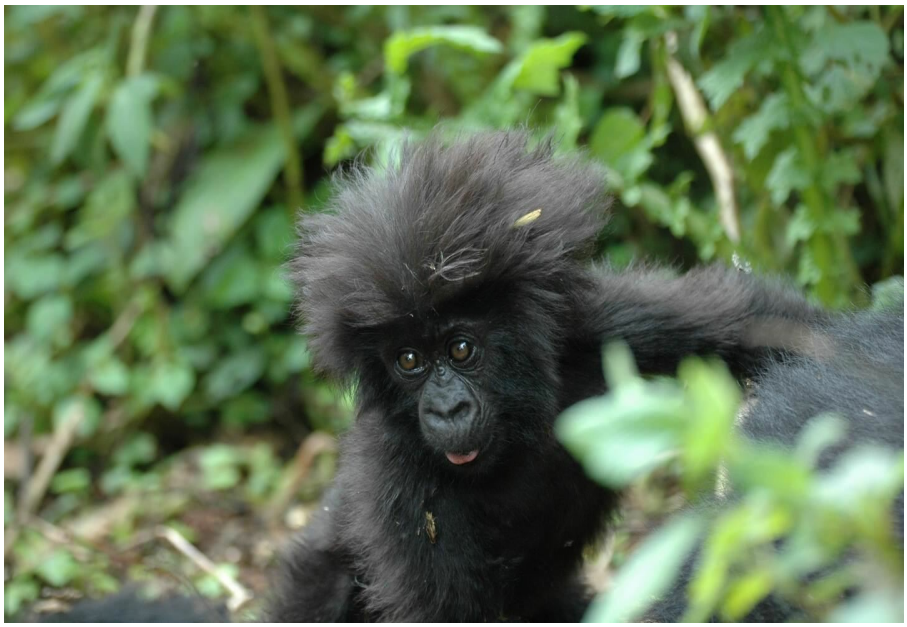
*Full Itinerary*

# ULTIMATE SAFARI OF KENYA WITH RWANDA GORILLAS EXTENSION



TALK TO OUR WELL TRAVELLED TEAM OF EXPERTS

0844 3350 197

Monday to Friday 09:00 - 18:00 GMT

## JOURNEY SNAPSHOT

ACTIVITY LEVEL:

Level 3

DESTINATION:

ULTIMATE SAFARI OF KENYA & RWANDA GORILLAS

DURATION:

13 days / 12 nights

FLIGHT INFORMATION:

Please arrange your flights to arrive into Nairobi Jomo Kenyatta International Airport [NBO] on Day 1 and depart from Kigali Airport [KGL] on Day 13

PICKUP LOCATION:

Nairobi Jomo Kenyatta International Airport [NBO]

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# OVERVIEW

18 - 30 Jan, 2025
10 - 22 Sep, 2025
20 Sep - 02 Oct, 2025

Combine the magical safari experience of Kenya, with the unforgettable moments of trekking with the mountain gorillas in Rwanda on this fantastic African journey.

Kenya is the ultimate safari destination - by day we'll see a host of wildlife whilst keeping a look out for the "Big 5" - Lion, Leopard, Elephant, Buffalo and Rhino. By night, enjoy spectacular African sunsets, nocturnal wildlife and luxury accommodation. A truly unforgettable journey deserving of the number one spot on your bucket list.

Make your unforgettable African journey the best ever by continuing to Rwanda and get up close to the mountain gorillas. Visit the Parc National de Volcans where the mighty mountain gorillas roam. This is one of the very few places on earth where you can meet a giant Silverback face to face and observe a gorilla family at close quarters. It is a mind-blowing experience - one you are unlikely to ever forget! You'll also go in search of the golden monkeys, as you walk through the beautiful terraced hillside that characterises much of Rwanda's landscape.

# ITINERARY SUMMARY

**DAY 1 -** Welcome to Nairobi

**DAY 2 -** Samburu National Reserve

**DAY 3 -** Samburu National Reserve

**DAY 4 -** Sweetwaters & Ol Pejeta Conservancy

**DAY 5 -** Great Rift Valley to Lake Naivasha

**DAY 6 -** Masai Mara

**DAY 7 -** Masai Mara

**DAY 8 -** Masai Mara

**DAY 9 -** Return to Nairobi & Travel to Rwanda

**DAY 10 -** Travel to Volcanoes National Park

**DAY 11 -** Walking with the Gorillas

**DAY 12 -** Glorious Golden Monkeys & Return to Kigali

**DAY 13 -** Goodbye, Africa!

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# FULL ITINERARY

## DAY 1 - WELCOME TO NAIROBI

Nairobi is the largest city between Cairo and Johannesburg. Just south of the equator, Nairobi enjoys a spring-like climate. It is a modern city with its main avenues ablaze with colour from tropical bushes and vines.

