to exchange rate fluctuation. The above figures are the very latest currently available to us at the time of writing. They can be taken as a reasonable guide only.

Lunch, drinks, souvenirs and your evening meals on Zanzibar are also covered by your personal spending money.

Updates on the price for all optional excursions are usually available in the update information we send out about two months before departure. Do check online for the latest copy of this document as well. Do be aware though that you are covering an enormous amount of territory on this trip and visiting many destinations, and consequently you may well spend a lot. Africa is not 'cheap', particularly when you add in game park entry fees and the cost of adventure sports such as scuba diving. Much of what you see, though, will afford you priceless memories and allow you to be actively involved to the limit. And remember that the money you spend also enables much-needed cash to go to local people and wildlife conservation.

If you choose not to do an optional activity, do bear in mind that this is your chance to catch up on washing and communications, read, relax and take time for yourself. During these periods the truck is usually parked up at a campsite where there are adequate facilities for you to be quite comfortable while you wait. Your crew will also, when possible, help you with alternative activities – e.g. safe places to take local walks that might be available, swim, cycle, hire a canoe, kick a soccer ball around with the local kids, go fishing, camel ride, visit the local markets or post office, a cinema, a museum, golf course, church, club or coffee shop.

There is a range of availability as to what there is to do from destination to destination on the itinerary. At some places such as Zanzibar there is a lot of choice and either/or optional choices. At other destinations, which are quieter, there are fewer choices if you do not do the listed optional excursion/s. This is worth noting particularly for optionals that last over one or two nights as you may not wish to be on your own at a campsite for an extended period.

If you would like further details of any of the different optionals for the safari do not hesitate to contact the office. It is a group participation safari so it is worthwhile thinking and planning ahead as to what you personally might like to do and to work out a realistic budget accordingly.

Please note also every safari is individual and it is not possible to detail all the possible optionals you will have a choice to do nor to predict new options that can arise. We will endeavor to provide another accurate price update for you just prior to departure. Please note also though we have no control over local operators' prices or government taxes. Nor do we just select operators on price, many factors have to be weighed up when selecting operators. We are always keen to get information on new operators and the best prices but do be aware that deals come and go constantly in Africa. Consistent service delivery and safe and respectful ethical practices are also worth searching for and rewarding. Your crew will work very hard to ensure you get the best value for money day to day on the road.

If you would like any assistance in regard to your budget please do not hesitate to get in touch with us.

## What do I need to bring?

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We ask that you carry your possessions in one large backpack, travel bag or soft suitcase (65 to 85 litre maximum). Day to day necessities can also be kept in an additional day bag. Please note we reserve the right to refuse any extra baggage and sending it home or storing it will be at your own cost.

You should carry your valuables in a flat money belt which you wear against your skin.

Do remember traveling light is always wise and particularly when going overland. Passengers also often buy a lot of African souvenirs on the way.

The vehicles have good storage capacity to carry souvenirs and lockups in the vehicle for your valuables, pack and day bag. There is a locker under your seat for easy access for day to day essentials.

The following list details essentials as well as non-essentials. It is a guide only. If you are unsure about specific items please feel free to ring us.

### You need to bring:

- Travel documents including passport (including relevant visas) and air tickets
- Booking Voucher with Final Receipt - essential for immigration purposes
- Vaccination documentation, particularly for yellow fever shot
- Insurance policy
- US\$ cash for your optionals, local payment and spending money
- Credit card - preferably Visa

### Other items to consider

- Student/YHA card
- PADI licence/diving ticket
- International drivers license
- Photocopies of main documents (keep separately)

### Essential camping equipment

- Sleeping bag and sheet.
- Eating utensils, including cutlery, cup, plate/bowl
- Torch and batteries, a head torch being the most useful.
- Mosquito repellent (DEET) 50% strength – up to 1 bottle
- Insect repellent spray

- High-factor sunblock cream
- Sun block cream
- Padlock
- Small personal medical kit including: anti-malarials, vitamin tablets, paracetamol, antibiotic powder, Band-Aids, cotton wool, sterile gloves, flu medication for coughs, colds and sinuses, rehydration salts, sports injury cream for sprains, an antihistamine, immodium, treatment for tummy bugs, stings/bites and sunburn and eye drops. If you wear contact lenses you are advised to carry disposables

