



Safari Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

Below are a number of questions of the type we are frequently asked by people considering booking a tour with us. If you have a question and it isn't answered below just contact us and we will get back to you as soon as we can with answers.

Who we are and our safari arrangements?

We're Kenyan based Destination Management Company representing East Africa destinations where we have knowledge, passion & Professionalism. We offer reliable, holiday services. We sort through the vast holiday options to find the best value for your holiday needs. We offer more than just a holiday; We offer value for money, interested guided experiences for all our clients regardless of age and budget. We make all safari arrangements including hotel/lodges reservations Across East Africa. We have our own fleet and though our clients are from all other the world we do not arrange international flights.

Why should I go on safari in East Africa?

Africa remains the last outpost of raw adventure, a refuge from the modern world. From the splendor of the Serengeti to the Masai Mara teeming with herds of a million wildebeest, to the pristine beauty of the Ngorongoro Crater, to the scenic viewing of game parks and reserves; this ancient land and its people offer a travel experience truly unlike any other. Eastern Africa in particular, in our opinion, provides travellers with the highest quality African wildlife and wilderness experience available.

Why big five?

The leopard, lion, elephant, rhino and buffalo were the top of list of traditional fun-hunters who came to Africa. These animals constitute a wish list for many people on safari. The term is a reference from colonial trophy hunting. Hunters ranked African animals as to how dangerous they were to hunt. This is why hippo and giraffe - despite their stature - are not among this elite, sought-after group.

What is the geographical formation like?

There are four geographical zones. The highlands, the coastal lowlands, savannah grassland, extinct volcanoes plus lakes and rivers. The Indian Ocean is shared also by Tanzania, with great beaches in Mombasa, Zanzibar among other coastal towns. The itinerary usually covers several or all of them depending on personal taste.

What are the road conditions?

In both Kenya and Tanzania, all the major roads are tarred. Not all of them are in good condition but accessible. In the National reserves the roads are of earth and rough giving the client a feel of the jungle.

What is the time difference East Africa?

- Kenya: GMT +3 hours
- Tanzania: GMT +3 hours
- Uganda: GMT +3 hours

Is English language spoken widely?

Language is not a problem and English is widely spoken in East Africa. In the tour industry some of the guides also have added languages learnt in the local institutes. These include; German, Spanish, French,

Italian, Russian, Chinese, Korean among others.

Which airlines fly to East Africa?

Many of the major world airlines such as KLM, British Airways, South African Airways, and Swissair and Kenya Airways fly into East Africa several times a week. Nairobi's JKIA acts as a hub for the East Africa region. With all international flights to Nairobi, you can easily get your connecting flight to Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania and Zanzibar.

Airports:

- Kenya has 4 major International Airports: Jomo Kenya International Airport in Nairobi, Mombasa International Airport in Mombasa, Kisumu International Airport in Kisumu and Moi International Airport in Eldoret; of these 4 airports, the first two are the most used by tourists arriving from outside Kenya.
- Tanzania has three major Airports: Julius Nyerere Airport in Dar Es Salaam, Kilimanjaro Airport near Arusha and Abeid Karume International Airport of Zanzibar.
- Uganda has one International Airport: Entebbe International Airport,
- Rwanda also has one airport: Kigali International Airport

Flights to Kenya: KQ, BA, Virgin, SN Brussels, SAA, Qatar, Emirates, Etihad, Egypt Air, Swiss Air, Turkish Airline, KLM, Gulf Air, Air India, Air Mauritius, Air France, Alitalia, Air Madagascar, Royal Jordanian Air, Korea Air

Do I need Travel Insurance?

It is always advisable to have travel insurance while visiting East Africa just like any other parts of the world. It comes in handy incase of evacuation from remote National Parks. An element of personal risk that is of hazardous nature is involved in all the expeditions. Although these can be purchased in Kenya it much better to take comprehensive travel insurance cover in your own countries to cover any flight irregularities, baggage loss or delays, as well as your travel during your entire holiday in Kenya.

Best Safari Time To Travel?

