

ACACIA AFRICA

Updated
19/11/2008
FOR ALL 2009
DEPARTURES

ULTIMATE AFRICAN ADVENTURE – TOUR DOSSIER

Tour Code UAAV39

NAIROBI – LIVINGSTONE

39 DAYS

Tour Departure – **08:00**

Pre-departure Meeting – **18:00 day prior to departure**

HIGHLIGHTS

Great Rift Valley
Lake Nakuru National Park
Lake Victoria
Jinja
Kampala
Bwindi impenetrable National Park
Mountain Gorilla Trek
Lake Bunyonyi
Masai Mara Game Reserve
Great Rift Valley
Meserani Snake Park
Masai Village Walk
Serengeti National Park
Olduvai Gorge
Ngorongoro Crater Conservation Area
Zanzibar
Lake Malawi
Livingstone – Victoria Falls



This tour explores famous game reserves, mighty rivers, misty mountains and golden beaches. Encounter wildlife from gorillas to the 'Big 5' and meet diverse cultures from the red-robed Masai to the warm-hearted Malawi people. From the source of the Nile to Zanzibar and Victoria Falls, this is the Ultimate African Adventure!

INTENDED ITINERARY

Whilst it is our intention to adhere to the route described below, there is a certain amount of flexibility built into the tour and on occasion it may be necessary or desirable to make alterations to the published itinerary. Please therefore treat the following as a guide only.

Duration: 39 Days
Countries visited: Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia

DAY 1 - 2 Nairobi – Nakuru – Eldoret

Kenya is a very welcoming country and the first words you will come to know are the Swahili greeting, '*Jambo*' (hello) often followed by a reassuring '*Hakuna matata*' (no problem!).

We depart Nairobi and descend into the Great Rift Valley, an enormous cleft in the Earth's surface stretching from the Red Sea to Madagascar. Our first stop is Lake Nakuru National Park, a comparatively small park by African standards, located on the Great Rift Valley's floor. The shallow soda lake around which the national park is set, attracts a huge variety of birdlife. Flamingos in particular gather in their thousands, often forming a strikingly pink 'fringe' around the lake shore as they feed on algae in the alkaline water. Lake Nakuru is also home to rhino, leopard, warthog, baboon, and a variety of smaller animals which we may see during our time here.

From Nakuru we continue northwest through verdant plantations of tea - one of Kenya's biggest exports - to Eldoret, near the Uganda frontier.

DAY 3 - 6
Jinja - Kampala

We now cross into Uganda, Winston Churchill's 'Pearl of Africa'. This is a wonderfully fertile country of green terraced hillsides, lush banana plantations and tangled forests. On our arrival, we spend a couple of nights on the grassy banks of the River Nile. Here we are not far from Jinja, where the 19th century British explorer John Hanning Speke discovered the 'source of the Nile' and settled a long running dispute about Africa's (and the world's) longest river. From this modest monument, marking the historic spot, the Nile begins its 4132 mile course through Uganda, Sudan and eventually Egypt to the Mediterranean.

Our camp overlooks a dramatic set of rapids known as Bujagali Falls and while here, we usually have the option to try rafting - an exciting option for those wanting to enjoy the thrill of 'white water'. There is also the chance to make some difference at a local school project. 'Softpower' is a locally run voluntary programme aimed at building and improving local schools in the Jinja area to which your contribution of a few hours of painting or plastering is always most welcome. Other activities here include quad biking, village walks or a 44m bungee jump over the river. From Jinja, we move on to Uganda's capital Kampala, an attractive hilly city vibrant with African street life - roadside traders, markets and busy matatu (mini-bus taxi) stands.

DAY 7 - 14
Gorilla Trek - Nairobi

From Kampala, we head southwest, skirting the coast of Lake Victoria and heading down into the mountainous region of Uganda. Although a long drive, the scenery is beautiful as we cross the equator and swamp areas of thick papyrus give way to mountain valleys and ancient forests. Heading deep into the Kigezi Highlands we stop at picturesque Lake Bunyoni, an ancient flooded valley with deep waters and scattered islands, before arriving at Bwindi National Park either from the main gates at Buhoma or the southern Nkuringo area. In rare circumstances we may trek in one of the neighbouring countries, depending on availability of gorilla permits. This region of Africa is home the world's remaining 700 mountain gorillas, half of which inhabit Bwindi. Local guides and trackers lead us in small groups through the thick rainforest. The trekking can be demanding and the terrain uneven as we trek through hilly rainforest, but the privilege of spending time with a family of these gentle apes makes the effort well worthwhile. To many people, even those who stay in Africa longer than this two week tour, the day's trek and time spent with a family of gorillas in their natural habitat remains their most exciting wildlife encounter in Africa.

Each group is allowed to spend one hour with a gorilla family – the time set by the Uganda Wildlife Authority. Photography is permitted (except with a flash, and there are restrictions for those who wish to use a video camera.) Each permit allows one gorilla trek. The authorities maintain strict limits on the number of visitors allowed to view the gorillas each day so we may spend up to four days in the area while everyone completes the trek and viewing.

We return to Kenya, crossing the Rift Valley and reach bustling Nairobi.

