

# ASTEP AHEAD

custom guided journeys

## MIGRATION & GREAT RIVERS SAFARI 2020

### 14 DAYS DRY SEASON TANZANIA WITH RUAHA - JUNE TO OCTOBER

This itinerary covers two renowned northern wildlife areas - spectacular Ngorongoro Crater and the vast Serengeti. As the dry season progresses the great migration of wildebeest and zebra normally have reached the dry season grazing areas on the banks of the Mara River in the far northern part of the Serengeti (in Tanzania) and the Masai Mara (in Kenya). From the Serengeti we visit two lesser known wildlife-rich and vast national parks in southern Tanzania. Ruaha is known for its herds of elephants and ancient baobab forests. Nyerere National Park is the largest national park in the country and was recently created from the vast Selous. There the meandering Rufiji river, replete with crocodiles and hippos, winds its way eastwards, towards the Indian Ocean. This itinerary is packed with variety, an ideal choice for this time of year.



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#### **14-DAY ITINERARY FOR JUNE TO OCTOBER 2020**

Key to meals included - B=Breakfast, L = Lunch, D=Dinner

Day 1	Arrive in Tanzania. 1 night at <a href="#">a small boutique hotel</a> just outside Arusha.	D only
Days 2 & 3	Drive to Ngorongoro for 2 nights at <a href="#">Entamanu camp</a> on the Crater rim	B,L,D
Days 4 - 6	Fly to the northern Serengeti for 3 nights in a <a href="#">Luxury seasonal tented camp</a>	B,L,D
Days 7 - 10	Fly to Ruaha for 4 nights at <a href="#">Kigelia tented camp</a> , Ruaha National Park	B,L,D
Days 11 - 13	Fly to Selous for 3 nights at a <a href="#">Kiba Point lodge</a> , Nyerere National Park (Selous)	B,L,D
Day 14	Last day - Fly to Dar es Salaam. Day rooms. Fly home.	B,L only

#### **HIGHLIGHTS**

The spectacle of the Serengeti migration. Stunning scenery and dense wildlife populations in Ngorongoro Crater, including black-maned lions and pink flamingoes. The luxury of a hot bath with a stunning vista of Ngorongoro Crater. Elephant families and baobabs in Ruaha. The Selous, dominated by the huge meandering Rufiji River, inhabited by crocodiles and hippos, bordered by palm trees. The great diversity of habitats, scenery and species of wildlife in each place we stay.



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## ACTIVITIES

Activities shown *in italics* may be possible if requested before finalizing the itinerary, and with prior planning. Participants must be at least 12 years of age in order to go on night drives, bush walks and fly camping.

**Arusha** - *shopping, massages (extra cost)*

**Ngorongoro** - game drives, *Maasai Cultural visit, walks (not in the Crater)*

**Serengeti** - game drives, *balloon safaris (extra cost)*

**Ruaha** - game drives, night drives, *bush walks (minimum age 12)*

**Nyerere NP (Selous)** - game drives, bush walks, pool, boating safaris, fishing, *fly camping*

**Dar es Salaam** - *shopping*



## CLIMATE

Tanzania's proximity to the Equator means that altitude is a more significant influence on temperatures than time of year. During the dry season months temperatures are approximately as follows:-

**Arusha** - 1,400m (4,600ft) a.s.l., min of about 14°C (57°F), and a max of about 29°C (84°F)

**Ngorongoro Crater Lodge** - 2,200m (7,220ft) a.s.l., min of about 9°C (48°F), and a max of about 24°C (75°F)

**Serengeti** - from 1,600-2,000m a.s.l. (5,250-6,560ft) min of about 15°C (59°F), and max of about 29°C (84°F)

**Ruaha** - 750m a.s.l. (2,500ft) Min 12°C in July to 20°C in Oct (54°F - 68°F), Max 30°C in July to 38°C in Oct (80°F - 100°F)

**Nyerere NP (formerly Selous Game Reserve)**- 300m a.s.l. (980ft) Min 17°C in Jul - 20°C in Oct (63-68°F) Max 30°C in Jul - 38°C in Oct (80-100°F)

## FLIGHTS TO / FROM TANZANIA

**International flights** - We do not book international flights.

You should fly into Kilimanjaro International Airport, which is around 1 hour drive from Arusha, and out of Dar es Salaam, which is a 40-minute flight from Nyerere National Park.

