

# Big Five Explorer 36 days



Adventure overdrive. Trekking for gorilla, game-spotting, kicking back on Zanzibar, this expedition takes in some of the best of Eastern Africa and culminates at the breathtaking Victoria Falls - Africa's adrenaline playground!

## TOUR DETAILS:

- Starts in: Nairobi / Ends in: Victoria Falls
- Departs: Saturdays - year round
- Local Payment: USD \$815
- Breakfast:30, Lunch: 28, Dinner: 29
- Hotel Rating: Camping expedition
- Tour Guide: Yes

## ONLINE RESOURCES:

- For a detailed GO GUIDE - [click here](#)
- To book this trip - [click here](#)
- To enquire about this trip - [click here](#)

## TOUR MAP:



## QUICK WEB LINKS

[Africa Prices](#) ::: [Why Us for Africa?](#) ::: [Africa Reviews](#) ::: [Our Africa Blog](#) ::: [Top Spots in Africa](#) ::: [Festivals & Events](#) ::: [Accommodation](#) ::: [Africa Visas](#) ::: [Africa - Useful Info](#) ::: [FAQs on Africa](#) ::: [Africa Gallery](#) ::: [About Overlanding](#) ::: [Gorilla Trekking](#) ::: [Optional Activities](#) ::: [About Lodge Safaris](#)

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## Day 1: Nairobi

Saturday. Welcome to Kenya! We'll be there to collect you at Nairobi Airport. Your first night will be spent at our pre expedition campsite. On day 1 there will be a pre departure meeting at 17:00. Overnight - [Nairobi](#)

## Days 2 - 3: Masai Mara N.P.

Nairobi - Masai Mara. Heading west from Nairobi on day 2, we reach possibly Kenya's most famous natural attraction - the Masai Mara National Reserve. The Kenyan section of the wildly beautiful Serengeti Plains teems with wildlife. The highlight of the Mara is no doubt the annual wildebeest migration, when literally millions of these beasts plus zebra and Thomson's gazelle stray north from the Serengeti in neighbouring Tanzania in search of lush grass on the savannah plains. Elephant, lion, cheetah, giraffe and a multitude of hooved herbivores also inhabit the reserve. A game drive through the Mara on day 3 gives us the chance to spot the Big Five. During our stay we can also opt to visit a local Masai tribe. Overnight - [Masai Mara N.P.](#)

## Days 4 - 5:

Masai Mara - Kisumu - Kampala (Uganda). Leaving the Masai Mara early on day 4, we head out of Masai Land and pass through the scenic tea plantations of Kericho before descending the Rift Valley Plateau, on our way to Kisumu - Kenya's harbour town on the banks of Africa's largest lake, Lake Victoria, where we spend the night. The following morning, we cross the border into Uganda where we overnight in the capital city, Kampala. Overnight - Kisumu (1), Kampala (1)

## Days 6 - 9:

Kampala - Lake Bunyoni. From Kampala we drive to Lake Bunyoni, the deepest Crater Lake in Africa and home to a large and varied number of beautiful birds, which is the base from which the optional Gorilla trek takes place. Dependant on where trekking permits are available, we trek in the Magahinga or Bwindi National Parks in Uganda, the Virunga National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo, or the Ruhengeri National Park in Rwanda.

We depart from our base in Bunyoni in small groups over 3-4 days, depending on the group size. We wind our way through arguably some of the most picturesque scenery in Africa en-route to the National Park. Dependant on where permits are available, we may spend a night in either Kisoro or in Rwanda. The following morning, after packing our picnic lunch, we are transferred to a ranger's station where the trek commences. Your rangers will lead you through the cultivated lands and then into the dense rain forest and on to a gorilla family. Trekking can take anywhere from 45 minutes to 8 hours and it can be quite strenuous. To ensure the gorillas do not get too used to the presence of humans and because they share many of our genes (and therefore able to catch our diseases), the maximum time permitted to spend with

them is 1 hour. You will have plenty of time to watch their activity and to take photographs. The rangers will be able to provide you with a background to the family you are visiting. Once your hour is up, you trek back out of the rain forest to your meeting point where you will be transferred back to the Lake Bunyoni campsite. Overnight - Lake Bunyoni