DAY 15 - 18
Nairobi – Masai Mara Game Reserve – Nairobi

After a day to enjoy Nairobi, we drive west into the famous Masai Mara Game Reserve via the Masai town of Narok. We spend two nights camping on the edge of the park and spend our days in the interior on afternoon and morning game drives. The 'Mara' is the Africa of Hollywood films; sweeping grassy plains, low slung Acacia trees and small coppices of vegetation where perhaps a leopard lurks. The area is excellent for game viewing throughout the year and we hope to spot some, if not all, of the Big 5 - elephant, lion, rhino, buffalo and leopard as well as an inspiring array of other African animals and birdlife. Returning to Nairobi, we stay here overnight before finally leaving Kenya to head south into Tanzania.

DAY 19 - 22
Arusha, Serengeti National Park,
Olduvai Gorge, Ngorongoro Crater

Our first stop is at Arusha, resting in the shadow of brooding Mt. Meru (4556m). After exploring its markets we head to our camp on the nearby Masai plains. Here, you may like to take a camel ride to a local Masai village, visit the local Snake Park or enjoy Tanzanian hospitality at the lively camp bar. The following morning we begin our two night/three day excursion into the Serengeti National Park and the Ngorongoro Crater. The Serengeti's plains are flatter and larger than the Mara, game viewing here is fantastic and camping in unfenced campsites where wildlife roam makes for an unforgettable experience. Leaving via Olduvai Gorge we reach the rim of the

Ngorogoro Crater and enjoy the sweeping view of the crater floor. After camping near the top, we head down the following morning for a day of unrivalled game viewing in one of Africa's most exciting national parks.

DAY 23 - 27
Dar es Salaam - Zanzibar

We leave the Ngorogoro and return for the night to Arusha before continuing past Mt Kilimanjaro to Dar es Salaam. 'Dar' is Tanzania's main port and a hub of commerce and industry. We set up camp on the beach, browse the curio markets and prepare for our trip to Zanzibar.

The 'Spice Island' is an island of sandy, palm fringed beaches, romantic winding cobbled alleys and lush tropical forests. After our ferry over to the island our time here is not structured, so you can choose what you would like to do. Your tour leader will help advise on activities available and book your accommodation before arrival. Explore the markets and alleyways of Stone Town, take the popular Spice Tour or soak up the island vibe, relax, snorkel and dive the reefs on the northern beaches.

DAY 28 - 35
Mikumi National Park – Lake Malawi Beaches

We cross back to the mainland and spend a further night in Dar before driving towards Malawi, passing through the small Mikumi National Park on the way. We enter Malawi - the 'warm heart' of Africa and follow its lake's shoreline south, passing numerous villages as we go. Malawi's highlights are its wonderfully peaceful beaches and welcoming people and we take advantage of this by camping beside the lake for a few days. There is usually a range of water sports including scuba diving available. You will also have the opportunity to meet some of the Malawi people, from the communities near the beach. Malawians are well known amongst travellers as being amongst the friendliest in Africa.

DAY 36 - 39
Lusaka – Livingstone – Victoria Falls

We head into Zambia and pass through Zambia's capital, Lusaka. We continue to Livingstone near Victoria Falls arriving on day 37 and setting up camp on the banks of the Zambezi River. Free time is given here, allowing you to take advantage of the wide range of optional activities on offer, including activities such as white water rafting, bungee jumping and scenic flights (by helicopter or small plane). A visit to the Victoria Falls, the largest curtain of falling water in the world, is a 'must'. It produces a huge spray, hence the local name Mosi au Tunya – the 'smoke that thunders'.

NB¹ Depending on the availability of gorilla permits the tour itinerary may vary in day to day running order from that published in our brochure. From time to time we may visit neighbouring countries, eg Rwanda, for the gorilla trek (instead of Uganda) and this may entail extra visa fees although we shall endeavour to advise you before departure of any significant change to the tour itinerary.

NB² In Nairobi on nights 14 & 15 accommodation is not included in the tour. Please put aside between US\$15-25 per night for meals and accommodation here.

NB³ As we leave the truck on the mainland, when we go to Zanzibar food and accommodation is not included and free time is yours to enjoy the island's activities. Your tour leader will assist the group by booking suitable and well priced accommodation both in Stone Town and on the beach (budget approx \$20-35 per night), unless you would like to book something independently in advance.

NB⁴ For the sake of practicality, meals in the Livingstone/Victoria Falls area are restricted to breakfasts. This allows you to take on half day or full day activities (some of which include lunch) without having to be back with the group at mealtimes. The Waterfront camp has a beautiful restaurant, overlooking the Zambezi which offers a good selection of reasonably priced meals and snacks throughout the day (we suggest you allow US\$15 per day). Relax and enjoy these few days at your own leisure.

TOUR INFORMATION

Travelling overland is great fun, but it can also be challenging! This is a participation tour and your help will be needed in setting up the camp each night and assisting (usually on a rota basis) with the various day to day campsite duties, such as shopping, cooking and keeping the truck and camp tidy. But don't worry it's not all hard work and it's a great way to meet the local people and get to know your fellow travellers. Your contribution benefits the success of the tour - most people find the greater their involvement, the greater their enjoyment of the whole trip.