Almost all the parks have great sightings all year round. Due to different habitats of the parks and reserves an overland safari comes handy and many maintain that June to September is the best time for Kenya and April to June, October –December for Tanzania. Bottom line is that all year round there is plenty of wildlife to see and great birding activities. The mentioned months usually have less vegetation and wildlife can be viewed with relative ease. The nature reserves are at the time a bit crowded and as such recommended to make reservations much in advance.

VISA

What are the East Africa Entry Requirements?

A passport and visa are required for U.S. citizens traveling to Tanzania, Kenya or Uganda. Your passport should be valid for at least six months past your arrival date. Please make sure you have at least 2 blank pages in your passport. Please note that all travelers flying to Tanzania via or in transit through a Yellow Fever Infected Country such as Kenya, Ethiopia and Uganda are required to show proof of the Yellow Fever Vaccination Certificate. For example, this would include those persons flying to Tanzania through Nairobi, Kenya on British Airways, Virgin Atlantic Airways, Swiss Air, Kenya Airways, Brussels Airlines, KLM and Emirates. Please see the health section for further information.

Tanzania Visas

Africa Dream Safaris is proud to offer VIP Tanzania visa service to all of our clients arriving into Kilimanjaro Airport. All Tanzania visa fees are included in the price of our safaris and your Tanzania visa will be issued immediately upon arrival at Kilimanjaro International Airport. Our dedicated visa specialist will meet you in the customs area upon arrival. He will have your name posted on a sign and will stamp your passport with your Tanzania Visa enabling you to avoid the long lines and confusion at customs. Each person will simply need to provide a valid passport and we will take care of everything else. Please make sure you have at least 2 blank pages in your passport. After your visa is issued, you will be escorted outside of customs and immediately transferred to your hotel. We are unable to issue Tanzania visas at the Dar es Salaam airport. For those persons arriving into Dar es Salaam, you will need to obtain your own individual Tanzania Visas upon arrival at a cost of \$100 per person. Simply fill out the short form upon arrival into Dar es Salaam.

Kenya Visas

A visa is required to enter Kenya and can be obtained on arrival by paying USD 50 for a single entry. Because most flights arrive at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport round about the same time in the morning, there can be considerable delay in obtaining a visa on arrival. It is therefore highly recommended that visitors obtain their visas from the nearest Kenya Embassy located in their country of domicile before departure. The Kenyan immigration authorities require that all travelers have two blank pages, clearly marked "VISA" and free of any other entry/exit stamps reserved in your passport for the exclusive use of Kenya Immigration stamps.

Uganda Visas

Those individuals traveling to Uganda on a gorilla and/or chimpanzee safari extension will be required to pay for Uganda visas upon arrival. Uganda visas cost \$50 per person (US dollars) and are easily obtained upon arrival at Entebbe International Airport by filling out a simple and short customs card. As soon as you walk into the customs hall, there will be several desks with blank registration cards. Simply fill out the card with your personal details (address, passport number, date of birth, etc.) and proceed to the kiosks to submit the \$50 per person visa fee.

What kind of safari do you offer?

Trails of Africa Safaris offer the lodge safaris, fly-in, permanent tented camps, budget mobile camping. All of these are available for both of our Kenya and Tanzania safaris. More specific information is available on request.

- **Lodge safari:**

Our safari guides drive you from lodge to lodge and do game drive excursions in each of the park/reserves visited. These are facilities in the nature reserves. These offer great comforts. Works well for families with children and services such swimming pools, restaurant, bars are available.

- **Permanent tented camp safari:**

Permanent tented camps are facilities in the nature reserves and are really permanent facilities. Safaris are operated by vehicle or fly-in packages. Accommodation varies from comfortable to luxurious tents. Usually these camps accommodate up to 50 or less people. They are facilities for smaller group of clients. This adds a personal feeling of closeness to the nature. Furniture such as chairs, beds are included. Hot showers, cold water and flushing toilets.

What Kinds of accommodation o you have in East Africa?