### **Other items**

- Pocket knife
- 1 litre water container. Make sure it screws tight.
- Non-plastic bags for wet items, rubbish and to keep items dust free.
- Towel
- Antibacterial Soap
- Condoms
- Tissues
- A means of securing your hair back is useful such as a bandana, a scarf, beanies, hair ties and clips as it can be windy day to day driving on the truck.
- Cigarette lighter
- Concentrated travel washing liquid or washing powder, clothesline
- Emergency sewing kit
- Tweezers, nail scissors, nail brush

You will probably find it worthwhile to pick up a cheap blanket once you arrive.

In regards to toiletries these are available to buy in Africa including shampoo, soap, toilet paper and tampons. Please note though they can be quite expensive and it can be time-consuming sourcing particular items so carry what you need if possible.

Ensure you bring any medications you might require with you with the script.

The two most common gynecological problems that may occur whilst traveling in Africa are thrush and urinary tract infections. If you know you are prone to either of these it may pay to seek advice from your doctor and bring the necessary treatments. Loose fitting, cotton underwear and clothes.

### **Consider bringing:**

- Binoculars
- Pillow
- Wet Ones can be useful
- Books
- Writing paper, pens

### **Electrical items**

- Mobile phone *Remember if you are on international roaming the charges will be very high to make and receive phone calls. If communication is very important to you, sim cards can be purchased very cheaply on the road. Some clients have their phone unlocked before arriving in Africa whilst coverage is not always good on this tour*
- Smartphone/Music player including headphones if you want to listen to your own music
- Camera in a protective case and spare memory card(s)
- For SLR cameras we recommend a telephoto of 120 mm (or similar) or an 80-200 mm zoom
- 2 camera batteries
- Polarising filter/lens hood for SLRs
- USB cable – to connect to internet cafes or for downloading
- Camcorder

### **Charging your equipment**

If bringing a camcorder, digital camera, iPod or mobile, your equipment can be charged from the truck. The trucks have 600 watt Intelligent Power Inverters converting 24v DC to AC mains electricity (220-240v).

This will be sufficient for charging any photographic equipment required. Remember to bring all necessary cables.

You will also want to bring a mains international adapter to charge at campsites as an alternative. A spare battery pack, where possible, is also advised.

## Clothes

Please double check the weather conditions for your particular safari when packing. Cotton and loose fitting items are preferable. Do also realise that any white clothing won't stay that way!

- Lightweight cotton clothing, shorts and T-shirts as well as shirts with long sleeves and long pants including casual wear for nights out. Long pants, sarongs and sandals are fine for these times
- Lightweight waterproof jacket and a fleece
- Swimming costume, sun hat, sunglasses, sandals
- Lightweight closed-in comfortable walking boots, shoes or trainers with a non-slip tread which give enough support and good traction. Please avoid shoes that get too heavy and hot, 'platforms', high heels or 'strappy' sandals
- Spare shoelaces

We would encourage you to bring clothes that will wear well, as traveling in Africa is very hard on clothes. Conditions are rough and belongings do get dusty and can get damaged. Soft bush colours are most suitable. Being able to layer clothing that can be removed easily as the day heats up is an advantage. This also helps to keep valuables inconspicuous. Clothes with zip and velcro pockets are sensible. Due to the bumpy road conditions women are advised to bring at least one sports bra. Women should dress 'modestly', respecting the sensibilities and attitudes of the people and countries they are visiting. This is of particular importance for your stay on Zanzibar.

*Be aware that camouflage clothing should be avoided.*

## Life on your Big Yellow Truck

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Day to day it is essential that everyone helps out with every routine chore. The trips are participatory in nature - the more you put in to the group and the trip the more you will get out of it. Overland safaris are very much about everyone willingly getting involved and working as a team. A roster is established for duties. Tasks you will need to be involved in are: shopping and cooking, assistant to the cook, washing up, cleaning the truck, filling the jerry cans, lighting the fires and truck guard duty.