Africa is an adventure destination and travelling here is not always predictable so be prepared to “expect the unexpected” in difficulties or delays which might come our way! However, you’ll soon find that the diversity of the African landscape, the wildlife and the communities we pass on our way, make the sometimes rough travel and long driving days worthwhile.

Come with a sense of adventure and a flexible attitude and you will be sure to enjoy your Acacia overland tour across this amazing continent.

TOUR STYLE

Acacia Overland Tour

WHAT’S INCLUDED

Fully equipped safari vehicle, camping and cooking equipment, all road tolls and vehicle taxes, transport, sleeping mattress, services of driver and tour leader, meals as indicated, Snake Park entrance, Masai village walk & Malawi village walk

WHAT’S NOT INCLUDED

Local Payment excursions, visas, travel insurance, flights, departure taxes, airport transfers, sleeping bag, optional activities, drinks, tips & items of a personal nature, meals and accommodation on Zanzibar (3 nts. Days 25 - 27) and Nairobi meals & accommodation (2 nts. Days 14 – 15).

ACCOMMODATION

We use 2-person dome tents with fly sheets, built in ground sheets, zip-up insect screens and thick foam sleeping mattresses. We mainly use designated campsites, which mostly have permanent wash and shower facilities, electricity points and sometimes even a small shop and bar.

TRANSPORT

24-seater, self contained, custom-built safari truck with onboard tables, plug sockets, freezers, library, i-pod jack, safety features and 70-litre individual lockers. In some of the national parks we may use smaller more suitable vehicles (typically, 4x4 or safari vans).

MEALS

Meals included are – Breakfast (B) x33, Lunch (L) x32, Dinner (D) x31

These meals are prepared in camp by the group and help preparing the meals is invited. Most dietary requirements can be catered for on the road. Please ensure you inform Acacia of any special requirements when you book or at your earliest convenience.

GAME PARK VISITS

In order to maximise the quality of game driving and to comply with local authority rulings, some of our National Park visits and game viewing is carried out using services provided by local African ground handlers. While enhancing our experience it also allows us opportunity to contribute at a ‘grassroots’ level to local economies, from which local people benefit. These local services are included in the Local Payment.

TOUR PREPARATION

BOOKING INFORMATION

When you make a confirmed booking for your tour you will be sent your booking documents and a pre-departure booklet with detailed information to help you prepare for your trip. Once you have paid in full you will receive a Travel Voucher giving details of your joining hotel. Nairobi and Livingstone are well served by a variety of airlines. Your travel agent can advise on flights to and from the start and finish of your tour.

JOINING INFORMATION

This tour starts in Nairobi. **The pre-departure meeting is held at 18:00** on the evening prior to departure and **the tour begins at 08:00 on day 1**. It ends in Livingstone on **day 31**.

Meeting point in **Nairobi**:

Address:

Boulevard Hotel

Harry Thuku Rd

PO Box 42831

Nairobi

Contact details:

Tel. +245 2 337221 / 227567/8/9

Fax +245 2 334071

E-mail:

hotel@hotelboulevardkenya.com

Pre-dep. meeting:

18:30 prior to departure day

Tour start time:

08:00 on day 1

Tour end point in **Livingstone**:

Address:

The Waterfront Resort

Sichango Road

Livingstone

Contact details: Zambia
 Tel. + 260 3 320 606
 Fax + 260 3 320 609
 E-mail: waterfront@safpar.com
 Tour end time: After breakfast on day 39

EXTENDING YOUR STAY

We recommend you stay in Nairobi the night prior to departure as the tour departs early on day 1. We also recommend you book accommodation in Johannesburg on your night of arrival as travel delays may interfere with evening flight times. Any additional nights can be booked on a direct pay basis. See below for a guide to extra accommodation costs. These prices may be subject to change so please contact Acacia or your agent to check current prices.

Description	Price	Description	Price
Nairobi		Johannesburg	
Pre tour accommodation – Twin pp/pn – B&B	Ksh3758	Post tour accommodation – dorm pp/pn	R100
Pre tour accommodation – Single pp/pn – B&B	Ksh5785	Post tour accommodation – twin pp/pn	R140
Pre tour accommodation – Triple pp/pn – B&B	Ksh8990	Post tour accommodation – single pp/n	R180

WHAT TO BRING

Please try to keep your luggage to a minimum, bearing in mind that most airlines impose a 20kg limit. It should be brought in a soft holdall or rucksack along with a smaller day bag. You will need to bring a mixture of lightweight clothing and warm clothing for evenings and early morning game drives. You also require a sleeping bag (and small pillow if preferred). We recommended you pack a small torch or headlamp, mosquito spray and a money pouch/ belt that is easily hidden. Please try to avoid bringing unnecessary valuables and use your hotel safe to store the bulk of your money, passport, and airline tickets. A full 'What to Bring' list is included in our **pre-departure booklet**, sent out when you book this tour.

VACCINATIONS/HEALTH

The table below indicates the vaccinations suggested for travel on this tour but **should be treated as a guide only**. You should seek professional medical advice from your GP or clinic at least six weeks prior to departure.