The best connections to/from the USA are KLM (a SkyTeam / Delta partner) and Qatar Airways/Fly Dubai (a OneWorld partner). Emirates/Fly Dubai and Ethiopian Airlines can be good options.

Turkish Airlines also fly direct to Kilimanjaro but their arrival and departure times are not so convenient.

Swiss Air and several other airlines have flights into Dar es Salaam. British Airways, Kenya Airways and others fly into Nairobi, Kenya.

**Regional flights** - Regional flights within Tanzania will be quoted depending on the routing required, and are not included in the safari cost.

## PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

This highly varied safari can be tailored to suit almost any group's needs, and is excellent for children from 8 years upwards. Young children should share a tent/room with an adult, and may not be allowed to participate in some activities such as bush walks or fly camping. We can tailor to maximize wildlife viewing and photographic opportunities, or offer a blend of activities, including opportunities to be more active.

If there are any special needs (such as elderly people, or young children), it is crucial that we are informed before designing the itinerary for you, as these could influence our choice of lodges or places recommended.

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## ARUSHA

The town of Arusha is situated at 1,400m / 4,500 feet above sea level (a.s.l.) on the foothills of Mount Meru and prides itself as the “safari capital of Tanzania”. The town was once a quiet colonial administrative centre with avenues lined with lilac flowered Jacaranda trees and orange flowered Nandi Flame Trees. Now it is a hustling and bustling centre of business for northern Tanzania. It is especially a tourism hub between Mount Kilimanjaro and the most famous wildlife areas in Tanzania: Ngorongoro Crater and the Serengeti. It is also only an hour's drive from Kilimanjaro International Airport, and only a few hours' drive or 1 hour regional flight from Nairobi in Kenya. Arusha is a good place to pause and browse the shops, enjoy an outdoor buffet lunch, or visit one of the various non-profit centres that help the community.

## KATAMBUGA HOUSE

Naturally, there is a wide choice of places to stay here. One of the most convenient is **Katambuga House**, which is situated in a residential area that was once a coffee plantation, on the outskirts of Arusha, 10 minutes from the regional airport - the perfect location to begin our safari!

The lodge, which only has 6 ensuite rooms, consists of two buildings - the main house and the Family cottage. The main house has a common dining room and lounge with a veranda overlooking the gardens. On either side of this are the Main house suites. The Family cottage has two interconnecting bedrooms.

Katambuga House is 5 mins drive from a small shopping centre, and a further 10 minutes from the interesting Shanga workshops.



Shanga is an aid project, aimed at enabling disabled people to earn a living by making crafts. It is possible to visit the workshops and also the adjacent restaurants and shops.

**COMMUNICATION** - There is cellphone reception and wifi in the main area.

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## NGORONGORO CRATER

Even if there weren't much wildlife here, the vast 180 km<sup>2</sup> (100 mi<sup>2</sup>) Crater, with its backdrop of extinct volcanos, would still be amazing. However the Crater is home to over 25,000 ungulates, and is said to have the highest density of large mammalian predators on Earth.



This is undoubtedly the best place in Tanzania to view black rhino as well as large prides of lion, including magnificent black-maned males. It is also home to huge herds of wildebeest, zebra, Thomson's gazelle and other plains game. An alkaline lake in the floor of the Crater provides a habitat for colourful flamingo and a variety of other water birds.



Professor Bernard Grzimek best described the Ngorongoro Crater in his book, *The Serengeti Shall not Die*. He said, "It is impossible to give a fair description of the size and beauty of the Crater, for there is nothing with which one can compare it. It is one of the Wonders of the World."

We descend more than 2,000 feet on steep tracks cut into the crater wall to reach the open plains of the Crater floor.

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## ENTAMANU NGORONGORO CAMP

Entamanu Camp is tucked in an acacia forest on the Ngorongoro Crater rim at 2,200m (7,200ft), offering views eastwards and into the Crater below. This traditional style tented camp, built on wooden decks, blends Maasai furnishings of cow and sheep-skin rugs and covers, beaded lampshades, and locally-made wicker armchairs with modern simplicity - and wonderful gas heaters that are a blessing at this altitude!



