

TRACKS SAFARIS

WE GET YOU CLOSER



**REMOTE GAME AND CHIMPANZEE ADVENTURE
RUAHA, KATAVI AND MAHALE MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARKS
A JOURNEY THROUGH REMOTE AND LITTLE VISITED NATIONAL PARKS OF
TANZANIA**



DAY ONE

On arrival into Dar es Salaam you will be met and transferred the short distance to the domestic departure terminal in time for your flight to the Ruaha National Park. On arrival at Msembe Airstrip you will be met and transferred to Kigelia Ruaha for 3 nights on an all-inclusive basis.

RUAHA NATIONAL PARK

Ruaha National Park is the largest national park in East Africa, covering an area of about 20,200 square kilometres in what's called "the southern circuit". It's in the middle of Tanzania and part of an extensive ecosystem which includes the Rungwa Game Reserve, Usungu Game Reserve and other protected areas.

The great Ruaha River runs through the park, flowing along its south-eastern margin; it's here where the game viewing is at its best with the river being the main source of water at certain times of the year. The landscape is vast and wild with hills dotted with baobabs, rocky escarpments and open savannah; it also has less camps and lodges than most other parks, despite its size.

Ruaha is famous for its large population of elephant, with about 10,000 roaming in the park, and this is believed to be the highest concentration of elephant in East Africa . You can also see both the Greater and Lesser Kudu here, Sable and Roan antelope, as well as other plains game like giraffe, zebras and eland. Other animals in the park include lion, leopard, cheetah, bat-eared foxes and jackals and you might see the endangered wild dog. Crocodiles inhabit the Ruaha and Mzombe rivers, as well as a number of other reptiles.

It is a paradise for birders, with more than 571 species, some of them known to be migrants from within as well as outside of Africa. Migrating species from Europe, Asia, the Australian rim and Madagascar have been recorded in the park.



Kigelia Ruaha, named after the Kigelia Africana, or “Sausage” trees which surround the camp, is a small 12-bed tented camp on the edge of the Ifuguru sand river in Ruaha National Park.

The camp is very light and has minimal impact on the surroundings, but it is still stylishly furnished with all the comforts. The sleeping tents have large beds and en-suite bathrooms with flush toilets and an ‘open to the sky’ safari style bucket shower. The larger “pavilion’ style mess tent provides the living space for dining and relaxing, with a bar and a well-stocked library.

This is an area that is usually full of game and it's not uncommon to find elephants walking along the paths connecting the tents, or easily seen on the other side of the dry riverbed. Ruaha National Park is the largest National Park in East Africa and the park is known for its dramatic landscapes, massive baobab trees and

the Great Ruaha River. The area is a transition zone where southern and eastern species of overlap, so there are a unique variety of animals, birds and flora and fauna to be seen.

Full and half-day game drives are on offer from Kigelia Ruaha, also trips to the nearby villages to see the work that they are doing with the local community.

DAY FOUR

Today you will transfer back to Msembe Airstrip in time for your light aircraft flight to Katavi National Park. On arrival you will be met by Chada Katavi and transferred to camp for 3 nights on an all-inclusive basis.

KATAVI NATIONAL PARK

Katavi National Park in the far west of Tanzania is somewhere that, even today, few people have been lucky enough to visit. Perhaps because of this, it feels untouched, almost like travelling back in time. The park centres on a series of wide flood plains, blond with waist high grass in the early dry season, green and flooded like a mini Okavango Delta after the rains. Connecting the main flood plains – Ngolema, Katisunga, Katavi and Chada - is a network of fragile seasonal rivers. It is these rivers that form the focus of the game viewing for which Katavi is renowned during the dry season.

Water rapidly becomes a limited resource in Katavi during the dry season, so animals of all kinds are drawn to the Katuma, Kavu and Kapapa Rivers. Hippo in their thousands cram the remaining pools, crocodiles retire to caves in the mud walls of the river banks, buffalo and elephant are drawn to the rivers to drink. The lion, hyenas and other predators know this. In the late dry season, there are few places that offer such a raw and wild experience as Katavi.



The rains usually arrive mid-November and go through until early June. Katavi then undergoes a complete transformation. Almost as soon as the first rains hit the ground, everything goes green; long green and lush grasses sprout from what was just dry and cracked earth. The rivers flow again, the pools overflow and

there is space for all. It's a birders paradise as all the migratory birds flock back. Grass as high as an elephant's eye, but there is still so much to see.