Country	Tetanus	Diphtheria	Polio	Hepatitis A	Hepatitis B	Typhoid	Meningitis	Rabies	Yellow Fever	Malaria
Kenya	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R*	R
Tanzania	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R*	R
Malawi	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R*	R
Zambia	R	R	R	R	R	R	-	R	C	R
Botswana	R	R	R	R	-	R	-	-	*	-
S. Africa	R	R	R	R	-	R	-	-	*	R

C = Compulsory, R = Recommended, * = If travelling from infected countries a certificate of proof may be required.

VISA REQUIREMENTS

The table below indicates the visas required for travel to the countries on this tour but **should be treated as a guide only**. At least one month prior to travel seek confirmation from embassies or a visa specialist, that these requirements are still current. For UK citizens the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) offers free up-to-date travel info: www.fco.gov.uk For other nationalities a number of travel advice websites are listed on the Acacia website.

Nationality	UK	AUS	NZ	USA	CAN	BEL	IRE	NED	DEN	ITA	GER	AUT	SWE	FIN	NOR	MEX	KOR
Kenya	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tanzania	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Malawi	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Zambia	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Botswana	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
S. Africa	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No

MONEY MATTERS

PERSONAL EXPENSES

Naturally you will require extra money for your own personal spending on the tour, for snacks, drinks, souvenirs, tips and items of a personal nature. Everybody has different spending habits but as a guideline we suggest you budget US\$15-20 per day. Also keep US\$ cash for any relevant airport taxes and visas needed, optional activities and any additional accommodation before or after your tour.

- **Spending money** is best carried as cash in US dollars, Sterling or Euro which can then be transferred into local currency on arrival. In East Africa especially, it is best to bring US dollars, but make sure they are **clean, post-2001 edition notes**. Older or dirty notes may not be accepted.
- **Currencies:** Kenya – Kenyan Shilling; Tanzania – Tanzanian Shilling; Malawi – Malawian Kwacha; Zambia - Zambian Kwacha
- **ATM machines** are found in most major cities but are sometimes unreliable.
- **Credit cards** are useful for paying for some optional activities in Zanzibar & Livingstone. They may be suitable to use in some major centres for cash advances but please do not rely on them as the charges for using cards are high by Western standards.
- **Travellers cheques** can be difficult to cash but make suitable emergency funds.

It is recommended you bring your money in a mixture of ways and your guide can best advise on what to use where.

LOCAL PAYMENT

A Local Payment (LP) is to be paid to your tour leader at the pre -departure meeting. The LP fund is administered by the tour leader in conjunction with the group and covers most meals, all game drives using our own vehicle, campsite fees and meals prepared at the truck (usually two or three per day). You can choose to either pay the Basic Local Payment and pay for your excursions along the way, or pay for everything up front in the Fully Inclusive Local Payment.

Payment must be made in **US\$ cash in clean, post-2001 edition notes**. Traveller's cheques and credit cards are **not** accepted. The LP amounts set out in the brochure are estimates of local costs at the time of printing. It is subject to inflation, exchange rate changes and local price rises. These may vary from the amounts set out and on the rare occasion where there is a shortfall, passengers will be asked to contribute further. Conversely, where there is a surplus of LP funds at the end of the tour, it will be refunded equally amongst all passengers.

TIPPING

As in many areas where tourism is an important contributor to the economy, it has become customary to give a small gratuity to local staff, including your tour leader and driver, at the end of a tour for services rendered. This is at your own discretion.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

In order to give you maximum flexibility on tour we offer a number of optional activities, where possible. To help budget, approximate prices are listed below (subject to change and availability).

Activity	Price	Activity	Price
Uganda		Dolphin excursion	\$35
Quad Biking	100,000UG	Malawi	
White Water Rafting	\$85	Snorkelling	\$15
Village Walk	\$5	Scuba Diving	\$35
Bungy Jumping	\$55	Horse Riding (half day)	\$45
Forest Walk	\$5-10	Livingstone	
Kenya		Gorge Swing/ Abseiling (half day)	\$75/ 95
Village visit	\$25	Zambezi Jet Boating & Cable Car	\$95
Tanzania		Crocodile Farm	\$20
Serengeti Balloon Ride	\$499	Half day/ Full day Canoe Safari	\$95/ \$135
Camel Ride	\$30	Horse Riding	\$75
Zanzibar (Tanzania)		Elephant Interaction	\$50
Scuba Diving (Mnemba island)	\$150	White Water Rafting/ Riverboarding	\$130/ \$155
Snorkelling Day Trip	\$30-45	Flight over the Falls	£130
Accommodation & Food (per day)	\$35	Zambezi Sunset Cruise	\$45
Spice Tour	\$20	Lion Encounter	\$115

INSURANCE

It is a booking condition of Acacia that you have full travel insurance valid for the duration of your tour to cover you for medical emergency and repatriation to your home country. Your guide will ask you for a copy of this when you join the tour. It is also important that you leave a copy of your insurance with the person nominated as your emergency contact. We can recommend a respected, specialist travel insurance provider for this tour. Please contact Acacia for more information.