Less than 100 years ago, there was a river in an empty wilderness where Nairobi now stands Nairobui has long attracted world attention as the centre of big-game safaris for the rich and famous. Perhaps the most famous historical safari was that of Teddy Roosevelt, who had 500 porters.

On arrival you will be transferred to the hotel where you will meet your Big Journey Company representative.

**Accommodation:** Mövenpick Hotel & Residences, Nairobi (or similar)

## DAY 2 - SAMBURU NATIONAL RESERVE

We have an early departure from Nairobi as we head north to Samburu by safari vehicle. We make a stop in Nyeri, a town in the Central Highlands, where we have lunch in a local restaurant.

Samburu National Reserve (225 sq. km) offers what is arguably Kenya's greatest - and least changed - encounter with wild Africa. This harsh, savagely beautiful wilderness depends on the steady flow of the Uaso Nyiro River for its existence; the river waters a wide variety of animal species not found south of the Equator, including the majestic Beisa oryx, the reticulated giraffe, the thin-striped Grevy's zebra, and the 'giraffe-necked' gerenuk antelope, which stands on its hind legs to feed. Elephant, buffalo, lion and leopard can all be seen along the river, and the 400-plus species of birds are positively spectacular. Together with neighbouring Buffalo Springs and Shaba National Reserves, this area comprises 844 sq. km of protected semi-desert land.

This area is also the home of the Samburu tribe, cousins of the Masai, who share the same nomadic, cattle-herding existence, and an even stricter adherence to their age-old rites and customs.

In the late afternoon, depart from camp to undertake a game drive in the reserve.

**Included meals:** Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner
**Accommodation:** Samburu Simba Lodge, Samburu (or similar)

## DAY 3 - SAMBURU NATIONAL RESERVE

Morning and afternoon game drives.

**Included meals:** Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner
**Accommodation:** Samburu Simba Lodge, Samburu (or similar)

## DAY 4 - SWEETWATERS & OL PEJETA CONSERVANCY

After an early breakfast we say goodbye to Samburu and drive to Sweetwaters (approx. 31/2 hours by safari vehicle).

Situated between the foothills of the Aberdares and the picturesque Mount Kenya in Laikipia, Ol Pejeta is a private wildlife conservancy located on 90,000 acre ranch in Central Kenya. Here there is a strong commitment to endangered species and it is the largest black rhino sanctuary in East Africa. Ol Pejeta is home to all of the 'Big 5', including the endangered white rhino. Other highlights include the Jackson hartebeest and the spotted hyena.

We have lunch at Sweetwaters Serena Camp before we head out again on a game drive in Ol Pejeta Conservancy.

Dinner will be served back at the Camp.

**Included meals:** Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner
**Accommodation:** Sweetwaters Serena Camp, Ol Pejeta Conservancy (or similar)

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## DAY 5 - GREAT RIFT VALLEY TO LAKE NAIVASHA

Today the road leads us to the eastern arm of the Great Rift Valley, arriving for lunch at our lodge. We will explore the area of Lake Naivasha, the highest and most beautiful of the lakes which form the Great Rift Valley. It is surrounded by a series of volcanoes and calderas, most notably Mount Longonot, an extinct volcano.

Lake Naivasha's name comes from the masai word En-aiposha meaning "heaving" or "to and fro" in reference to how turbulent the waters can get in the afternoons. This area is home to resident giraffe, waterbuck and both Vervet and Colobus monkeys and is also a night stop for hippos.

Lake Naivasha is an ornithologist's paradise, as well as having excellent fishing with tilapia and black bass first introduced by the early settlers. This is the perfect place to relax, walk with a guide or just sit under a canopy of mature shady Yellow Fever trees and listen to the sound of the animals and view the rich bird life.

**Included meals:** Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner
**Accommodation:** Enashipai Resort & Spa, Lake Naivasha (or similar)
**Optional extras:** Lake Naivasha Boat Ride: Take to the water for an hour-long cruise on mighty Lake Naivasha. Spot families of hippos cooling off by the lake shores, flocks of pelicans, lofty cranes and storks and mighty African fishing eagles swooping down to catch their lunch and a whole host of other birds and animals grazing away. The lake is teeming with wildlife and you can see if from a different and relaxed perspective from the water as you sail quietly along.

## DAY 6 - MASAI MARA

We enjoy an early breakfast this morning before heading out to Kenya's richest game reserve: the Masai Mara.

The jewel in Africa's crown, Masai Mara is host to the most spectacular array of wildlife. Here, 1,510 square kilometres of open savannah, woodlands and tree-lined rivers create an eco-system which supports huge numbers of bird and mammal species. The western border of the park is the spectacular Siria Escarpment, and together with the acacia dotted plains, creates scenery of stunning beauty across the whole region. Lion are found in abundance throughout the park as are elephant, giraffe, a variety of gazelle species and zebra. Cheetah and leopard are also regularly seen and, if lucky, you may also find rhino.

