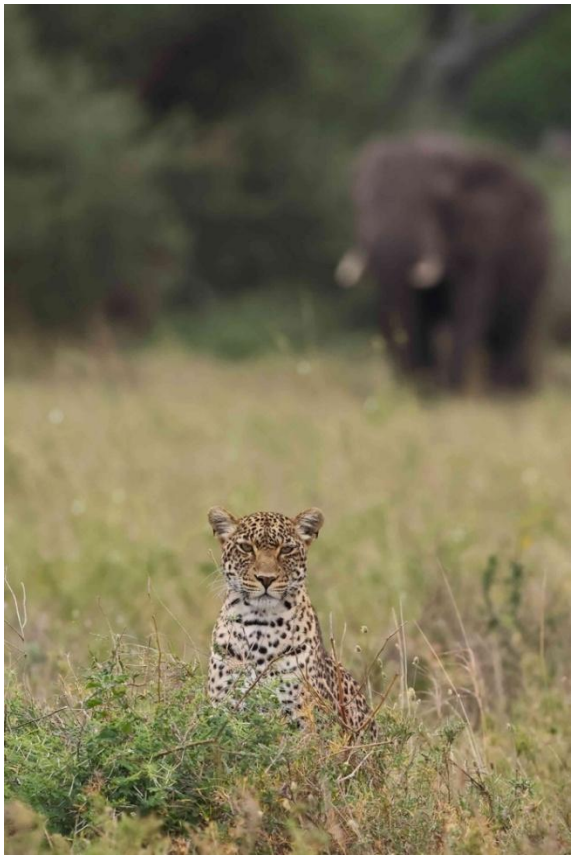
Natural Selections

BIRDING, WILDLIFE, AND PHOTO TOURS



Leopard and Elephant

15 Day Kenya Wildlife Photo Safari with Lee Hoy

14 Nights/15 Days

Kenya is renowned for its amazing wildlife, diverse habitats and fascinating cultural heritage. A wide range of ecological zones—semi-arid plains, vast savannas, tropical mountain forests, a rugged northern frontier, and the Great Rift Valley—provide for a tremendous array of fauna and flora and of course, world-class photography. On this photo safari to Kenya, Photographer Lee Hoy takes you to explore the best-known and most distinguished parks and reserves in East Africa. Our focus will be on expanding our technical and creative skills, fieldcraft, and patience in order that we can capture visually compelling images.

This wildlife-packed safari offers a total of twenty (20) game drives. Of course, the Big Five of Africa, lion, leopard, elephant, rhinoceros (black and white), and buffalo, will be high on our target list We will work hard to get up close to a variety of big cats, zebra, wildebeest, giraffe, a plethora of antelope species, and hippos. Birds are ever present and we will look for rollers, cranes, raptors, weavers, hornbills, and much more!

Tour Overview

Day 1: Arrival at Nairobi's Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (NBO)
Days 2-4: Samburu Game Reserve/Simba Lodge
Days 5-6: Sweetwaters Game Reserve
Days 7-8: Lake Naivasha
Days 9-11: Masai Mara
Days 12-13: Masai Mara
Day 14: Masai Mara to Nairobi
Day 15: International Flights home, or Amboseli extension



Masai Giraffe

14 Night/15 Day Itinerary:

Day 1, Arrive Nairobi:

Your safari begins when you arrive in Nairobi where you will be met at the airport and transferred to the Boma Hotel for overnight.

Lodging at Hotel Boma Nairobi
Meals: N/A

Day 2, 3, 4, Samburu Game Reserve:

After breakfast, we travel to Samburu Game Reserve, located in Kenya's Northern Frontier District. We enjoy the magnificent scenery of this region, exploring the area for characteristic wildlife. Grevy's Zebra, Somali Ostrich, Beisa Oryx, Gerenuk, Olive Baboon, Guenther's Dik-dik and Reticulated Giraffe thrive in this harsh but picturesque landscape. This is the land of the Samburu tribesmen, a pastoral people related to the Masai. The women wear layers of beads in choker fashion around their necks, and the men are famous for their colorful adornment and high-jumping dances. Morning and afternoon game drives will allow ample time to explore this unique area and photograph its abundant wildlife under a variety of conditions.