Country Information - UGANDA

Facts

Capital: Kampala
 Size: 236 040 sq km / 146 675sq miles
 Population: 27 269 482 (Sept. 05)
 Groups: Baganda, Ankole, Basoga, Iteso, Bakiga, Langi, Rwanda, Bagisu, Acholi, Lugbara, Batoro, Bunyoro, Alur, Bagwere, Bakonjo, Jopodhola, Karamojong, Rundi, non-African (European, Asian, Arab)

Languages: English, Luganda, other Niger-Congo languages, Nilo-Saharan languages, Swahili, Arabic
Local time: GMT + 3
Seasons: Dry (December-February, June-August), rainy (March-May, September-November)
Currency: 1 Ugandan Shilling
Telephone: Country code 256, international access code 000
Electricity: 240V / 50 Hz, rectangular blade plug

The Pearl of Africa' according to Winston Churchill - Uganda, to many people is one of the most beautiful and friendly countries in Africa. The capital, Kampala, is situated on hills on the northern edge of Lake Victoria, and the neighboring city of Jinja is built over the outlet from that lake. The scenery to the west along the border of Zaire is dominated by high ranges of mountains, the Ruwenzoris (Ptolemy's "Mountains of the Moon"), and is suitably spectacular, as are the regions to the north of Kampala, around the Murchison Falls. The 'Idi Amin' days have long disappeared. Uganda in the late 1980's and early 90's is a place of improvement and regeneration. Roads and buildings have been or are being rebuilt, and the economy is slowly re-asserting itself. The tourist industry is still small - but is growing; game parks are being restocked and services in Kampala and around the country being improved.

Points of Interest

Jinja

Jinja is one of the small gems you can find in Africa – not too big and a bit out of the way, but well worth going there. It is home to the long sought **Source of the Nile**. Where the White Nile leaves Lake Victoria you can find monuments to commemorate both Speke (who discovered the source) and Mahatma Gandhi (whose ashes were sprinkled here, amongst other places). A boat ride is a nice way to explore.

If you like it a bit speedier, you might want to opt for white water rafting (the stretch outside Jinja boasts world class rapids) or one of the other **adventure activities** like bungy jumping or quad biking.

Near Jinja, the **Owen Falls Dam** swallowed up what used to be the Owen Falls in exchange for hydroelectric power.

Kampala

Kampala is capital of Uganda and previously capital of the old Kingdom of Buganda. The city is attractive, situated amongst seven hills on the northern shore of Lake Victoria. Historically, control of Uganda has been much fought over and such figures as Obote and Idi Amin took terrible hold over the country, causing enormous civil strife in the 70s and 80s. Uganda has come a long way since then. Today, Museveni's 20 year rule has settled the country and Kampala is welcoming to the visitor. The city has a vibrant African street life, roadside traders, markets and busy matatu (mini-bus taxi) stands. Kampala boasts an eclectic mix of Hindu temples, hilltop mosques, tribal memorials and elegant colonial hotels, illustrating its diverse influences. All the while the city is circled overhead by impressive marabout storks, an ever familiar sight in the capital.

While many of the Asian population left in the 1970s, there is still a thriving Indian population and a number of popular Indian cuisine restaurants around. The **Buganda Royal Palace** and the **Kasubi Tombs** are worth visiting for an afternoon for an insight into the pre-colonial tribal kingdoms of Uganda. Kampala is home to Makerere University, Uganda's premier university.

Lake Bunyoni

Lake Bunyoni is accessible from the south-western town of Kabale and is situated in the highly picturesque **Kigezi Highlands**, often nicknamed the '**Switzerland of Africa**' after its steep and verdant mountain valleys. The lake itself is an ancient flooded valley and widely considered the deepest lake in East Africa. Strangely the lake is devoid of fish, although the area is magnificent for birdlife and flora. A small number of the lake's islands are inhabited and one of the largest has a school. Transport on the lake is restricted to small motor boats or dug out canoe, the local's traditional means of getting around.

Bwindi Impenetrable Forest National Park

This proclaimed World Heritage Site in the south-west is why most people come to Uganda. It covers 330 square kilometres of the most amazing landscape (hills, gorges, streams, rainforest) and is one of the biologically most diverse areas on earth. Its name derives from the dense ground cover of herbs, vines and shrubs with only a few trees. It is home to over 100 mammal species, including 11 primates. Its main attraction are the 300 endangered **mountain gorillas** (over half of the world's population) living here in four troops – to see these gentle giants in their natural habitat is one of the most rewarding experiences. They are the bulkiest, but yet most peaceful ones of the living primates and share 95% of their genes with us. Besides the famous gorillas, you will also find elephant, chimpanzee, monkeys, various antelope and numerous bird species in this park.