On safari do follow all instructions given by your safari leader as to how to use equipment, move around on, and enter and exit the truck as well as how to maintain all supplies. Please also follow all washing and cleaning procedures carefully to avoid infections being spread. Seat belts are fitted on the truck. For your safety please use these.

It is essential in order to keep to schedules that you listen at group meetings to know what is happening and when, on the following day. Please follow all instructions carefully in regard to border crossings. Your truck will also usually have a small notice board with information as to what is happening for the next few days. For the group to function well you do need to keep informed as to what is happening and use group meetings to help the group work together. Please feel free to discuss any matter with the crew and to use group meetings. Do remember you are on a group safari and it is also as valuable to listen to other people's ideas as well as contribute your own.

On a daily basis you are encouraged to look out for each other and be considerate of everyone else's needs and wishes. Your group will be made up of individuals all wanting to get the most out of their trip and at the same time each of you will have your own specific likes and dislikes, needs and wishes. These are group adventure camping safari, not a 5 star holiday! A sense of humour and patience are essentials to pack! The group experience of seeing your safari through together on the truck is one of the really exciting and fun aspects of the trip. For some, the group experience and day to day life on the truck becomes a main highlight.

Often on the road you will be up early for breakfast. Wherever possible, you buy lunch in local markets and you then have opportunities to mix in with the local community and organise anything you need to including



ensuring you have enough drinking water. Remember how important it is to keep up your fluid levels during the trip. Please note we cannot guarantee the provision of regular clean drinking water from the truck throughout the safari and you do need to organise your water day to day. At most campsites the truck can easily access clean drinking water and you will find the water carried on the truck is often drinkable, particularly once we head south into Tanzania. Where this is not the case it is advisable to buy your own bottled water, which is readily available and most campsites now sell sealed bottled mineral water. When purchasing your water do check that the bottles are sealed.

Drive times in Africa can be difficult to predict so do be prepared for the occasional situation when the plot changes!! Getting bogged is an essential optional extra...be prepared. And in general, be ready for some occasional long and dusty drives. These are based on ongoing and careful scheduling decisions to ensure you get to the current 'must see' places.

On the road there is always a lot to see but also too, you may like to bring some good books and an iPod to listen to your own music. The occasional long drives are deemed essential by crew to get you where you want to be in the time given.

### **Schedules and itineraries**

When you go on safari do remember our aim at all times is to enable you to have an experience of a lifetime at an affordable price. Due to the nature of Africa - weather, politics, road conditions, lack of infrastructure, border restrictions, breakdown, sickness, etc. - it is not always possible to exactly follow departure/arrival dates and routes. The best plans can unravel and in a lot of ways that is all part of the adventure that makes your safari. Itineraries and truck schedules can be changed at any stage prior or during your safari particularly in consideration of crew needs, weather and road conditions as well as security concerns, truck servicing requirements and booking patterns. Whilst we do all we can to avoid making changes please note we do reserve the right to change vehicles and/or crew on a safari at any time without notifying passengers.

The trips are made up of components and quite often during the safari you will probably meet clients doing shorter and longer sections of your trip depending on the booking patterns for the months you are traveling.

### **Camping**

We supply large, durable three-person tents complete with ground sheet and separate waterproof flysheet, ideal for Africa's varied conditions. They also have mossie netting in-built at the doors and openings. These are used for two people only.

We also supply high-density foam roll mats.

All cooking equipment is supplied including pots and pans, gas cookers, a cool box, lighting, fire-grate, cooking bench, chairs and shelter. The truck also has a large fridge.

It is a participation trip and part of your every day routine will be to put up your own tent and be involved in all the daily chores on a daily basis including cooking and cleaning. For reasons of personal hygiene, we ask you to supply your own cup, plate and cutlery. You may wish to bring your own mossie net as well if you think you may wish to sleep out of your tent, particularly in the hotter months. It can become warm in the tents. Please note your net needs to be large enough to tuck in under your roll mat.