This depends on personal taste and varies from Luxury safari lodges, hotels, bed & breakfast, Luxury tented camps and camp sites. Whatever your choice, advance booking is recommended.

a) Permanent Lodge:

These are hotels that have fully constructed structures with all en-suite rooms (with toilet and bathrooms inside each room). They have high level of comfort and works well with families with children as they always have swimming pools and children playground and facilities.

b) Tented camps are of two varieties.

Luxury Tented camps are spacious and are built on designated permanent sites. All of them have fitted with private bathroom facilities with hot showers and flushing toilets. Standards of hygiene and levels of comfort are extremely good. Security is given the highest considerations with each block of tents having its own armed guards. Most of the tents in this category are surrounded by an electric fence to keep wild animals at bay. Food is fresh and brought in regularly by the many light aircrafts that serve these camps. The camps are safe for both adults and young children.

c) Basic Camping:

The second category are basic tented camps. These are pitched on temporary sites with basic outdoor bathroom facilities. Levels of comfort in basic camps are modest.

What can one expect to pay for accommodation in East Africa?

This varies drastically depending on where you are staying and the level of luxury and exclusivity you are looking for. For lodge accommodation, one can expect to pay anything from \$75 (US Dollars) per person per night upwards. The upper limit for extremely up-market accommodation stretches up to \$600 per person per night. The cost of accommodation generally includes all meals. At certain lodges it will include various activities and certain drinks as well.

What type of vehicles do you use on safari?

Trails of Africa Safaris uses both 4x4 Landcruisers as well as safari mini-buses with open hatch (roof). All the vehicles have long distance two-way radios and maintained to provide great comfort during the drives.

How many people do you need for a safari to take off?

Our safaris are guaranteed to commence with a minimum of 2 people (However we still offer safaris for single travellers on their own when requested). All our vehicles are 7-seaters. For safaris with more than 7 people we use 2 vehicles. ***Each person is assured a window seat.***

What to bring?

From June-September the evenings can be quite cool. Be ready for this and pack some warm clothing for the evenings. Be ready to meet with an unexpected showers but this doesn't lower the temperatures too much. Always have with you a wide-brim hat, insect repellent, sunscreen and sunglasses. Force yourself to drink water, lots of it, if you want to avoid headaches and lethargy from dehydration.

What type of clothing should I pack?

The type of clothing to pack depends very much on where you intend to spend most of your holiday in east Africa; In inland areas (Nairobi, Arusha, in National Parks and in Uganda and Rwanda) there is pleasant climate throughout the year with bright sunny days giving way to cool evenings. ***Light cottons for***

daywear with something more formal for eveningwear is recommended. On the other hand, along the coastal strip (Mombasa, Malindi, Lamu, Zanzibar, Dar Es Salaam) it is hot and humid throughout the year. One or two piece bikini is normal daywear on the beaches but it is not permitted to go topless on the beach and nude bathing is illegal. More formal clothing – light wrappers made from the famous khangas, for example, is an all time evening favourite with most tourists. Shorts and flip-flops in the lobby and dining hall areas is frowned upon.

On the higher altitudes for example the Mt. Kenya and Mt. Kilimanjaro region and in most safari parks, a sweater will be essential as the evenings are fairly chilly. Other essential items to carry include wide-brimmed hats, good walking shoes, sunglasses and binoculars.

What do I need for my day pack?

The following are the items you need for your day pack (what you need each day when heading out to the safari with the driver) * Sunglasses * Lip balm (SPF 45) * Facial cleansing clothes ("Olay Daily Facials Express" or similar) * Mints or chewing gum * Tylenol or Advil * Small notebook and pen * Sunscreen (SPF 50 or higher) * Safari hat * Pony-tail holder * Kleenex * Pet-waste bags * Hand-sanitizer * Insect repellent * Money/passport wallet * Camera

What kind of people book a tour with Trails of Africa? Is it a particular age group? Wealthy? Budget?

Single young people, solo travelers, single parents, and people from all walks of life and various countries join us for on our tours. We have no age restriction but we do find that most of our clients have a sense of adventure. The groups are made up of single travellers, couples, friends, student groups and families. However, when travelling together in a group each individual needs to have a degree of flexibility and patience.