Lodging at Samburu Simba Lodge
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 5, 6, Sweetwaters Game Reserve and Chimpanzee Sanctuary:

Sweetwaters Game Reserve is a historic 24,000-acre wildlife sanctuary in central Kenya that forms the core of the larger Ol Pejeta Rhino Conservancy near Nanyuki, with views of Mount Kenya, beyond.

Today, after an early breakfast, we depart for Sweetwaters Game Reserve arriving in time for lunch. Sweetwater's is on the slopes of Mt. Kenya and overlooks a well-lit waterhole offering visitors an unforgettable opportunity to view and photograph animals in their natural habitat. Twenty five of the thirty luxurious tents here overlook the water hole and some are built on stilts to offer a better view. Each luxurious tent comes with en-suite facilities, a patio (veranda), and is set under a thatch roof. Sweetwaters is well known for its Black and White Rhinos, as well Cheetah, Lions and smaller mammals like Thompson Gazelle, Grant's Gazelle, Impala, Buffalo, and Giraffe.

Lodging at Sweetwater's Tented Camp
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 7, 8, Lake Naivasha:

Today, after an early breakfast, our group will depart for Lake Naivasha, the only freshwater lake in Africa's Rift Valley. From the top of the Rift Valley escarpment, you can see the lake sparkling under the sun, thousands of feet below you. The lake is home to a large colony of Hippos and it's also a mecca for bird photographers, as over 400 different species of birds have been recorded here. Not the

least of which include the African Fish Eagle, Pied, Giant, and Malachite Kingfishers, and numerous other wading and water birds. It's on the beautiful shores of Lake Naivasha that Joy Adamson, author of the bestseller book, "Born free" lived; her home Elsamere is now a wildlife education and conservation center.

The lakes' location and wildlife make it an ideal place for an afternoon boat ride. We'll make a visit to the liberating Crescent Island, which is completely undeveloped, wild and free, and one of the few places on earth where you can wander/walk on foot among herds of Zebra, Wildebeest, Gazelle, Giraffe and Dik Diks. There are no predators and no fences so it will be quite a liberating photo-walk among the island's wildlife.

Lunch will be served at the tranquil Lake Naivasha Sopa Lodge. In the afternoon we enjoy an unforgettable and memorable boat ride among colonies of Hippos and birds, and later enjoy dinner prepared from the freshest lakeside produce and ingredients. Set among one hundred and fifty acres of grassland studded with Acacia bushes and trees, the resort is not only home to resident Giraffe, Waterbuck and both Vervet and Colobus monkeys, but it is also a night stop for the Hippos as they leave the lake to come and trim the grass on our expansive lawns.



Lion

Lodging at Lake Naivasha Sopa Lodge
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 9, 10, 11, Masai Mara Game Reserve:

This northern extension of the Serengeti ecosystem, one of the world's most rewarding wildlife observation sites, virtually throbs with wildlife. The rich savannah is famous for its concentration of plains game and its predators, including lion, Leopard, Cheetah and Hyena.

We depart this morning for our exciting, overland journey to Masai Mara, one of Africa's most wildlife-packed game reserves. This northern extension of the Serengeti ecosystem, one of the world's most rewarding wildlife observation sites, virtually throbs with life. The rich savannah is famous for its concentration of plains game and its predators, including Leopard, Cheetah and Hyena. As we arrive in Masai Mara, we will begin to see Masai herding their cattle. The Masai, perhaps the best-known and most colorful African group, still follow their traditional ways as semi-nomadic pastoralists. Young warriors carry spears and decorate themselves with red ochre, and the women wear elaborate and beautiful beadwork. The social life of the Masai makes them a fascinating and special people, and we shall see their herds and villages among the plain's animals through much of our journey. (Recommended reading: The Maasai by Carol Beckwith and Tepilit ole Saitoti).