There is also the occasional opportunity to upgrade to dorm-style chalet or simple hut accommodation with a bed if you think you might need a break from camping. This usually costs about 20 USD a night. Availability though is very limited and you need to be considerate of everyone else on the truck. Do budget accordingly though if you might wish to upgrade once or twice en route.

The facilities in the campsites we use vary a lot. In general you will find campsites that are clean, may give a little hot water, and can have working flush toilets. Be aware though that water pressure is often very weak and toilets are in the main long drop style through Tanzania. Please do not come on your African adventure camping safari expecting pristine bathroom facilities...

You will find we may also camp in the bush a couple of times during this trip under the African night sky. Your truck is well equipped for these opportunities but be prepared to 'rough it' a little these nights and enjoy the chance to camp out in the wild.

Please remember when leaving a campsite we do expect you to be diligent to leave places as you find

them if not better. In particular we insist that cigarette butts and toilet paper are not left behind when free camping... we are just visitors here in a continent with extraordinary challenges and dilemmas to face. Do be responsible as you travel.

### **Sickness**

All our trucks have a medical kit, which has been put together by tropical expedition specialists for emergency use only. The foreign embassies throughout Africa provide English-speaking doctors for emergency situations. If you do become ill we will transport you as soon as possible to the nearest health clinic and your crew will do all they can to assist. You will always have a friendly escort.

### **Meals and cooking on the truck**

Day to day meals are prepared from the truck using both the non perishable supplies we buy in bulk prior to the safari and fresh supplies we buy as we travel. Staying fit and healthy on safari is a priority as we do keep busy and we want you to enjoy all you do. Everyone takes turns on a roster basis cooking for the group, being 'assistants' to the cooks and with the clean up. The safari leader assists with menus, recipes and loads of ideas as well as being directly involved with cooking as needed. She/he is available to provide support and encouragement at any time during meal preparation. Cooking together is lots of fun and all part of the group experience! The sort of meals provided day to day are spaghetti and pasta dishes, stir fries, cottage pies, kebabs, curries, stews and casseroles, hamburgers or jacket potatoes, which are then complimented with rice and/or salads. Breakfast is usually fruits, muesli and/or other cereals, toast, as well as some regular cooked breakfasts like eggs, bacon, baked beans or pancakes. During the trip we often also arrange to cook a spit-roast pig or goat or alternatively do a hungi, which is usually a project in itself...

There are also a few pre-arranged meals booked ahead of time so the whole group can occasionally relax in the evenings in the knowledge that someone else is doing the cooking. This frees up the itinerary so you can enjoy a little more of Africa. We also use these opportunities to enjoy a couple of traditional local meals on safari and as well arrange a seafood buffet so the group can experience seafood fresh from the Indian Ocean.

### **Specialist diets**

For vegetarians we do all possible to ensure a good supply of veggies, salads, fruits, beans, pastas and rice. The diet leans towards vegetarian day to day, as fresh quality meat is not easily accessed every day. The staples are beans, pastas, pulses, and rice, as well as fresh fruit and vegetables when available and in season. In restaurants, when meals are ordered ahead of time, vegetarian options are available with usually good supplies of fresh fruits, veggies and salads. Do be aware though how spoilt we are in the Western world with our constant supplies of fruit and veggies regardless of the season. In reality, and more naturally, fruit and vegetable supplies are seasonal, may not be as chemically assisted and can also be difficult to access en route. We will do all we can to ensure supplies where possible.

We can also cater for gluten-free, vegans, wheat-free and dairy-free diets, supplying soymilk, rice noodles, gluten-free cereals etc.

When booking, do remember to let us know if you have any specific dietary requests.

### **Safety and security whilst on safari**

Traveling as a group does provide you with an added level of security. Perhaps the two most important factors to always bear in mind when traveling in Africa are to be constantly vigilant as to your own and your group's health and security.

### **Personal safety**

Do be very aware of protecting your cash and valuables at all times and do not walk around flaunting valuables e.g. cameras, jewellery and money. Remember even cheap jewellery can look expensive! Day to day, layer your clothing to keep valuables inconspicuous and take clothes preferably with zip and velcro pockets.