## Days 10 - 11:

Lake Bunyoni - Kampala - Jinja. After marvelling at the experience of our gorilla encounters and enjoying the peaceful Lake Bunyoni, we begin our drive back to Kampala. We cross the Equator for the second time and stop for the classic "one foot in each hemisphere" photo opportunity. We overnight in Kampala and have the opportunity to sample its night life! On day 11 we have the option of visiting the Ngamba Island Chimpanzee Sanctuary or heading to Jinja for a selection of adventure activities including white water rafting at the source of the White Nile, quad biking or visiting a volunteer and community project. Overnight - Kampala (1), Jinja (1)

## Days 12 - 13: Lake Nakuru

Jinja - Nakuru - Naivasha (Kenya). Departing early, we head back to Kenya and spend the night outside Nakuru at a lovely campsite on a local farm. Nakuru is Kenya's 4th largest town and capital of the Rift Valley Province and lies adjacent to the small but wildlife rich Lake Nakuru National Park. Lake Nakuru National Park is home to a veritable array of wildlife. The park supports a population of black rhino, lion, leopard, zebra, antelope and giraffe not to mention millions of pink flamingos. The lake itself is a shallow soda lake. The following morning we begin our exploration of the national park and after our game drive, we travel on to Lake Naivasha arriving in the late afternoon. Overnight - Nakuru (1), Naivasha (1)

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## Days 14 - 15: Lake Naivasha & Nairobi

Naivasha - Nairobi. Lake Naivasha, is home to a multitude of bird life, the most magnificent being the African Fish Eagle with his regal cry. At 1880 m, this is the highest of the Rift Valley lakes. We spend the day enjoying optional excursions like Elsamere (former home to Joy & George Adamson of Born Free fame), a boat ride to the Crescent Island Game Sanctuary or a bike ride around Hell's Gate National Park. The next morning we head back to Nairobi. Overnight - Naivasha (1), Nairobi (1)

## Days 16 - 19: Optional Serengeti & Ngorongoro

Nairobi - Arusha (Tanzania). Leaving Nairobi, we cross the border into Tanzania. Arusha is the starting point for the optional 3 day excursion to Ngorongoro Crater and the Serengeti. For those not opting to visit the Ngorongoro Crater or Serengeti National Park, the next 3 days are spent at leisure enjoying the Meserani reptile park, Masai Cultural Museum and the surrounding villages and craft markets. Alternatively the town of Arusha is close by to explore.

The Optional Ngorongoro/Serengeti excursion takes us via the Masai town of Mtu Wa Mbu (Mosquito River) that lies adjacent to the Lake Manyara National Park and up the Rift Valley Escarpment to the higher lying village of Karatu. Karatu offers magnificent views over the surrounding hills and has many well established wheat farms that add to the picturesque panoramas. We spend the evening at a pleasant campsite in Karatu. The following morning we depart early for the Ngorongoro Conservation area and head into the wildlife rich Ngorongoro Crater. This World Heritage Site boasts some of the best game viewing in Africa – including the elusive Black Rhino. After our game drive in the Crater, we continue down the Crater rim and past the 'Cradle of Mankind' on our way to the Serengeti National Park. We cross the vast plains as we game drive through the southern and central areas in the park. Tonight we bush camp (no ablutions) in the wild surrounded by the sounds of the African wilderness. In the morning, we head off for another game drive and explore the landscape in search of the resident wildlife. With some luck, we may see some of Africa's 'Big 5'! Overnight - Arusha (4), OR optional Karatu & Serengeti



## Days 20 - 21: Pangani & Dar es Salaam

Arusha - Pangani - Dar es Salaam. We return to Arusha before continuing on towards Dar es Salaam. On the way we drive through the town of Moshi situated at the magnificent Mount Kilimanjaro – Africa's highest mountain. We may even catch a glimpse of this magical mountain's snowy summit - a photo opportunity not to be missed! We spend the night in Pangani midway between Arusha and Dar es Salaam before reaching our lovely seaside campsite in Dar es Salaam the following day. Overnight - Pangani (1), Dar es Salaam (1)

## Days 22 - 24: Zanzibar

Dar es Salaam - Zanzibar (optional). A ferry from Dar Es Salaam takes us to 'Spice Island', where we have the option to spend the next three nights.\* Zanzibar is steeped in history and offers a wealth of experiences. Wander the streets of Stone Town, take an excursion around a spice plantation or simply laze on one of the pristine white sandy beaches, the choice is yours!