Country Information - KENYA

Facts

Capital:	Nairobi (from the Masai word 'sweet water' – once a major watering hole)
Size:	582 646 sq km / 362 116 sq miles
Population:	36,913,721 (Sept. 07)
Groups:	Kikuyu, Luhya, Luo, Kalenjin, Kamba, Kisii, Meru, non-African (Asian, European, and Arab)
Languages:	English, Swahili, Kikuyu, Luo, Kikamba, Masai, Samburu
Local time:	GMT +3
Seasons:	Dry (June-October), short rainfalls (October-December) and long rainfalls (March-June)
Currency:	1 Kenyan Shilling (KES) = 100 Cents
Telephone:	Country code 254, international access code 00
Electricity:	240 V / 50 Hz, rectangular blade plug

Kenya has one of the most diverse and colourful collections of tribal people found anywhere on the continent. The country has been a major migratory pathway for millennia. In the 16th Century most of the Swahili trading towns, including Mombasa, were either sacked or occupied by the Portuguese and this marked the end of the Arab monopoly of the Indian Ocean trade. Kenya straddles the equator and covers an area of 582,646 sq kilometres, which includes around 13,600 sq kilometres of inland lakes. Kenya's population of around 37 million is made up almost entirely of Africans. There are more than 70 tribal groups and distinctions among them are already blurred with western cultural values being adopted. Most of the African population is Christian whereas the Asian population are a mix of Muslim, Hindu and Sikh. English and Swahili are the official languages, however there are many other major tribal languages spoken.

Points of Interest

Masai Mara Game Reserve

The Masai Mara Game Reserve is often abbreviated as 'the Mara' meaning 'mottled' – due to its patchy landscape. It is coined by gently rolling hills, woodland and acacia trees and watered by two rivers, the Mara and Talek.

There are no fences between the Masai Mara and the bordering Serengeti National Park in Tanzania, so large numbers of animals roam freely between the two parks. The most dramatic spectacle of the area is the **migration of zebra and wildebeest**. Every year in May, they leave the dry south in herds of thousands and head first west and then north to the greener grasses. Lion, cheetah, hyena and wild dog follow the wildebeest and zebra, making sure that only the fittest survive. In November, when the grazing is finished in the north, this army of animals surges back to the now green pastures of the south where they calve and mate before starting the entire cycle again.

You will also be likely to spot the **Big 5** here - buffalo, elephant, rhino, lion and leopard. It's little known but the term originally referred to the 5 large animals that proved the most challenging to early colonial hunters – and therefore became a much sort after prize. Thankfully, visitors today prefer to shoot these animals with cameras rather than guns and they make a very exciting find in the bush. The park also has very healthy populations of cheetah, zebra, giraffe, hippo, hyena, jackal, eland, crocodile and many different birds.

Several sub-tribes of the **Masai people** live within the Masai Mara Game Reserve. They are a proud semi-nomadic, non-hunting people who live and raise their cattle in harmony with the surrounding wildlife. Despite the growth of modern civilisation, the Masai have largely managed to maintain their traditional ways.

Useful Swahili Words

Hello	Jambo	Yes	Ndiyo
How are you?	Habari gain?	No	Hapana
Thank you	Ahsante	Bring here	Lethe hapa
Go away	Enda	Today	Leo

Slowly	Pole pole	Tomorrow	Kesho
Coffee	Kahawa	To sleep	Kulala
Tea	Chai	Goodbye	Kwaheri
Milk	Maziwa	How much?	Ngapi?
Water	Maji	Come here	Njoo hapa
Sugar	Sukari	Welcome again	Karibu tena
Food	Chakula	See you	Tutaonana
Please	Tafadali	No, thanks	Hapana sante

Country Information - TANZANIA

Facts

Capital:	Dodoma
Size:	945 087 sq km / 364 900 sq
Population:	36,766,356 (Sept. 05)
Groups:	Mainland: native African (mostly Bantu tribes), other (Asian, European, Arab) Zanzibar: Arab, native African, mixed Arab and native African
Languages:	Swahili, English, Nyamwezi, Arabic
Local time:	GMT + 3
Seasons:	Dry (January-March, July-October), short rains (November/December), long rains (April-June)
Currency:	1 Tanzanian Shilling
Telephone:	Country code 255 , international access code 00
Electricity:	230 V / 50 Hz, round pins with ground or rectangular blade plug

The United Republic of Tanzania (the largest country in East Africa, including the islands of Zanzibar and Pemba) came into existence in 1964, three years after the initial independence from Britain by Tanzania. Although it shares many characteristics with its northern neighbour (especially the Swahili culture and language), it has developed along more socialist lines than has Kenya, and has not been as receptive toward foreign investment. Possibly for this reason Tanzania has not had the growth in industry that Kenya has enjoyed and the casual visitor will notice many differences of this nature between the two countries. However, Tanzania's game parks are - if anything - even better known than those of Kenya. The Serengeti National Park and neighbouring Ngorongoro Conservation Area are truly world renowned, as is Africa's highest peak Mount Kilimanjaro. All of these highlights are within easy reach of Nairobi, attracting many tourists and earning Tanzania much needed foreign exchange.

Points of Interest

Serengeti National Park

Of all the wildlife sanctuaries in Africa, the Serengeti is probably the most famous. With 14,763 square kilometres (the size of Northern Ireland) and no fences between the adjacent game parks, it is also one of the biggest. No wonder the Masai call it 'serengeti' – meaning 'endless plains'. Its **landscape**, formed by volcanic activity, varies from grass plains in the south, savannah in the centre and hilly, grassland in the north to extensive woodland and black clay plains in the west. Small rivers, lakes and swamps are scattered throughout. Each area has its own particular atmosphere and wildlife.