How far in advance should I book my safari?

It is highly recommended to make arrangements for your safari in advance as far as possible. 4-6 months is most convenient and assures you availability especially during the months of the high season, July-mid September, Christmas-new year. This saves last minute searches which often find you compromising standards and with no guarantee of availability.

If we want the tours which are on fixed departures but we can't make it on the specified dates, can we travel on the same program on our own dates?

All of the tours which we operate on fixed departures can be tailor-made to your specific travel dates and routing requirements. Please note that it is advisable to book early in order to secure unique space as some of the smaller properties fill up very quickly, especially during the peak season.

We are a group of friends and would all like to travel together – is this possible?

Yes, this is definitely possible! In order for us to propose the most suitable itinerary which will be in line with all of your requirements, just let us know the number of people in your travel group, your intended travel dates and your specific interests and special requests for this trip. Once we have this information we can prepare your itinerary accordingly. Email us your details on info@trailsof africa.co.ke

Do you offer custom built holidays or must we always join a group?

Trails of Africa Safaris specializes in arranging safaris and holidays custom built around your own specifications. This is our special niche. Please fill in your requirements in the Inquiry Form provided and

submit online for an itinerary plan and a quote. Alternatively, you can drop us an email on info@trailsof africa.co.ke and we shall put together a package for you based on your interests and budget.

Would you advice bringing along, my small children for the safari to Africa?

Kenya and Tanzania are great destinations for families. Some of the lodges have arrangements to cater for young ones through children clubs that you can engages them a lot with games and nature activities. Many of the lodges and permanent tented camps have swimming pools that the kids can enjoy. Contact us for children arrangements and you will be informed accordingly. Some lodges do not accept children less than 7 years. If traveling with children indicate in the remarks on the reservation/inquiry form.

I'm travelling alone, will this be a problem?

We welcome single travellers and assure you that whether you are travelling on a tailor-made itinerary or as part of one of our group tours, we will make sure that you have a fantastic time and experience the magical adventures we strive to deliver. Our driver guides are very highly trained, with years of experience in the industry, and are therefore very aware of single travelers who may feel apprehensive and nervous. Rest assured that African hospitality will make you feel as though you are among friends from the very beginning of the tour, and within hours you will be.

What is a single supplement?

The hotels impose a minimal extra fee for single travelers. Safari prices are based on two people sharing a double-room accommodation. In the case of single travelers they pay the per-person and the single-supplement fee.

A single traveler can share a room with another single?

In addition, a single traveler can share a room with another single person as long as the other person is of the same sex and on condition they both agree to the arrangement.

What about food

Any special dietary requirement can be catered for. For this inform us in advance and will be organized accordingly. On your itinerary you will see these letters , B,L,D. These are abbreviations. Each stands for: B > Breakfast, L > Lunch, D > Dinner. Gourmet cooks bake fresh breads, and produce soups, salads, and entrees that could easily grace tables at top restaurants around the world. Meals are international in flavor with soups, salads, cold meats, pasta dishes, meat and fish dishes, and breads. Your day normally starts with tea and biscuits before your morning activity. Returning to your lodge or camp late morning, brunch is enjoyed - cereals, fruit, bacon, eggs, sausage, and toast. Buffet lunches are typical with a warm dish such as stew served with salads, quiches and cold meats. Dinner consists of an appetizer followed by meat, fish and pasta dishes served with assorted vegetables and sauces. Dinner is followed by coffee (or tea), cheeses, and gorgeous desserts.

Is it safe to drink tap water?

Most tap water is safe but it is highly recommended that visitors drink bottled water which are in plentiful supply even in remote areas. In all our vehicles, we supply clients with 2 bottles of water per day while lodges and camps daily allocation of water in your rooms and where more is needed, they have plenty of water for sale in their restaurants.

Are there any medical precautions?