**Accommodation is not provided on Zanzibar, allowing you the freedom to choose where you spend your time on the island. Your trip leader can arrange accommodation for you locally should you wish.**

\* For those opting not to visit Zanzibar, the 3 days can be spent at leisure at the beach campsite or exploring Dar Es Salaam. Overnight - Dar es Salaam (3) OR optional Zanzibar (3)



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## Days 25 - 26:

Zanzibar - Dar es Salaam - Iringa. Leaving Zanzibar in the afternoon, we return to the mainland and another night in Dar es Salaam. The next morning we head south and pass through the Mikumi National Park where it is possible to view a range of wildlife from the roadside, totally impervious to the passing traffic. We travel towards Iringa where we spend the night in a beautiful rustic campsite famous for its Amarula Hot Chocolates and its steamy showers! Overnight - Dar es Salaam (1), Iringa (1)

## Days 27 - 30:

Iringa - Lake Malawi (Malawi). Winding our way through the beauty of the Tukuyu tea and banana plantations, we travel into Malawi, a landlocked country with 20% of its total area made up of beautiful Lake Malawi. We travel the length of the western side of the lake, stopping off at various bays and inlets over the next 4 days. Spend the days learning the game of bao from the locals, scour the markets for a bargain or simply relax on the pristine beaches. Overnight - Lake Malawi



## Days 31 - 32:

Lake Malawi - Chipata - Lusaka (Zambia). We head away from Lake Malawi, and stop off in the capital, Lilongwe, a small city distinctively divided into the old town and the new administrative centre, to stock up on supplies before crossing into Zambia where we spend the night in a beautiful little campsite. From Chipata, we head south-west via the Great East Road to our campsite on the outskirts of Zambia's capital city, Lusaka. Overnight - Chipata (1), Lusaka (1)

## Day 33: Livingstone

Lusaka - Livingstone. Heading further south, we journey to Livingstone. The Victoria Falls or Mosi-oa-Tunya (the Smoke that Thunders) is one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World and it's not difficult to see why. At 1700 m wide and around 100 m high, this is the world's largest sheet of falling water and a memorable sight on any African Safari! The Falls can be viewed from the Mosi-oa-Tunya National Park, Zambia - a fantastic photo

opportunity. Tonight we have the option of enjoying a sunset dinner cruise on the mighty Zambezi. Overnight - [Livingstone](#)



## Day 34: Chobe N. P.

Livingstone - Chobe (Botswana). Today we cross the border into Botswana and continue to the town of Kasane, on the banks of the Chobe River which forms a border between Zambia, Namibia and Botswana. After lunch, we take a boat cruise along the Chobe River and tonight we enjoy an exciting overnight experience in the wilds of the Chobe National park. Chobe is one of Botswana's premier game parks, renowned for its large elephant herds. Spend the afternoon in search of wildlife while we game drive to our camp within the park where we spend the evening surrounded by the night-time noises of the local wildlife. Overnight - [Chobe N. P.](#)

## Day 35: Victoria Falls

Chobe - Victoria Falls (Zimbabwe). After our night in the bush, we head out early to continue our search for wildlife, before packing up the camp and heading back to Kasane. Crossing the border into Zimbabwe, a short drive takes us to the nearby Victoria Falls. Named after the famous World Heritage site and Water Falls, the town of Victoria Falls is situated on the Zambezi River and surrounded by the Victoria Falls National Park. We enjoy our last day in the adrenaline playground of Africa, where there are optional activities aplenty here including Zambezi white water rafting, bungee jumping from 111m and flights over the Falls in a variety of airborne machines! Overnight - [Victoria Falls](#)



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## Day 36: Victoria Falls

Saturday marks the end of our expedition. Consider extending your stay in Victoria Falls to take advantage of all the exciting optional excursions available.