The **wildlife** here comes in large numbers: 1,3-million wildebeests, 200,000 zebras, 1,500 lions, 1,000 elephants, 280,000 Thompson's gazelles, 25,000 buffalos, 500 species of birds, 72,000 topis, 32,000 Grant's gazelles, 8,500 giraffes and 10,000 elands.

The highlight is the **annual migration of zebra and wildebeest**. Every year in May, they leave the dry south in herds of thousands and head to the greener north and west. Lion, cheetah, hyena and wild dog follow the wildebeest and zebra, making sure that only the fittest survive. In November, when the grazing is finished in the north, this army of animals surges back to the now green pastures of the south where they calve and mate before starting the entire cycle again.

Ngorongoro Crater Conservation Area

Located between the Serengeti and Lake Manyara, this 8 300 sq kilometres big conservation area is home to the famous volcanic **Ngorongoro Crater** which is the largest unbroken caldera in the world and a World Heritage Site. The crater, which is 610 metres deep and 260 km wide, hosts almost any animal species found in East Africa. Most of the **25,000 larger animals** within the crater itself are zebra and wildebeest, but there are also about 20 black rhinos and 100 lions, including the marvellous black-maned males. The crater floor also has a soda lake which is home to flamingos and other water birds. Besides these, a whole array of species lives in the crater: leopard, cheetah, hyena, elephant, warthog, impala, buffalo, hartebeest, eland, various antelope and birds. The rim of the crater, where all of the lodges are located, offers spectacular views over this enclosed Garden of Eden.

Olduvai Gorge

The name Olduvai derives from a misspelling of Oldupai, the correct Masai word for this region which is named after a wild sisal plant fibre growing in the gorge. The gorge is a steep sided long ravine and forms part of the Great Rift Valley. Located between the Serengeti and Ngorongoro, this is the place where **Mary and Louis Leakey** discovered **early remains of mankind** in the late 1950's and later an **ancient human footprint**. It is therefore also called the '**Cradle of Mankind**' - as the findings suggest that our species first evolved in this area.

Arusha

Since most safaris start from here, Arusha is nicknamed the '**safari capital**' as it is the gateway to the Serengeti, Lake Manyara and Tarangire National Park. Nestling at the bottom of Mount Nero, Tanzania's third highest peak, Arusha is a fast growing town with good views of Mount Kilimanjaro. North of town, you can find authentic Masai villages.

Zanzibar

Zanzibar is Tanzania's **island getaway**. It has a colourful history, spice plantations and **beautiful beaches**. Zanzibar was once a trading centre for spices and slaves and a base for 19th century explorers such as Speke, Burton and Livingstone. Over the centuries, Zanzibar traded with the people of the Arabian peninsula who arrived on dhow sailboats with the annual trade winds. The Arab influence is evident in the unique architecture and diverse street stall offerings of the capital, Stone Town. In fact the Arab influence can be seen right along the East African coast with the Swahili language and culture displaying the mix of Arab and African cultures over the centuries.

The capital **Stone Town** with its intriguing alleyways and markets is an interesting mix of cultures and known for its intricately carved wooden doors. Make sure to go on a **Spice Tour** where you will learn everything about, well, spices. Other trips include swimming with dolphins or snorkelling/diving around the island.

Country Information - MALAWI

Facts

Capital:	Lilongwe
Size:	118 484 sq km / 45 747 sq miles
Population:	12,158,924 (Sept. 05)
Groups:	Chewa, Nyanja, Tumbuka, Yao, Lomwe, Sena, Tonga, Ngoni, Ngonde, Asian, European
Languages:	English, Chichewa
Local time:	GMT + 2
Seasons:	Rainy season (November to May)
Currency:	1 Malawian Kwacha = 100 Tambala
Telephone:	Country code 265, international access code 101
Electricity:	220 V / 230 V / 240 V / 50 Hz, rectangular blade plug

Established in 1891, the British protectorate of Nyasaland became the independent nation of Malawi in 1964. The Republic of Malawi is in Southern Africa. Countries bordering Malawi are Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia. Lilongwe is the capital of Malawi and Blantyre the largest city, is an important commercial and industrial centre. Malawi's terrain consists of plateau and mountains. Lake Malawi is drained by the Shire River, a tributary of the Zambezi. Lake Malawi (600 kilometres long) is one of Africa's largest lakes. Other lakes in Malawi include Lake Chilwa and Lake Malombe. Together Malawi's lakes cover around one-fifth of the country.

Malawi has a sub-tropical climate. The rainy season runs from November to May. The lakes are home to hundreds of species of fish. Perhaps the most famous is the cichlid family of fish. The lakes are also the habitat of a variety of birds such as the stork and the giant kingfisher. The population of Malawi is around 12 million. English and Chichewa are both official languages.

Points of Interest

Lake Malawi

Malawi is dominated by the **third largest lake** in Africa which takes up a fifth of the whole country. Its nickname 'calendar lake' derives from its dimensions: it is 365 miles (590 kilometres) long and 52 miles (85 kilometres) wide. It is home to more than **500 different species of fish** – more than in North America and Europe combined! Most of them belong to the family of cichlids many of which are endemic to Lake Malawi. The clear waters of this lake are also one of the **world's premier fresh water dive and snorkelling spots**. Other water sports on offer include fishing, water skiing, windsurfing and sailing. A particularly nice beach where most travelers stop is **Kande Beach**.

