

Service, Safari & Ecotourism

Day 1 Nairobi.

Fly from London to Nairobi.

Day 2 Naivasha, Elsamere

From Nairobi, drive North West across the escarpment as you descend into the Rift Valley you will see one of the world's natural wonders: **Hell's Gate National Park** is famous for its natural hot geysers, and eagle and vulture breeding grounds. Driving, walking, camping, cycling and rock climbing can be enjoyed within the park. Zebras, baboons and gazelles are common sights and occasionally cheetahs, leopards and ostrich are encountered. Hell's Gate is one of the few game reserves where visitors can explore by foot and walk amongst the elands, zebras and hartebeest. Fischer's Tower, formerly a volcano's plug, is a column of volcanic rock named after a German explorer who explored the Hell's Gate area in 1882.

Mount Longonot was created as a result of the volcanic eruptions that formed the Great Rift Valley. Time permitting, visitors can hike to the rim of the crater or inside to the bottom. As you climb, you will pass herds of grazing wildlife or watch buffalo and other animals as they cross the crater floor. Views of Lake Naivasha and the valley itself are not to be missed. Hot springs and steam seep through vents in the solid lava.

We then make a visit to **Longonot Primary School** where we will become involved in the cultural activities at a local primary school.

After these excursions you will be staying at **Elsamere**, former home of the late Joy Adamson of Born Free fame, a haven for lovers of nature, set on the banks of Lake Naivasha. By staying at Elsamere you have the unique opportunity to visit local conservation projects. Check-in to the lodge dormitories and visit the museum including a slide show. Dinner will be served at the lodge.

Day 3 Lake Naivasha, Elsamere

Lake Naivasha is a freshwater lake that varies greatly according to rainfall. In the early 20th Century, the lake dried up and disappeared but then rose again covering a much larger area than it currently occupies. The variety of bird species is numerous, including the African fish eagle, and Naivasha is noted as a world class birding destination. Animals that can be found in or around the waters of Lake Naivasha include giraffes, buffalo and hippos with Colobus monkeys calling from the treetops. The land surrounding the lake is one of Kenya's prime agricultural regions. Flowers, fresh fruit and vegetables are produced as well as beef cattle for consumption and export.

There will be a **Boat trip** on the Lake using Elsamere boats to enjoy excellent viewing of hippos and birds, or try fishing for bass or tilapia. We will then tour a local **Flower Farm and Plantation** to learn about Kenya's horticulture industry.

Time permitting, for a shot of prehistory try a visit to **Kariandusi**, with a surprising sideshow in the shape of a neighboring diatomite mine. There's a small museum too, which explains the formation of the Rift Valley, and has comparative skull specimens of our various distant ancestors. A fascinating complement to the prehistoric site is a **diatomite mine** just 800m from the highway. Diatomite is a light, white, crumbly rock composed of the compressed silica skeletons of microscopic sea organisms (diatoms).

Day 4 Lake Nakuru - Naivasha, Elsamere

In the morning you will visit **Lake Nakuru National Park** for a **game drive**, one of the finest bird sanctuaries in the world with regular sightings of one million flamingoes feeding on the lake. This stunning park is also home to a huge variety of wildlife including rhino, lion, leopard and giraffe.

You will then have lunch and pay a visit to the **Hyrax Hill Neolithic site**. Late afternoon you drive back to Elsamere.

Day 5 Masai Mara

After breakfast, depart for the **Masai Mara Game Reserve** via Narok. Check-in and lunch at the lodge. Afternoon **game drive** in the reserve that is famous for its large concentration of wildlife as well as bird life. It is the natural prolongation of Serengeti National Park in Tanzania.

Day 6 Masai Mara

Wake up at 0530hrs and after a cup of tea/coffee and some toast we board the bus for your first **game drive** in the Mara. An early morning start gives you the best opportunity to see the big 5 and the rest of the plains game. After the game drive you head back to camp for a late breakfast (1000hrs) relaxing around camp followed by a light lunch. This is followed by an afternoon **game drive**. Return to camp early evening before it gets dark by 1900hrs. Try with your biological classification skills if you can classify the animals and birds you see.

Day 7 Mara- Sagana – Project Visit

Depart the Mara early morning for the journey back to Nairobi and then onto Sagana. This is a 7hr drive in total.

In the afternoon we will **visit the project**; after a 30 minute walk we arrive at the school and receive a welcome from the children. We have a guided tour of the school before setting up our workshop and planning the next two days. With the School project, we will liaise with the head teacher and the trustees of the schools we support and find out exactly what they want done. We will know well in advance on what they want us to do. This will mean we will be able to buy what is required in Nairobi and carry it down to the school as getting the building materials there would be extremely difficult.

With the projects, it is a very good idea for the students to raise money at home to bring out to Kenya. With this money, stationary supplies and textbooks can be bought. The schools are in desperate need of textbooks, exercise books, pens, paper, footballs etc, all the things you take for granted. As little as £500 pounds go a long way it would support a school with stationary for over 8 months.

Days 8 & 9 Sagana – Project Work

The kind of work we have done in the past and would most likely be required would be the following:

Building of desks, building of shelves and cupboards to keep the limited amounts of books they have. Digging and laying foundations to new classrooms. Building classrooms. Putting up roofs. Collecting local stone and sand for buildings, Finishing off inside classrooms. All of the projects are closely supervised by builders who are on hand to do some of the harder more technical work but to also teach the students how to do these trades: for example plastering walls.

Day 10 Sagana – White Water Rafting

The Tana River is a drop pool river offering an exciting day of **white water rafting**. The adventure starts with 3 km of easy class II and III white water, with plenty of opportunity to gain the practice of paddle skills required running the lower part of the river. A 6 km section follows with an hour or so of relaxation to view the abundance of bird life around. You can cool off with a swim in the warm water. The final 7 km of river back to the campsite starts with some easy class III waters where paddle commands are gone over again. It is now the 3 big rapids (class IV and V) with names like Captains Folly, Can of Worms because of its four 90 degree bends in succession, and Sphincter Flexor.

Subject to water levels we may be able to “surf” in “fish eye” and then swim the next couple of minor rapids. Numerous smaller rapids brings one on to the last big one – Spasm, a series of drops over $\frac{3}{4}$ km section with a big surprise half way through. You reach the take out point/campsite about 4 hours after setting off, where a full barbeque lunch awaits you.

Day 11 Sagana - Nairobi

We depart Sagana for the journey back to Nairobi, which takes around 1½ hours.

The Giraffe Centre is a wonderful and refreshing experience undertaken during Nairobi’s excursion. The tour gives a completely up close and personal interaction where guests have the opportunity to view giraffes as well as feed them.

At **David Sheldricks** sanctuary you will be able to see orphaned elephants and rhinos that are, at given times, fed with bottles and mud baths. It is possible to get up close with baby elephants and rhinos.

You will spend the last night in a comfortable hotel.

Day 12 Fly to UK

Your flight departs this morning and arrives back in the UK the same afternoon.