### WHAT YOU SEE AND WHAT YOU GET:

Below is a list of key highlights and what is included on this tour. Further, where appropriate, we have listed the items that are not included in the tour price.

### Trip Highlights

- **Kenya:** Nairobi, extend your stay to explore the sites. The Great Rift Valley. Lake Nakuru National Park and lake, famous for its flamingos. Lake Naivasha, the highest Rift Valley lake. The Masai Mara, Kenya's finest wildlife reserve. Masai Mara tribal lands.
- **Uganda:** Kampala, the lively capital. Lake Bunyoni, spectacular scenery. Jinja, Nile rafting. The Equator Crossing.
- **Gorilla Trekking** (an optional excursion). Bwindi or Mgahinga Gorilla park in Uganda or Ruhengeri (Rwanda) or Parc National des Virunga (DRC)
- **Tanzania:** Arusha, the safari gateway. The Serengeti and Ngorongoro Crater (an optional excursion). Views of Mt Meru and Mt Kilimanjaro. Pangani, a historical coastal town. Dar es Salaam, Tanzania's largest city. Mikumi National Park (transit only).
- **Zanzibar:** (optional) Beautiful northern beaches & historic Stone Town (UNESCO-listed).
- **Malawi:** Lake Malawi, one of the African Great Lakes, with beautiful beaches, bays and inlets.
- **Zambia:** Livingstone & Mosi-oa-Tunya National Park, Zambia's gateway to Victoria Falls (optional).
- **Botswana:** Chobe National Park, famous for its herds of elephants. Boat cruise along the Chobe River.
- **Zimbabwe:** UNESCO Listed Victoria Falls, one of the natural wonders of the world.

### What's Included

- Arrival transfer from Nairobi Airport on day 1
- 1st night dormitory accommodation at Acacia Camp Nairobi (upgrade available)
- Transport in fully equipped expedition truck
- Services of 3 person crew (leader, driver, cook)
- All camping fees & appropriate equipment
- 30 breakfasts, 28 lunches, 29 dinners
- Park entry - Lake Naivasha NP. Park entry & game drives - Masai Mara, Lake Nakuru NP and Chobe NP
- Return ferry to Zanzibar

- Chobe River boat trip
- All road taxes & tolls

### What's Not Included

- Sleeping bag and roll mat - please bring your own
- Gorilla Permit and transfer fee: Please note that Gorillas often move across the border, between the national parks in Rwanda, Uganda and DRC, therefore itineraries often have to be changed at short notice in order to track the Gorillas in whichever National Park they have migrated to. For this reason the cost of the Gorilla Permit and relevant transfers varies, as do the applicable visa costs, dependent upon which country we need to travel into.
- Accommodation in Zanzibar
- International flights and visas
- Tipping - an entirely personal gesture
- Optional activities including the Serengeti/Ngorongoro Crater 3 day excursion
- Entrance Fees: Gorilla Permit + Transfer US \$575 - 815

### BOLT-ONS:

Make the most of your time away! Listed below are the optional activities that are available on this trip. Please note that you will need to book these prior to travel as we cannot always guarantee availability of these activities once you are on holiday.

### Masai Mara - 4 Days - USD \$495

Take a walk on the wild side with this Masai Mara Mini Safari. Go in search of the Big Five in Kenya's Masai Mara - arguably the country's most famous reserve. Enjoy an exciting game drive through the Mara and the opportunity to spot a diverse array of wildlife including elephant, giraffe, black rhino, lion, leopard, cheetah, gazelle, buffalo and hippo.

### PRICES AND DATES: from USD \$2,435

Prices shown above are per person travelling. Single travellers will be paired up in tents with another person of the same sex.