Game viewing is never dull in the Mara, and patience is often rewarded with unique sightings: a pride of lion stalking their prey; a solitary leopard retrieving its kill from the high branches of an acacia tree; male wildebeest sparring to attract females into their harem; even a herd of elephant protecting their young from opportunistic predators. The annual wildebeest migration traditionally is present in the Mara from July-September and at this time nature's dramas unfold before your very eyes at every turn.

As well as wildlife, the Masai Mara is also home to many members of the colourful Masai tribe who may be seen around the borders of the park - morans (warriors) loping across the plains, young boys herding goats, or elders grouped under a tree discussing matters of the day.

Check-in and lunch upon arrival at the camp (approx. 5 ½ hours by Safari Vehicle).
In the afternoon, depart from camp to undertake a game drive in the reserve before returning to camp early evening for dinner.

The Ashnil Mara Camp is located along the confluence of the Mara and the Olkeju River. The camp is host to an amazing concentration of wildlife which is easily viewed from the camp and it comprises of 40 luxury tents overlooking the plains of the Masai Mara. The tents include luxury en suite bathrooms, walk-in closets and a sun deck for relaxation whilst watching game and listening to the "laughing" hippo sounds.

Each room has thatched roof, private veranda and en suite bathroom (with hot and cold running water and flushed WC) At night, the winding paths between the widely-spaced tents are lit by hurricane lanterns imparting a uniquely magical feel to this unique tented camp.

**Included meals:** Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner
**Accommodation:** Ashnil Mara Camp, Masai Mara (or similar)

## DAY 7 - MASAI MARA

Day spent undertaking morning and afternoon game drives.

**Included meals:** Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner
**Accommodation:** Ashnil Mara Camp, Masai Mara (or similar)
**Optional extras:** Masai Village Cultural Visit. Discover the Maasai culture as you visit a traditional Masai village. The Masai, a nomadic tribe,

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used to move with their herds across the Mara, searching lush pastures for their animals to graze. However, in recent times they have built permanent huts or bomas and prefer to stay in once place. Their cattle are the measure of a man's success, as well as a vital food source and income for all the tribe. A loud and colourful welcome awaits you as the tribe come to greet you, dancing and singing in their brightly coloured robes. Be welcomed by the tribe as they invite you into their village and tell tales of their day to day lives, rituals and struggles to retain their culture faced with the modern world. You may even be invited into their houses, where you can see how they live, work and play along with their cattle and other animals. You'll also get the chance to browse their handicraft and purchase artefacts made by the people you encountered, the proceeds of which go directly to the community and local school. This glimpse of the Masai culture is a fascinating insight into a unique way of life.

## DAY 8 - MASAI MARA

Day spent undertaking morning and afternoon game drives.

**Included meals:** Breakfast Lunch & Dinner
**Accommodation:** Ashnil Mara Camp, Masai Mara (or similar)
**Optional extras:** Masai Mara Hot Air Balloon Ride with Champagne Breakfast. Few balloon trips are as breathtaking as the one over the Masai Mara, Kenya's famous game reserve. Setting out just before dawn, you are driven to the launch site, where the balloons are already up, just as the sun peeps over the horizon. Hear the burners firing as they raise you gently skyward where, depending on the wind speed, you'll remain for forty minutes to an hour. Mother Nature will ultimately determine what wonders you will see on your flight. To give you the best possible views of the Mara, the pilots rotate the balloons and skilfully manoeuvre them up and down – bringing you almost literally face to face with life, undisturbed, in this richly diverse land. As you drift silently on the breeze, absorbing the sights and sounds of your early morning air-borne safari, you may forget about the second part of this fantastic excursion - your champagne breakfast! Close to where you land, breakfast awaits – time for good food, a glass or two of champagne and the chance to reflect on a trip we doubt you'll want to forget.

## DAY 9 - RETURN TO NAIROBI & TRAVEL TO RWANDA

An early morning wakeup call before undertaking a last game drive in the Mara. Return to camp for breakfast, departing thereafter to Nairobi.

This evening we will fly from Nairobi into Kigali, Rwanda, ready for our Rwandan adventure tomorrow

**Included meals:** Breakfast
**Accommodation:** Kigali

## DAY 10 - TRAVEL TO VOLCANOES NATIONAL PARK

After a morning relaxing in your hotel, we will drive to Musanze in the northwest part of Rwanda.

On arrival, we check into our lodge and have some time at leisure before dinner together this evening before our early start tomorrow.