Chada Katavi is stylish and wonderfully comfortable, but we share all the resources here with Katavi's animals and so we've ensured that our footprint remains light. There are just six tents, raised up on wooden platforms on the edge of the Chada Plain. They have wide-open fronts and lots of shade net windows to let in the passing breeze. The en-suite bathrooms are at the side, also on platforms, and have eco-flush loos and an urn of cool water to refresh yourself. Safari style bucket showers are the best thing here, tried and tested and we can think of no better way to wash off the Katavi dust under one of these.

The game is everywhere in Katavi. So much so in fact, that you often don't have to leave your tent veranda to see all kinds. Elephant are frequent visitors, attracted to the same shady fruit trees as us, and vast herds of buffalo graze on the flood plain, sometimes right in front of camp.



DAY SEVEN

Today you will transfer back to the airstrip in time for your light aircraft flight to Mahale Mountain airstrip – right on the shores of Lake Tanganyika. On arrival you will be met and assisted to board the dhow boat for a relaxing 90 minute journey to Greystoke Mahale arriving at around lunchtime. We have reserved a room for 3 nights at Greystoke Mahale for you on an all-inclusive basis.

MAHALE MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK

The Mahale Mountains National Park is in the far west of Tanzania, on the shores of Lake Tanganyika. Named after the Mahale Mountains range that runs through it - it is one of the only places left in the world where you can see chimpanzees in the wild and spend time with a small group - the M Group - who are semi-habituated.

In the 1,613 square kms of the Mahale Mountains there are still no roads and all you will find are forest paths and tracks made by animals over the years. This, and the fact that the only practical way of reaching

camp is by boat, add to the sense of seclusion. Flying in over the northern end of the mountains you will see nothing for many, many miles and only small villages and local fishermen in dhows dotted along the lake shore. The park is home to some of the Africa's last remaining wild chimpanzees; a population of roughly 800 (some 60 individual forming the "M group") habituated to human visitors by Japanese researchers from Kyoto University in the 1960s.

Mahale's mountain ridge is around 50 km in length and runs across the park from the northwest to the southeast. Its tallest peak, Mt Nkungwe at 2462m, is the highest point on Lake Tanganyika's shoreline. The mountains of the Congo, on the opposite side of the lake, can sometimes be seen – some 60kms away – usually during the green season when the air is clear.



Greystoke Mahale sits on a pristine, white sandy beach overlooking the turquoise water of Lake Tanganyika in far-flung western Tanzania. The forested slopes of the 8000 ft Mahale Mountains range rise behind and, across the water, you can often see the mountains of the Congo, some 60kms away.

The camp has just six wood and thatch bandas set on the edge of the forest line at the base of the mountains. Each one has an en-suite bathroom - accessible by a short boardwalk - with hot and cold running water, strong showers and flush toilets, dressing room and upstairs chill-out deck. Dine in the main mess banda on the beach and enjoy sundowners in the bar on the rocks at the end of the beach. The main mess is the only structure on the beach and it's the focal point of camp.

Your days can start there, eating breakfast whilst waiting to hear news of the whereabouts of the chimps and deciding what to do with your day. There are many choices as well as the chimp trekking: fishing, boat trips down the lake, gentle forest walks or a lazy afternoon on the beach. Evenings end with sundowners on the rocks of the headland, where drinks are served around the lamp-lit bar whilst the mountains, rising behind camp, disappear into the darkness.



DAY TEN

Today you will transfer via dhow to Mahale airstrip to connect with your light aircraft flight back to Arusha. On arrival into Arusha you will be met and transferred to Kilimanjaro International Airport for your flight home.

RUAHA INCLUDES / EXCLUDES

Includes - all meals, house drinks, laundry and shared activities (4x4 game drives and short walks)

Excludes - non-house drinks; private guide/vehicle (available at a supplement, subject to availability, must be pre-booked)

KATAVI INCLUDES / EXCLUDES

Includes - all meals, house drinks, laundry and shared activities (4x4 game drives and short walks)

Excludes - non-house drinks; private guide/vehicle (available at a supplement, subject to availability, must be prebooked)

GREYSTOKE MAHALE INCLUDES / EXCLUDES

Includes - all meals and house drinks, laundry, 1 x chimp trek per full day, snorkelling, forest walks, boat trips

Excludes - non-house drinks, fishing (\$50pp per trip)

You can extend your safari by visiting the Selous Reserve at the beginning of your itinerary or alternatively extend your safari to visit the northern parks – Serengeti, Tarangire, Lake Manyara or the Ngorongoro Crater. You are also within striking distance of the Indian Ocean Islands of Zanzibar, Mafia and Pemba!



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