Money Belts – The most efficient money belts are ones that go under your clothing, against your skin. If you use a bum bag please only carry small amounts of local currency in it that you are prepared to lose.

Do not leave anything unattended anywhere - including in your tent - and avoid being crushed in large crowds. Be very careful when you walk after dark; never walk alone or become separated from the group. Take taxis in cities at night and around unfamiliar areas. When taking taxis always agree on a price before setting off.

Confidence tricksters are particularly common. Be wary of anyone with a hard luck story, asking for assistance, soliciting sponsorship (particularly educational) or anyone offering a deal to change money at favourable rates.

ATMs are becoming more accessible on the route, you must also be wary of security of crimes around ATMs. Be discreet when withdrawing cash and as always be very careful with your card and cash.

### **Truck security**

Your truck will have a lockable safe in which to keep your passport and valuables. You will also have a lockable place on the truck to keep your day bag. Your backpack is stored underneath the truck. The truck is never left unattended. Do be aware on safari you will be required in certain locations to assist with watching that all is safe and secure with other passengers. Please note that whilst all precautions will be taken in regards to valuables left on the vehicle, we cannot be held responsible for any damage or loss from the vehicle.

Do listen carefully to all instructions regarding security issues given by your crew and local operators as we travel. Before traveling you are also advised to keep yourself informed and up to date as to the current political situation in the countries through which we travel and to check out the Foreign Office Travel Advice. If you are a British, Australian or New Zealand citizen you may like to look at: [www.fco.gov.uk](http://www.fco.gov.uk), [www.dfat.gov.au](http://www.dfat.gov.au) or [www.mfat.govt.nz](http://www.mfat.govt.nz).

Remember this is a group experience you are booking. It is a condition of booking that you follow the group leader's instructions and take responsibility for your rostered tasks. It is important that every member of the group is attentive and looks out for each group member's health and security. All in your group will appreciate your co-operation with this.

### **Photography**

African authorities often require that tourists do not take pictures of bridges, airports, railway stations or military installations. We are often in areas where locals are not used to being photographed and we ask you to show them every courtesy. If in doubt it is always best to ask first

### **Trading, donating and supporting**

You may wish to consider if you want to bring items such as old T-shirts, sunglasses, cheap watches, old walkmans/discmans and mobiles to trade.

Please be aware we strongly discourage giving away 'something for nothing' from the truck, whilst we are very happy on the other hand to donate pens, books etc. to schools. Do note it is also very unwise to donate cash en route. If you wish to donate something whilst in Africa remember unwanted clothes, pens, crayons, balls, books, soap and stickers are always welcome in schools and orphanages. For more ideas feel free to contact us.

### **Problems or issues you may have while on the tour**

Where you have any issue at all during the tour, talk to the tour leader at the very earliest as this could affect the rest of your trip. The tour leader is there to help and they can't if you don't let them know the issue. Your driver is always happy to chat as well if the tour leader isn't available.

Remember as well these are group participation trips. Group meetings are there so everyone can talk about what's happening day to day so do raise any niggles or queries at the meetings.

If you do experience a problem while you are on the tour such as feeling unwell, not getting along with a fellow traveller or if there is something that you are unhappy with in regard to the running of the tour or anything else that is bothering you or stopping you from having an enjoyable trip, please do inform your tour leader directly of the problem as a priority. They will want to know. Once they know they can take the appropriate actions to resolve the issue as quickly as possible. All and any issues will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

Everyone at Absolute Africa works very hard to ensure our travellers have the very best of trips. Should you have a continuing problem that you feel is not being addressed effectively it is your responsibility to email or contact the office at the very earliest. Detailing your concern in writing in an email is usually the best way to explain. We will then look into this immediately to see how the problem can be resolved so you can continue to have an enjoyable tour. Further details can be seen in our Terms and Conditions (14).

### **General code of conduct**

Please remember we are all ambassadors for our respective countries and your behaviour should reflect this. Open minds, and a desire to have a positive impact, are vital attitudes to carry with you. A sense of humour is also an essential to pack for any safari in Africa.