There are actually two camps - the main 7 room Ngorongoro Entamanu, and its smaller 4-roomed sister camp Entamanu Private. The two have almost identical facilities.

The main area of Ngorongoro Entamanu comprises one long tented structure on a wooden deck, with two dining rooms and a veranda at one end, and two lounges at the other, with a bar in between. The seven wood and canvas cabins, including two family units, have a large bedroom with a king-size double or two twin beds, and the eastward wall consisting of canvas, mosquito netting and heavy plastic sheets, so the views can be enjoyed regardless of the outside temperature. There is limited wifi in the main area.

The rooms are adorned with cow-skin rugs, a writing desk, a charging unit for computers, cameras and phones, and a gas heater. The adjoining bathroom has twin washbasins, a wardrobe, shower, and flush toilet.

**ACTIVITIES** (*If in italics it should be requested before the safari*)

1 game drive in the Crater, picnic breakfast or lunch, bush walks near camp (minimum age 12 years), Maasai village visit, *Olduvai Gorge visit, local school visit.*

**COMMUNICATION** - There is limited cellphone reception. There is limited wifi in the main area.



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## THE SERENGETI IN THE DRY SEASON

The huge herds of migrating wildebeest and zebra have usually reached the Grumeti River in the Western Serengeti by some time in June.



However this time is highly unpredictable, and where exactly they will be depends on rainfall and other factors.

If it is a very dry year it is possible they could reach the banks of the Mara River in the northern Serengeti some time in July, or in rare occasions earlier. **If that is the case** with luck we could see a “River Crossing” - when herds bunch together and then charge headlong into the crocodile-infested roaring Mara River. That is a spectacle never to forget, but if we decide to focus on more remote areas we are just as likely to be rewarded.



Although this is the dry season, highlands to the northeast in Kenya facilitate build-up of cloud on hot days, resulting in thunder storms. There are also plenty of streams and other sources of permanent water. “Mara” in the Maasai language means patchy, and this area is very varied, with grasslands and riverine woodland.

This area supports large numbers of predators, including less territorial hunters such as hyena and cheetah. We are also treated to sightings of resident giraffe, elephant, buffalo and topi, and numerous other animals. It is possible to see the rare black rhinoceros here too.

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## SEASONAL LUXURY TENTED CAMP

We stay in a seasonal tented camp erected in a remote northernmost corner of the Serengeti National Park from July to October.



This camp has long, spacious, adjoining dining and lounge tents, overlooking the fireplace and wide open plains beyond. The lounge has a full bar with a small library, comfy cushions to relax in, and a bank of electrical outlets to charge camera and phone batteries. There is a public washroom tent a few metres away.

There are six tents in all. Each has large beds with crisp linen, a writing desk, dressing area and an en suite bucket shower and eco-flush loo. One is a family tent which accommodates two adults and two children in two adjoining tents, each with its own bathroom area and a shared common space with a sofa and cushions to relax . Daily laundry service is included (except ladies' smalls).

There is nothing better than sipping cocktails around the campfire at dusk, listening to a serenade of roaring lions in the distance!

**ACTIVITIES** - Game drives & bush breakfasts (included), hot air balloon flight (supplemental cost of approx. US\$ 600 per person)

**COMMUNICATION** - There is no internet service, so be prepared to be immersed in the African bush, far from the modern world. There may be patchy, sporadic cellphone coverage.



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## RUAHA NATIONAL PARK

Ruaha is Tanzania's largest national park, covering 22,000 sq kms (8,500 sq miles). This is a remote park that has excellent wildlife viewing. What we see and do varies on your choice of accommodation, interests, and the wildlife movements at the time. There are various different options from any of the camps we choose to stay. We could explore a nearby sand river, or head down to the permanent flow of the Great Ruaha River, a wide flowing sandy river, and a busy spot as the dry season progresses and water becomes the most important issue for wildlife. Then animals head to the river to drink before the heat becomes too oppressive. Sometimes herd after herd of elephant wander down to the water's edge to bathe and have a drink. Naturally in such dry periods it is a favorite haunt for prides of lions to lie in wait for thirsty prey.



Of course it is also a great place to spot crocodiles. We might even see one laying eggs in the sand along the riverbank, or a monitor lizard lurking nearby, lying in wait for a moment when the mother crocodile is off her guard, to feast on the eggs. This is one of the few places in Africa where you can see both the lesser and greater kudu. If we are extremely lucky we may encounter a shy sable antelope, or the extremely rare roan antelope.