Travelers to East Africa should start with long term basic health protection. This means vaccinations against Tetanus, Typhoid, Yellow fever and Hepatitis A. It is mandatory for visitors Tanzania be vaccinated for Yellow fever. You have to prove this so bring your inoculation card and it will be checked at the airport. East Africa has some parts with Malaria Coastal and around Lake Victoria). It advisable that you consult your doctor for information on Malaria prevention preparation and most updated information on health to the third world.

Don't go in the sun in the middle of the day, and be especially careful when swimming, snorkeling. This will avoid earning you a good chance in the melanoma lottery. If you intend to do mountain climbing be prepared with necessary altitude sickness medication from your doctor. Otherwise known as AMS, Acute Mountain Sickness.

Symptoms:

- Dizziness, nausea, headaches, insomnia, breathlessness, loss of appetite.
- Cure: rest, eat well, drink lots of water and don't ascend further. You should be fine in a couple of days. To avoid this take time to acclimatize.
- Stage 2: dry cough, vomiting, confusion, loss of balance and co-ordination. Pulmonary oedema.

What photography advice can you give?

Souvenir photos can be taken. This requires some patience and excellent timing. The regular family camera is usually not enough for wildlife that is far. A camera with a 200-300 mm comes handy in this case. Dedicated photographers can use telephoto lens of 400-500 mm. If you have big lens bring with a light tripod stand for stability and a teleconverter (2 x) to help double the focal length. Bring with you ample films and batteries. These can also be bought in the lodges or tourist centres. At the moment of writing this page it is forbidden to photograph government institutions, military personnel (police, army, border police) Some cultures eg, Masai are very sensitive so be careful when you photograph and to consult the guide on the various circumstances.

Is there electricity at the safari lodges and camps? What kind of plug will I need?

Electricity in East Africa and is 220-240 volts and plugs are three-pin square or round; UK Model. Most safari lodges and camps are not connected to an electrical supply. Solar lighting (backed up by batteries) is common, with many lodges having a generator which runs part of the day (morning and late evening). Lanterns also provide light at night. In most areas you will not be able to use a hairdryer or electric shaver.

What are the communication facilities like ?

There is an extensive network of communication facilities within Kenya as well as many parts of Africa. International roaming facilities are now available almost in every part of Kenya including the parks. So are internet facilities either connected directly in the room or within a designated business centre. In very remote camps there facilities for a radio call. So wherever you are in Kenya whether in the main towns or in the safari parks, effective communication is not a real problem.

Is it safe to visit East Africa?

It is safe to travel to East Africa. However the same safety principles as applying to any big city anywhere in the world also apply to our cities. Visitors are advised to travel in groups and to keep to well lit roads and avenues when travelling at night. Visitors are also advised not to carry a large amount of cash with them when out shopping and not to carry with them valuables for example expensive jewelry. Always

keep a close watch on handbags, wallets, and cameras when walking in crowded places. Avoid walking at night and place valuables in safe deposit boxes at hotels. Visitors are also advised to leave important documents such as passports and tickets in the hotel safety deposit boxes at all times. The above applies to major cities only. Travelling on safari away from the large cities is very safe and visitors will find that the country folk that live in these parts are extremely friendly, very concerned, quick to help in case of need, and very hospitable. While on safari, we advise that valuables be locked away or kept under the supervision of the camp or lodge manager while on safari.

Aren't wild animals dangerous?

While viewing wildlife there is a degree of danger as the behavior of wild animals cannot be guaranteed. However most animals are frightened by the sight / smell of humans and rather than attack, will flee (unless cornered or provoked). Attacks on humans are rare. While on safari you will be accompanied by a Trails of Africa Safaris' guides who are well trained (KPSGA Guides) & armed with an amazing understanding of the wildlife with which they share their lives on a daily basis.

At your tented camp or lodge it is not uncommon for wildlife to wander through as camps & lodges are typically not fenced. An attack on a sleeping traveler would be highly unusual. However please never venture outside your accommodation at night without your guide. Always consult with your guide/s when in doubt.

Currency Declaration

Unlimited foreign currency can be brought into the country but only maximum of Kshs. 100,000/- can be exported. Unspent Kenya Shilling may be re-converted at the airport bank on departure, but this takes time and patience. We recommend you change only what you intend to spend.