We ask that each member of the group looks out for each and every member in your group. The trips are about group participation and each member of the group needs to do all he or she can to enable the group to work well together.

Day to day be sensitive and aware of how you and your group are being perceived by those around you. Be alert to where you are, sensitive when taking photos, aware of how much noise we are making, careful of how you are dressed. Everyone wants to have the best time possible in Africa and there are plenty of chances to have a trip of a lifetime. Excessive noise, obscenities and inappropriate behaviour cannot be tolerated. We need to show respect to the places we visit and the people we meet enroute. Poor behaviour embarrasses other members of the group and can seriously upset those around us, particularly in campsites and restaurants. Be responsive, discreet and sensitive to the world around you and you will get more out of your trip.

Be particularly alert to the impact of excessive drinking as you travel. Alcohol abuse will put your health at risk, particularly in malarial zones. Please note alcohol is not to be drunk on the trucks.

There is also a strict no smoking rule onboard the trucks, and no-smoking areas will be set up for during meal times.

There are serious penalties in Africa with regard to illegal substances.

Game parks are a spectacular sight. Please be considerate and keep noise to a minimum. Everybody's game viewing on an ongoing basis is better served if our impact on a park is kept to a minimum. Do be attentive to all signs and instructions as to how to behave in game parks.

We won't leave a campsite until it is entirely clean. Your enthusiasm with packing up camp to ensure all is left clean is appreciated.

In a serious situation where behaviour is disruptive and/or dangerous your Safari Leader can step in and will remove you from the trip. Don't spoil your or someone else's trip.

### **Keeping in touch**

It can be quite difficult and also expensive staying in touch whilst you are traveling in Africa. Please let your family know that this will be the case, particularly if you are usually in touch on a regular basis. In an emergency if your family needs to get in touch they should contact the London office and we will do all we can to assist.

E-mail - you will be able to access email in Arusha and Zanzibar. Please note internet speed is quite often very slow so be warned!

Post - Letters from the U.K. to Africa take approximately 10 - 14 days and from Australia or New Zealand to Africa approximately 2-3 weeks. Please be aware that articles regularly going missing in the post.

If you did need to have something sent to you while traveling please contact the office as to the best destination and address to use

Please do not have anything of value posted to Africa en route, including credit cards or prescription drugs. We would also advise against having birthday and Christmas parcels posted. In an emergency if something needs to be got out to you, the London office should be contacted for further advice.

### **Language**

English is understood in most East African countries. Learning some Swahili will ensure a warm response from the locals.

The migration covers over 3,000 kilometers on the combined stage of the Serengeti and Masai Mara plains. It is a constant movement of 2.5 million animals and may well be the highlight of your Safari (depending on the season). Follow the link for our chart which will show you where you are most likely to see the migratory herds each month of the year: [www.absoluteafrica.com/migration.lasso](http://www.absoluteafrica.com/migration.lasso)

For information on where you should be able to see which animal, as well as other useful facts, check out the chart on the following page.



# What and where?

[Back to Index](#)

With such a huge variety of wildlife to see in Africa - we have put together a quick reference guide to help you plan your safari so you know what animals might be found in game parks in each country.