Lilongwe

Malawi's capital (since 1975) is divided into two parts: the New and the Old City. The first has all the typical capital things like hotels and offices whereas the older part has markets and bus

Country Information - ZAMBIA

Facts

Capital:	Lusaka
Size:	752 614 sq km / 290 586 sq miles
Population:	11,261,795 (Sept. 05)
Groups:	Native African, European
Languages:	English, Bemba, Kaonda, Lozi, Lunda, Luvale, Mambwe, Nyanja, Ngoni, Tonga, Tumbuka
Local time:	GMT + 2
Seasons:	Warm and rainy (November-April), cool and dry (May-August), hot and dry (September/October)
Currency:	1 Zambian Kwacha = 100 Ngwee
Telephone:	Country code 260 , international access code 00
Electricity:	220 V / 230 V / 50 Hz, round pin attachment plug, round pins with ground or rectangular blade plug

Formerly Northern Rhodesia, Zambia is made up of a highland plateau (approximately 1000 metres above sea level) which rises toward the east and which - in the north, along the border of Zaire - houses enormous reserves of copper, cobalt, coal, zinc and lead, the mining of which is of extreme importance to the economy. Tourism is of increasing importance with the magnificent Victoria Falls on the Zambezi River marking the border with Zimbabwe. The game parks of Zambia, although not so well known as those of Kenya and Tanzania, are large and well stocked with wildlife of all types. The long standing leader Kenneth Kaunda was defeated in elections in 1991, the country's first multi-party elections in 19 years, and today Zambia is one of Africa's newest democracies - although it is struggling to maintain living standards at a time when earnings from its mineral exports are dropping.

Points of Interest

Victoria Falls

'Mosi-oa-Tunya' - the smoke that thunders is what the locals call Victoria Falls, one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World and a World Heritage Site. The **waterfalls** are 1,708 meters wide and drop between 90 metres and 107 metres into the Batoka Gorge and an average of 550,000 cubic metres of water plunge over the edge every minute. Even from as far as 70 kilometres away this spectacle can be seen. Batoka Gorge also forms the border between Zambia and Zimbabwe. David Livingstone first came here in 1855 and reported about 'Scenes so lovely, they must have been gazed upon by angels in their flight'.

Today, visitors come here not only to look at the waterfall, but also to experience it in different ways. From Livingstone (named after the explorer), you can book activities like white water rafting, river boarding, jet boating, bungy jumping, canoeing, helicopter flights, sunset cruises and elephant back safaris.

FOOTBALL’S COMING TO AFRICA

In line with the 2010 Football World Cup, in Cape Town, Acacia’s keeping its eye on the ball. We’ve got together with the charity Footballs for Fun to spread some goodwill and love for the beautiful game across the continent. In 2008 all our trucks will carry footballs which can be bought and donated to children in the local towns along our route. The footballs are a perfect ice breaker and a game with locals is a great way to make friendships despite language differences. And all the profit (at least £2 from each ball) goes straight back into Africa, helping support a selection of AIDS charities and children’s homes. Make a difference, get kicking and buy a ball when you’re next on one of our trucks.



RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

We believe that you get the most out of a journey by respecting the culture and people of the places you visit. On our tours we try to travel in a way that benefits the communities we pass through and minimises negative impact on the environment. This can be from ensuring the campsites we use are clean when we leave and dressing respectfully in conservative areas to getting involved with local charity projects. We ask that you are open to this when you travel with us. Being proactive in responsible travel helps develop cross-cultural understanding and friendships with the local people, and will greatly enhance your experience in Africa.

PHOTOS & STORIES SEARCH

If you’ve ever thought you can take better pictures than the brochures or have a great travel story and want to see yourself in print, then we’re looking for you. If you’ve captured a great moment on tour, whether it’s of the wildlife, local people, landscape or life on the road why not enter our monthly photographic competition starting in 2009. Not only do we give away a monthly prize, you may also see your photos published in a future brochure or on our website. We are also on the lookout for stories of life on the road, the funny, exhilarating, moving or simply unforgettable things you did on tour. We publish the best stories on the Tales from the Road section of our website. Send your photos or stories to acaciaontheroad@googlemail.com

Photos should be in digital format & good resolution (max 6 pics per person) and labelled with the location of where the photos were taken. Meanwhile if you have a story or anecdote about your tour (up to 400 words) it needn’t be word perfect, we’d love to hear about it.

Legalities: You, the photographer/author, retain copyright of all images & words submitted but we reserve the right to use of them for Acacia brochures, promotions & advertising.

For information on our Acacia Small Group Safaris, Adventure Tours, Comfort Class Safaris, Short Breaks & City Stays, Voluntours, Dive Tours, New Horizons and Access Tours or to contact us please visit www.acacia-africa.com

<p>Acacia Adventure Holidays Ltd 23A Craven Terrace London W2 3QH</p> <p>UK Tel. +44 (0)20 7706 4700 Fax. +44 (0)20 7706 4686 SA Tel. +27 (0)21 556 1157 Fax. +27 (0)21 557 5983</p> <p>Email: info@acacia-africa.com Website: www.acacia-africa.com</p>			
--	--	--	--