#### 2012

Date	Price/Person	Single Supp.
19 MAY - 23 JUN	USD \$2,435	-
02 JUN - 07 JUL	USD \$2,435	-
09 JUN - 14 JUL	USD \$2,435	-
16 JUN - 21 JUL	USD \$2,435	-
23 JUN - 28 JUL	USD \$2,435	-
30 JUN - 04 AUG	USD \$2,435	-
07 JUL - 11 AUG	USD \$2,435	-

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14 JUL - 18 AUG	USD \$2,435	-	27 JUL - 31 AUG	USD \$2,435	-
21 JUL - 25 AUG	USD \$2,435	-	10 AUG - 14 SEP	USD \$2,435	-
28 JUL - 01 SEP	USD \$2,435	-	24 AUG - 28 SEP	USD \$2,435	-
04 AUG - 08 SEP	USD \$2,435	-	07 SEP - 12 OCT	USD \$2,435	-
11 AUG - 15 SEP	USD \$2,435	-	21 SEP - 26 OCT	USD \$2,435	-
18 AUG - 22 SEP	USD \$2,435	-	05 OCT - 09 NOV	USD \$2,435	-
25 AUG - 29 SEP	USD \$2,435	-	19 OCT - 23 NOV	USD \$2,435	-
01 SEP - 06 OCT	USD \$2,435	-	02 NOV - 07 DEC	USD \$2,435	-
08 SEP - 13 OCT	USD \$2,435	-	16 NOV - 21 DEC	USD \$2,435	-
15 SEP - 20 OCT	USD \$2,435	-	30 NOV - 04 JAN	USD \$2,435	-
22 SEP - 27 OCT	USD \$2,435	-	14 DEC - 18 JAN	USD \$2,435	-
29 SEP - 03 NOV	USD \$2,435	-	28 DEC - 01 FEB	USD \$2,435	-
06 OCT - 10 NOV	USD \$2,435	-			
13 OCT - 17 NOV	USD \$2,435	-			
20 OCT - 24 NOV	USD \$2,435	-			
27 OCT - 01 DEC	USD \$2,435	-			
03 NOV - 08 DEC	USD \$2,435	-			
10 NOV - 15 DEC	USD \$2,435	-			
17 NOV - 22 DEC	USD \$2,435	-			
24 NOV - 29 DEC	USD \$2,435	-			
01 DEC - 05 JAN	USD \$2,435	-			
08 DEC - 12 JAN	USD \$2,435	-			
15 DEC - 19 JAN	USD \$2,435	-			
22 DEC - 26 JAN	USD \$2,435	-			
29 DEC - 02 FEB	USD \$2,435	-			

## 2013

Date	Price/Person	Single Supp.
12 JAN - 16 FEB	USD \$2,435	-
26 JAN - 02 MAR	USD \$2,435	-
09 FEB - 16 MAR	USD \$2,435	-
23 FEB - 30 MAR	USD \$2,435	-
09 MAR - 13 APR	USD \$2,435	-
23 MAR - 27 APR	USD \$2,435	-
06 APR - 11 MAY	USD \$2,435	-
20 APR - 25 MAY	USD \$2,435	-
04 MAY - 08 JUN	USD \$2,435	-
18 MAY - 22 JUN	USD \$2,435	-
01 JUN - 06 JUL	USD \$2,435	-
15 JUN - 20 JUL	USD \$2,435	-
29 JUN - 03 AUG	USD \$2,435	-
13 JUL - 17 AUG	USD \$2,435	-

## POSTCARDS:

Here's what some of our past travellers have written in to us and said about their experiences on this trip.

*Great trip - I enjoyed every monetnt of it! It has changed my vue of Africa dramatically, thank you very much - I absolutely loved it!*

[Stacey, Jun 2010](#)

*I've had a great tour on the truck. Steve, our driver was exceptional. Hizzi, the cook, never let us down. Natasha did a great job dealing with such a variety of personalities. Her knowledge of an African culture, politisc and especially animals was outstanding! She made this a real memorable African Safari. Thank you.*

[Katrin Berwick, Aug 2009](#)