## ABSOLUTE AFRICA



BIG FIVE	Group Name	Average Gestation (months)	Average Life Span (years)	Status	Diet	Distribution as at June 2010									
						Kenya	Uganda	Rwanda	Tanzania	Malawi	Zambia	Zimbabwe	Botswana	Namibia	South Africa
Lion	pride	3.7	15	VU	C	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
African Elephant	herd	22	70	VU	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cape Buffalo	herd	11	17	LC	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Leopard	solitary	3	20	NT	C	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rhinoceros	crash/herd	6	35	CR	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Black White	crash/herd	6	35	NT	H	Introduced	Reintroduced	✓	Reintroduced	Reintroduced	Reintroduced	Reintroduced	Reintroduced	Reintroduced	✓
Cheetah	coalition	3	11	VU	C	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Spotted Hyena	clan	4	25	LC	O	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
African Wild/Painted Dog	pack	2.5	11	EN	C	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Blue Wildebeest (Gnu)	herd	8.5	20	LC	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Giraffe	herd/corps/tower	15	28	LC	H	✓	✓	Introduced	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Plains/Burchell's Zebra	herd/harem	12	28	LC	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Oryx/Gemsbok	herd	8.5	20	LC	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sitatunga	herd/group	7.5	19	LC	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Greater Kudu	herd	9	7.5	LC	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Common Eland	herd	9.2	17.5	LC	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Impala	herd	6.5	12	LC	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Thomson's Gazelle	herd	6	10.5	NT	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Gerenuk	group	7	20	NT	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dik-dik	monogamous pair	6	3.5	LC	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Warthog	sounder	5.7	15	LC	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mountain Gorilla	group/troop	8.5	45	EN	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Chimpanzee	group/community	8	50	EN	O	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Baboon	troop/congress	6	25	LC	O	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Golden Monkey	group/troop	5	19	EN	O	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Zanzibar Red Colobus Monkey	group	6	20	EN	O	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rock Hyrax/Dassie	colony	7	12	LC	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Banded Mongoose	group	1.7	8	LC	C	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Common Genet	solitary	2.5	13	LC	O	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Meerkat	mob/gang	2.5	13	LC	O	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hippopotamus	pod/herd	7.9	50	VU	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Nile Crocodile	pod/float	3*	45	LC	C	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Common Bottlenose Dolphin	pod	12	20	LC	C	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

\* Incubation not gestation

**Status:** LC = Least Threatened, VU = Vulnerable, EN = Endangered, CR = Critically Endangered

**DIET:** C = Carnivore, H = Herbivore, O = Omnivore

For those of you who want to read before you go, here are a few suggested titles:

The Africans	David Lamb
Malaria Dreams	Stuart Stevens
Out of Africa	Karen Blixen
Letters from Africa	Karen Blixen
Venture Into The Interior	Laurens Van der Post
Gorillas in the Mist	Dian Fossey
A Good Man in Africa	William Boyd
The Grass is Singing	Doris Lessing
African Laughter	Doris Lessing
The Tree Where Man Was Born	Peter Matthiessen
African Silences	Peter Matthiessen
French Lessons in West Africa	Peter Biddlescombe
Cry the Beloved Country	Alan Paton
The Weather in Africa	Martha Gellhorn
The Last King of Scotland	Giles Foden
Zanzibar	Giles Foden
Mukiwa – A white Boy in Africa	Peter Godwin
I Dreamed of Africa	Kuki Gallman
Songs to an African Sunset	Sekai Nzenza-Shand
The Scramble for Africa	Thomas Pakenham
Disgrace	J. M. Coetzee
The State of Africa	Martin Meredith
Mugabe: Power, Plunder and the Struggle for Zimbabwe	Martin Meredith
Blood River	Tim Butcher
The Zanzibar Chest	Aiden Hartlet
Sowing the Mustard	Yoweri Museveni
In the Footsteps of Mr Kurtz	Michela Wrong
River God and The Seven Scrolls	Wilbur Smith
A Sunday at the Pool in Kigali	Gil Courtemanche
Out of Shadows	Jason Wallace
Africa on a Shoestring	Geoff Crowther
Healthy Travel Africa	Isabelle Young, Lonely Planet Publications 2000

Lonely Planets, Bradts and Rough Guides are always a mine of information.

A 746 Michelin map will give you a good insight into where you are travelling.

**A friendly note that conditions, prices and details change constantly in Africa and what may be appropriate and/or correct one day is not necessarily the case the next. Much time and effort goes into keeping this information as up to date as possible. At the same time do not treat this document as 'the bible' for your safari. It is a guide only to assist in steering you in the right direction.**

**If you have any queries please do not hesitate to get in touch. We are more than happy to assist.**

**Queries about your safari booking should be directed to Absolute Africa. We are available on Skype and Live Chat, or feel free to email us at our bookings office at [bookings@absoluteafrica.com](mailto:bookings@absoluteafrica.com)**

**18th July 2024**