Another day trip involves driving to the village of Tungamalenga outside the park, where we can visit the school and nearby farms. We then return to the Great Ruaha to relax in the shade with a picnic lunch, where we can watch herd after herd of impala, greater kudu, waterbuck, giraffe and elephant come down to drink. Once it has cooled down we gently drive back to camp scouting the river banks for skulking leopards.



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## KIGELIA TENTED CAMP IN RUAHA

Kigelia camp is small and intimate, with only six tents. One of these is a family tent which can take 2 adults and 2 children. There is a separate dining tent and lounge and the whole camp is set overlooking a sand river.



Each accommodation tent has comfortable, locally crafted beds and its own en-suite bathroom with flush toilet and open air bucket shower for that true camping experience. There is nothing better than to stand under a steaming hot open air shower at the end of a long day's game drive! At night, we sometimes hear the sawing cough of leopard from camp as they cross the sand river to visit a nearby spring for water. It does not have a pool.

## ACTIVITIES

*(If in italics it should be requested before the safari)*

Game drives, night drives, bush picnics, bush walks (minimum age is 12), hot air balloon flight (extra cost)

## COMMUNICATION -

WiFi is available in the rooms but not in the main area. There is limited cellphone reception.



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## NYERERE NATIONAL PARK (Formerly SELOUS)

Nyerere National Park, created in 2019 from the northern part of the Selous Game Reserve is 30,893 km (11,920 sq miles), making it the largest national park in East Africa.



Two of Tanzania's largest rivers, the Ruaha and the Rufiji pass through here. Both teem with hippo and crocodile, which we see basking on the sand banks while we sit in the comfort and shade of the lodge surroundings. From there we may also spot some of the many species beautiful birds which inhabit this area, such as Boehm's bee-eater, or see an African skimmer speed by "skimming" the water's surface for fish.

### SPECIAL SPECIES

This is a vast area, home to herds of elephant, buffalo, greater kudu, giraffe, plains zebra, Nyassa wildebeest and Lichtenstein's hartebeest. It is a haven for the predators too, such as lion, leopard and spotted hyaena, and is home to Africa's largest population of one of its rarest predators - the African wild dog, seen especially when they den in the dry season. Since there is plenty of water around, this is a fantastic place to see hippos and crocodiles, as well as an opportunity to spot the unusual Zambezi soft-shelled turtle.



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## SAND RIVERS & KIBA POINT

Two small lodges built of local materials straddle the Rufiji River in a quiet part of Nyerere National Park. Both lodges blend beautifully into the surroundings, and the accommodation facilities and service is similar. The rooms all have large beds, single or double, with an en suite shower and flush loo.



## KIBA POINT

Kiba Point is a four-roomed exclusive lodge, accommodating only up to 8 guests, tucked in the cool forest near the banks of the Rufiji River.

## SAND RIVERS

Sand Rivers Lodge welcomes mixed groups and offers superb views across the Rufiji. The main dining room, lounge and swimming pool are almost on the waters edge. Here we meet the other guests, relax, have a drink, and swap stories. This lodge only has nine cottages and is better for larger groups.

## ACTIVITIES

*(If in italics it should be requested before the safari)*

Game drives, boat cruises, fishing, bush picnics, bush walks (minimum age is 12), *fly camping (minimum age is 12)*.

**COMMUNICATION** - WiFi is available in the main area. There is very limited and sporadic cellphone reception.

## FLY CAMPING

While staying at either of these places, it is possible to venture out for a “fly camping” experience for one or more nights. These lightweight accommodation tents are simple sealed mosquito net affairs, designed to allow us to enjoy the night stars, and the experience of sleeping in the wilds. Often, this is a highlight of the safari! If we opt to do this, we usually do so on one of the first two nights, allowing us to return to the main camp or lodge for our last night.