**Included meals:** Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner
**Accommodation:** Gorilla Mountain View Lodge, Volcanoes National Park

## DAY 11 - WALKING WITH THE GORILLAS

Today will be the most amazing day – a chance to meet the gorillas. Many of our previous guests have enthused about how this experience has touched their soul and made them think differently about the conservation and survival of the mountain gorilla.

A very early morning transfer will be necessary to the Park Office for trekking formalities. Treks vary in duration depending on which gorilla group you are assigned to, and on where those animals have chosen to range.

After locating your assigned gorilla group, you will spend approximately one hour in their company before heading back down the volcano slopes. Lunch is back at the lodge with the afternoon to relax and reflect on this truly special experience.

**Included meals:** Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner
**Accommodation:** Gorilla Mountain View Lodge, Volcanoes National Park

## DAY 12 - GLORIOUS GOLDEN MONKEYS & RETURN TO KIGALI

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This morning we will set out into Volcanoes National Park to encounter another endangered species, the Golden Monkeys. This rare species lives at the base of the volcanoes and habituation has helped them to accept their daily visit by researchers and tourists.

Trekking golden monkeys and gorillas is a similar experience – in a small group you can spend one hour with the monkeys once you find them. They are very active creatures, and jump from tree to tree which is really interesting to watch, if a little difficult to photograph!

Afterwards we will drive back to Kigali, Rwanda's capital. In the evening we will have a farewell dinner and will certainly spend some time reminiscing about all the incredible memories of our trip.

**Included meals:** Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner
**Accommodation:** Kigali Serena

## DAY 13 - GOODBYE, AFRICA!

This morning is spent at leisure at the hotel before we arrange for your transfer to Kigali Airport to meet your departing flight back home. Say goodbye to Africa ... until next time!

**Included meals:** Breakfast

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## WHAT'S INCLUDED

- One way flight Nairobi Jomo Kenyatta Airport [NBO] - Kigali Airport [KGL]
- Meet & Greet at Nairobi & Kigali Airports on arrival
- Accommodation as detailed in the itinerary
- Transfers as detailed in the itinerary
- Meals as detailed in the itinerary
- Transport in 4x4 vehicle
- Park Entrance Fees into specified Parks and Reserves
- Golden monkey trekking permits
- All activities, visits and excursions as detailed in the itinerary
- 2 x ½ litre Mineral Water Bottles per person, per day in Safari vehicle
- National English speaking tour guide
- Tour Director from The Big Journey Company as well as the local tour guide (subject to minimum group size being reached.)

## WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- ATOL Protection
- International flights to Nairobi Airport, Kenya [NBO] and from Kigali Airport [KIG], Rwanda - Please contact us for a flight quotation
- Gorilla Permit: USD $1,500/~£1,215 per person per visit 2024, 2025 pricing subject to confirmation – payable at the time of booking. A copy of your passport is required when booking for the permit
- All entrance fees to non-stipulated attractions
- Visa entry to Kenya
- Drinks
- Gratuities
- Visas, travel and medical insurance
- Any personal items and anything not mentioned under included in price above
- Any meals not mentioned in itinerary
- Any optional activities offered
- Any COVID tests or related entry & exit requirements

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## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- Please note, flights to Kenya and from Rwanda are not included in this package. The Big Journey Company would be happy to provide a quotation for your flights - please contact us for further details
- Gorilla Permit: USD $1,500/~£1,215 per person per visit 2024, 2025 pricing subject to confirmation – payable at the time of booking. A copy of your passport is required when booking for the permit
- Vaccinations are recommended for Kenya & Rwanda. Please consult your doctor for advice.
- British and US Passport holders require a Visa to visit Kenya and Rwanda.
- Please let The Big Journey Company know prior to travelling if you have any medical needs or take any medication that we need to be made aware of to ensure that you have a safe and pleasant tour.
- Check in is after 2-3pm and check out is before 10am unless otherwise specified in the itinerary.
- Cancellation 90 – 0 days prior to departure cancellation fee is 100%. It is your responsibility to ensure the correct travel insurance in place to protect you against the need to cancel your holiday. Deposits are non-refundable. Balance payments due 14 weeks prior to departure.
- Further terms and conditions apply and will be provided upon request or at the time of booking. The Big Journey Company reserves the right to withdraw any offer prior to accepting a reservation request. This does not affect your statutory rights. This offer is subject to availability and space is limited.

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## BOOK YOUR JOURNEY

*Choose from the list of dates below*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| CASH ONLY OPTION | 18 JAN - 30 JAN 2025 | **FROM £14,139 PER PERSON.** |
| CASH ONLY OPTION | 10 SEP - 22 SEP 2025 | **FROM £14,815 PER PERSON.** |
| CASH ONLY OPTION | 20 SEP - 02 OCT 2025 | **FROM £14,814 PER PERSON.** |

*Call to Book*

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