How much money should I bring? Cash or travelers cheques? Are credit cards accepted?

You will need very little spending money on most safaris as the majority of meals and activities are included in your package cost. You will need to pay for lunch, dinner, and drinks when you are staying at hotels on a bed and breakfast basis as is the case at most lodges and hotels in cities. Bills may be settled by US cash, by travellers check, or by credit card (accepted at most lodges, camps, hotels). Ensure all your dollars are of year 2,000 and above series and not of 1990's. the dollars of 1990's are often rejected in banks and bureaus; this is due to a large number of counterfeit notes in circulation worldwide of the 1990's series. Credit cards may be used in large towns at restaurants and shops with MasterCard and Visa being most accepted. However, use may be restricted in small towns and country areas and non-existent in small retail shops.

Do not exchange money on the street. You may be approached by someone willing to give you a 50% to 70% premium for your dollars. This is what is known as the black market. It is illegal. Do NOT therefore, get involved.

Automatic teller machines (ATM's) are situated outside the Airport upon arrival and also outside the shopping malls in towns and cities in East Africa, and international credit cards often can be used to withdraw currency. However, as Africa is unpredictable please do not rely on ATM machines for your currency needs.

Is tipping recommended?

Tipping in East Africa is entirely at your discretion. However, we suggest the following as a reference guide:

- Game rangers, specialist guides - US \$5-10 per guest per day
 - Trackers - US \$5 per guest per day
 - Game lodge, hotel staff - US \$5 per guest per day placed in the communal tipping box to be distributed equally
 - Tour guides - US \$5 half day, US \$10 per person full day.
 - Transfers - US \$2 per person
 - Restaurants - 10% good service, up to 15% for exceptional service
- Request for a tipping guide from our office by emailing; info@trailsof africa.co.ke

Should we purchase local currency?

US cash or travelers checks may be changed into local currency at airports and banks. Small bills (US \$1, US \$5, US \$10, and US \$20) are best. Always keep your receipt so that when you depart you may change your money back to US dollars.

Communications

Whilst on safari the lodges operate on Satellite phones which you may use for making calls to USA, however these are expensive and could cost up to \$7 per minute. E mail facility is available through the satellite system but you may not be able to access the internet for browsing. Nairobi is the best place to make calls and use the internet. Nairobi hotels have telex, facsimile machines and internet services.

What is there to buy in East Africa?

Shopping while on safari is limited. Often lodges and camps have small curio shops where you can buy postcards, local goods such as carvings or books, clothing (hats, shirts), and film. At airports and in larger towns you will find African curio markets where you can buy all sorts of carvings, masks, drums, jewelry etc...in general souvenirs and curios are inexpensive (in US dollar terms) - still, fun spirited bartering is the norm.

In most cities there are up market jewelers and art galleries where you can easily spend hundreds, even thousands, of dollars on African art. Most reputable shops offer shipping of your purchase at extra cost. For any additional questions you may have on Kenya Safari advice and counseling, Travel insurance, Kenya safari packages, family safari, African Safari FAQ, Safari Questions, Travel Kenya Tanzania questions, safari advice, Kenya tour information, booking tour, safari preparation to Kenya tour, please contact us for further personalized advice

Is it rude to barter or haggle at the local markets?

No. Hagglng is not rude and is often expected.

What kind of activities can one do in East Africa?

This varies greatly depending on where you are traveling. In the national parks, one goes on game drives during the day in closed vehicles with pop-up roofs, but no night drives or walking are permitted for safety reasons. In the private conservancies, many lodges offer both day and night drives as well as safari walks. Game drives in the private reserves are also sometimes in open vehicles.

Is there a dress code?

There is no set dress code on safari in East Africa. However, it is a conservative culture and at most lodges you will want to at least wear long trousers to dinner. Very revealing clothing is not recommended.

[Contact us](#) for other itineraries in Eastern and Southern Africa Destinations.

Thank you for choosing us
Trails of Africa Tours and Safaris

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