## **COST OF THE ABOVE 14-DAY SAFARI IN THE DRY SEASON - JUNE TO OCTOBER 2020**

Number of guests	4	6	8	10	12
Led by professional A Step Ahead guide	\$17,400	\$15,300	\$14,550	\$14,550	\$13,450
Guided by local camp guides in each place	\$13,380	\$12,700	\$12,700	\$12,700	\$12,100

**PLUS FLIGHTS** - Manyara (for Ngorongoro)/Serengeti/Ruaha/Selous/Dar-es-Salaam (approximate cost only due to frequent changes in fuel costs and taxes)

**EITHER - Scheduled Flights** - Approximately US\$ 1,800 per person

**OR - Private Charters** - For one 9-passenger Cessna 208 or similar approx US\$ 23,000 for the aircraft\*

\* Flights are costed per aircraft, so **for a group of 10 or more TWO aircraft are required.**

### **Notes:**

- i. Costs are based on 2 adults sharing a tent/room throughout. If you would have children in your group, please let us know as there are quite substantial discounts for children of all ages.
- ii. Costs for single accommodation can be supplied on request.
- iii. Costs for groups of less than 4 guests or more than 12 can be supplied on request.
- iv. The costs include private 4x4 vehicle(s) and guide(s) at each place.
- v. In the Selous, groups of 10 or 12 would stay at an 8-room lodge. For groups of 4, 6 or 8 we can book a smaller, 4-room lodge on exclusive basis at no extra charge.
- vi. It is possible to book the Serengeti and Ruaha camps on exclusive basis at an extra cost. Please let us know if you would like us to calculate this supplement for you.
- vii. It is possible to extend this safari to include a stay on Zanzibar Island, which is only a 20-minute flight from Dar-es-Salaam.
- viii. There is a saving on the above costs when travelling in June or October so please ask if you are interested in travelling in those months.
- ix. Scheduled flights leave at specific times from certain airstrips. We have to be at the airstrip ½ hour before departure. The aircraft will not wait for any latecomers. The flight might include stops to pick up and drop off other passengers on the way to our destination. Flights are costed per person.
- x. Charter flights leave from the airstrip of choice (usually the nearest) and at the time requested upon booking. They go direct to our destination with no stops on the way - unless it is necessary to refuel.
- xi. It is possible to use a mix of both scheduled flights and private charters, choosing charters where the saving in time is greatest, and schedules where the saving in cost is greatest.

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**Included in the above safari cost:** Services of a professional *A Step Ahead* guide throughout the safari (if this option is chosen); services of experienced regional expert guides in each place; accommodation in best available twin-bedded tent/room on full board everywhere; services of a fully trained crew; laundry service from Day 2 to Day 13 when not a move day (not ladies underwear in some camps); ground transport in private, customized 4-wheel drive vehicles while on safari (Ngorongoro, Serengeti, Ruaha & Selous); ground transport in Arusha & Dar (could be in minibuses); all park entry and camping fees; soft and alcoholic drinks when on safari (except premium brands); boat and walking safaris where applicable; Flying Doctor membership (covers air evacuation to Nairobi Hospital in an emergency); transfers to/from the hotel and the airport on the first and last days.

**Not included in the above safari cost:** Any drinks, meals or room extras in Dar es Salaam on the last day; premium brand alcoholic drinks anywhere (e.g. champagne); items of a personal nature (e.g. visas, airport taxes, telephone or fax services, massages, internet services etc.); any new government taxes; medical or hospitalization costs in the event of illness or emergency; any kind of insurance; balloon flights or other extras; international flights; any regional flights (please see separate cost above); gratuities.

PLEASE SEE OUR **TERMS & CONDITIONS FOR AFRICA (2020)** DOCUMENT FOR MORE DETAILED INFORMATION ON TERMS AND INCLUSIONS & EXCLUSIONS

### **YOUR A STEP AHEAD GUIDE**

Our guides are keen and passionate bush professionals, who guide safaris because they absolutely love being in nature and helping their guests understand the world they cherish. They are mostly all-rounders, expert at the many varied fields a guide should know about, and are not limited to one field. They have experience traveling and being in the bush in many different countries in Africa and so are able to offer a broad view on most things. They are involved in designing custom itineraries for our guests. They compliment and work well with the locally based guides in the various countries or camps, and they ensure continuity and are good at adding special

touches to a safari to make sure you have an amazing safari experience. Invariably once on safari with one of our *A Step Ahead* professional guides, our guests will recommend no other to their friends back home! That is the greatest tribute they give them. Our *A Step Ahead* safaris are normally led by one of our guides.



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