Lodging at Lake Mara Ashnil lodge
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 12, 13, Masai Mara Game Reserve:

Today our safari expedition will explore this icon of Kenya's parks, the world famous Masai Mara Game (Wildlife) Reserve. This is Kenya's number one park and is always on every photographer's bucket list. Full of diverse, East African animals and birds, Masai Mara is the crown jewel of every safari in Kenya. Its rolling grasslands and acacia studded savannah have time and again been captured on film with the movie "Out of Africa" being the most famous. Masai Mara is also home to the "Big Five" (Elephant, Buffalo, Lion, leopard and rhino) and over 450 bird species. Apart from the big five, the Masai Mara is most famous for the spectacular annual migration of over a million wildebeest, zebra, gazelle, and many more hooves mammals. from the Serengeti in northern Tanzania crossing the Mara River



Southern White Rhino

into Kenya in search of fresh feeding grounds, which takes place in late July or August (our workshop is timed to avoid the crowds of vehicles and photographers who amass during this event making photography very difficult).

Lunch will be served at the luxurious Mara Serena Safari Lodge set in the African bush, on an elevation that overlooks the Mara Plains. The camp is a combination of luxury and adventure. After lunch we will have some time for post processing class. The luxurious rooms have electricity and en-suite bathroom facilities. The grounds are beautifully laid out with trees and flowers inhabited by a collection of exotic birds and butterflies.

In the afternoon, we will head out with your driver guide in search of the shy and elusive leopard and over 450 species of birds of which 57 species are birds of prey. As the sunset starts to dip below the African horizon it will be the perfect opportunity for you to capture the beautiful Mara landscape and hopefully some wildlife environmental portraits.

Mammals here include lions, leopards, African Elephants, African Buffalo, Cheetahs, Spotted Hyenas, Side-striped and Black-backed Jackals, Bat-eared Foxes, Honey Badgers, Wildebeest, Plains Zebras, Maasai Giraffes, Hippos, Warthogs, Topis, Elands, Impalas, Thomson's and Grant's Gazelles and more.

The birds here include such iconic species as Secretary Birds, ostriches, Kori Bustards, Ground Hornbills, Lilac-breasted Rollers, Superb Starlings, Martial Eagles, African Fish Eagles, Bateleurs, Pygmy Falcons, and vultures such as Rüppell's Griffon, White-backed, and Lappet-faced). Along the rivers and marshes are kingfishers (including Malachite and Striped), Herons, Egrets, Grey Crowned Cranes, and Storks (such as Marabou and Saddle-billed). And in forest pockets, Turacos, Black-and-white Casqued Hornbills, and Barbets can be seen just to name a few.

Lodging at Mara Serena Safari Lodge
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 14, Masai Mara Game Reserve- flight to Nairobi:

Today, after breakfast, we will have the last chance to photograph a few more iconic mammals and landscapes before returning to the hotel for lunch and freshen up as we await our flight back to Nairobi. Upon arrival in Nairobi, we can have dinner and later transfer to your hotel.

Lodging at Hotel Boma Nairobi
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 15, Departure from Nairobi:

The feeders at Guango allow "in-This morning after breakfast, you will checkout from the hotel, and you will be transferred to the airport for your international departure flight. Those participating on the Amboseli extension will continue on a land based adventure.

Meals: Breakfast

Included:

All ground transportation in 8-seater 4x4 land cruiser for the duration of the safari, fitted with VHF - one guest per row of seats with photography workshop leader riding in front or in any spare row, internal flight from Masai Mara to Nairobi, all accommodations as listed, all meals from breakfast on day two to breakfast on departure day, all park entrance fees, all airport transfers, drinking water throughout, Kenyan guide and driver and US tour leader throughout.

Not Included:

International airfare, visa fees, tips, soft drinks, alcoholic drinks, laundry, souvenirs, additional services at hotels, other items of a personal nature.

