

## Between the lions – Maasai Mara

### Overview

The Masai Mara is one of the best known reserves in the whole of Africa. Seasoned safari travellers, travel writers, documentary makers and researchers often admit that the Masai Mara is one of their favourite places.

'Big skies', open savannahs, the romance of films like 'Out of Africa', or maybe a Hot Air Balloon ride?

Red-robed Maasai people, whose lifestyle is completely at odds with western practices, and from whom one learns to question certain western values.

Lions, Simba (in Swahili) are everywhere in the plains of the Masai Mara. Generally, they are sleeping in the shade (their days are spread between 1% hunting, 1% eating and 98% sleeping after eating or before hunting).

A nature walk will guide you into a complete sense of connection and appreciation for even the smallest things in nature. Our experienced guides will take you to all the hidden spots. Customised open safari vehicles offer all-round views, allowing for excellent photography opportunities.

Olonana is an award-winning tented camp on a private stretch of the Mara River, at the foot of the impressive Siria Escarpment, close to where the famous last scene from "Out of Africa" was filmed.

### Suggested Itinerary

#### DAY 1

On arrival at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport and after clearing with customs you will be met by a Nonpareil representative who will transfer you to Wilson airport for your connection flight to the Masai Mara, one of Africa's greatest parks. Your Olonana guide will meet you at the airstrip. Drive to the camp (about 15 min) with game viewing en-route, you may be rewarded with sightings of lions, elephant, buffalo, giraffe and a host of other plains' game.

On arrival relax and freshen up in your tent before lunch is served.

The tents are very spacious and have floor to ceiling mosquito netting, en-suite bathrooms with hot showers,



flush lavatories, solar lighting and large, river view verandahs.

The main dining room and veranda commands a dramatic stretch of the Mara River providing the perfect setting for breakfast, afternoon tea and after dinner star gazing.

In the afternoon there is time to relax before enjoying one of the many activities offered at Olonana. Take a game viewing drive to experience the phenomenal wildlife or visit the adjacent Maasai village to learn about the local Maasai culture and get a feel for the Maasai pastoralist heritage.

As the afternoon activity comes to an end, drive to a specially chosen vantage point overlooking the Mara plains. Enjoy drinks as you take in the beauty of the rapid sunset coloring the acacia dotted plains and transforming the world in a matter of minutes. Sit by a the log fire and discuss the day's adventures as waiters serve canapés, with the spectacular setting sun in the horizon.

Return to the lodge in time for a well deserved dinner.

## **DAY 2 & DAY 3**

This morning after breakfast at the camp venture out led by our expert guides to explore the Mara.

The Mara is a fabulous place for seeing big cats and all of the big five, a variety of plains game and over 300 bird species. The plains offer a rich variety of food for the dominant predators: lion; leopard; hyena and cheetah. Elephants browse amongst the large herds of wildebeest and topi, eland and buffalo,

Thomson's and Grant's gazelle. In the Mara River, hippos submerge to snort and grumble while crocodiles sunbathe, mouths agape, on the riverbanks. From around July to October, there's the greatest show on earth - the wildebeest migration.

On one day you could walk with our naturalist and learn about plants, trees, insects and even how to approach animals on foot, as your guide shows you how to spot animal signs which are everywhere but not that easily noticed.

Relax by the pool or revitalize at our mini-spa which offers a range of treatments from facials to body massages. Olonana earned a Silver award from Ecotourism Kenya - you can visit the wetlands which cleanses wastewater before returning it to the natural environment or take part in our tree planting initiative which offers an opportunity to purchase and plant an indigenous tree leaving a positive mark on a piece of Africa.

Mid-afternoon high tea will be served before your next activity.

During your stay there are a variety of activities that can be booked on request.



Possibly a balloon safari. Float gently over the plains with a bird's eye view of the game below as the sun rises slowly over the horizon. After around one hour the balloon lands and nearby a full breakfast is served in the middle of the bush with glasses of bubbly to toast your flight!



**Or**

An adventure on Lake Victoria. Take an early flight by light aircraft to the lake. Try fishing for the legendary giant Nile perch found in these waters as you explore the myriad of tiny islands or stop at a traditional fishing village and see how the villagers live from day to day before flying back to the Masai Mara.

On your last evening drive out into the bush where a private and secluded clearing has been prepared for an elegant dinner in the middle of the wilderness. The table setting is as sophisticated and elegant as found in the finest restaurants. Candles flicker in the darkness, throwing golden lights on the table cloth as smiling waiters serve a delicious dinner. After dinner, retire to the warmth of the campfire where brandies and liqueurs are served as guests relax and absorb the peace and beauty of an African night. Spend your morning game viewing in the Mara and return to camp for lunch.

In the afternoon your guide will transfer you to the airstrip for the flight to Nairobi's Wilson Airport. On arrival we will meet you and drive you the short distance to Nairobi's Jomo Kenyatta International Airport for your departure flight.

**Prices are in US dollars per person share:**

**Peak season 16-31 December and 21 June to 30 September \$2,980**

**High season 1 January to 31 March and 01 to 31 October \$2,400**

**Low season 1 April to 20 June and 1 November to 15 December \$1,750**

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