Travel insurance:

We highly recommend you obtain travel insurance. In the event that you need to cancel your trip due to medical or other reasons, this insurance will protect you. For details, please see https://www.naturalselectionstours.com/travel-insurance/

Amboseli National Park Optional Extension

Amboseli National Park is one of Kenya's most iconic safari destinations, best known for its spectacular views of Mount Kilimanjaro and large herds of Elephants. The open plains, seasonal lake, and permanent wetlands attract an impressive variety of wildlife, including Lions, Cheetahs, Buffalo, Giraffes, Zebras and more than 400 species of birds.

Compact and easy, this Amboseli extension offers five (5) game drives, excellent wildlife viewing and magnificently scenic, photographic opportunities throughout the year. Amboseli combines naturally with the Maasai Mara or Kenya's coast, making it an ideal addition to a wider and more diverse Kenyan safari.

Amboseli Extension Overview

Day 1: Nairobi to Amboseli National Park
Days 2-3: Amboseli National Park
Day 4: Amboseli National Park and departure for Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (NBO) and flights home

14 Night/15 Day Itinerary:

Day 1, Nairobi to Amboseli National Park:

After breakfast and check out, we'll drive to the scenic Amboseli National Park, located at the base of the iconic Mount Kilimanjaro, offering a beautiful backdrop. The setting combines with the unmatched view of animals, giving you the most memorable time in Amboseli. With a good view, we will check in and later enjoy lunch before embarking on an afternoon game drive into the park. This is an exciting opportunity to see a wide range of wildlife in their natural habitat. After the game drive, you will return to the lodge for dinner and overnight.

Large herds of Elephants and rare "super tuskers" (elephants with tusks weighing over 100lbs) are easy to spot on the open plains and dry lake bed here. Predators like Lions, Cheetahs, Hyenas, and Leopards roam the grasslands and acacia bushland, eying the many Zebras, Wildebeests, Giraffes, Hippos, Baboons, Impalas, Gazelles, and Lesser Kudus that call Amboseli home.

Bird life here is diverse as well, and includes myriad water birds and waders, raptors, and savanna and woodland species.

Lodging at Ol Tukai Lodge
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 2, 3, Amboseli National Park:

Two full days at Amboseli national park with optional full-day game drives or morning and afternoon game drive is a thrilling and unforgettable experience as you search for wildlife among the grassy plains of Amboseli. We will be immersed in photographing Elephants, Zebras, Buffalo, Giraffes, and other animals roaming the landscape. During our game drives, we hope to see and photograph some of the Big Five—



Topi

Elephants, Lions, Buffalos, Rhinos, and Leopards under a variety of lighting and conditions. We will be working on capturing super portraits, portraits, birds in flight, environmental wildlife portraits, and black and white images!

Throughout these two days we will also have opportunities to take breathtaking views of Mt. Kilimanjaro from different angles.

All meals and overnight at the lodge.

Lodging at Ol Tukai Lodge
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 4, Amboseli National Park and departure for Nairobi:

Soon after breakfast, (with a game drive en-route), we head back to one of Africa's modern capital cities Nairobi, affectionately known as the "City Under the Sun". Later you will be transferred to the airport for your international departure flight.

Meals: Breakfast

Included:

All ground transportation in 8-seater 4x4 land cruiser for the duration of the safari, fitted with VHF - one guest per row of seats with TL riding in front or in any spare row, all accommodations as listed, all meals from breakfast on day one to lunch on departure day, all park entrance fees, all airport transfers, drinking water throughout, Kenyan guide and driver and US tour leader throughout.

Not Included:

International airfare, visa fees, tips, soft drinks, alcoholic drinks, laundry, souvenirs, additional services at hotels, other items of a personal nature.

Travel insurance:

We highly recommend travel insurance for this and for all travel. Important detail can be seen here https://www.naturalselectionstours.com/travel-insurance/



Mount Kenya

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