

Kenya

Sub Saharan Africa

Facts & Highlights

Full Country Name: The Republic of Kenya

Area: 580,370 sq. km (224,081sq. miles)

Population: 31.5 million

Capital: Nairobi

People: Kikuyu 24%, Luhya 15%, Luo 12% Kalenjin 12%, Kamba 11%, Kisii 6%, Meru 6%, Masai/Samburu 2%

Languages: English, Kiswahili, various indigenous languages

Religions: Protestant (mainstream) 27%, Protestant (evangelical) 23%, Roman Catholic 31%, Muslim 8%, other 2%, None 2%

Currency: Kenyan shilling (KSH)

Government: President & National Assembly elected every five years.

Electricity: 220/240 volts AC, 50Hz. Plugs are UK-type square three-pin

Time: GMT + 3 hours



Mount Kenya: Trek among the rock pinnacles of the highest mountain in Kenya, and the second-highest in Africa.

Samburu & Lake Turkana: Visit the north of Kenya with its beautiful desert scenery, remote Lake Turkana and the colourful Samburu tribe.

Masai Mara: Search for big cats in perhaps the greatest wildlife reserve in the world.

The Masai People: Experience the majesty and presence of the Masai people and their traditional lifestyle.

Rift Valley: See the vast Rift Valley and its associated soda lakes and game parks.

Lamu: Visit this relaxed spice island and its glorious beaches.

The Lonely Planet describes a visit to Kenya as like "rummaging through nature's treasure chest".

Visitors to this east African country expecting diversity and adventure will certainly not be disappointed. Kenya has everything you could want from an adventurous destination and much more besides: high mountains, remote deserts, extraordinary cultures, a rich history, beautiful beaches and of course, spectacular wildlife in vast numbers. It really does have something for everyone.

Culturally, Kenya is very diverse with many different tribal groups each with their own distinct traditions, cultures and dress. Tribes such as the Masai or Samburu are perhaps the best known as their regions are heavily linked to the tourist areas. A visit to, or even better, time spent on a community project in a traditional tribal village, is sure to be a highlight of any trip.

Mount Kenya (5199m) and its surrounding National Park offer the best trekking in the country. The ascent itself is technically straight forward. Nevertheless, it is a demanding trek to high altitude usually completed over four days. The end point of the ascent is not the actual summit, but the third peak of the mountain, Point Lenana (4895m). The summit itself requires technical climbing skills and so is not within the realm of most trekkers. Even so, it is a worthwhile challenge and viewing the sunrise from the top of Lenana is well worth the effort. On a clear morning you may see Mt. Kilimanjaro some 300km

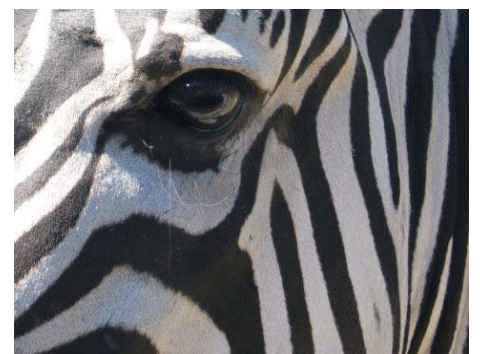
further south in Tanzania!

The country offers a wide range of project possibilities, many among communities or on-going conservation projects. Possibilities include teaching, building or restoration work, as well as habitat and wildlife management. A highlight of any project will be the interaction with the local people, and as anyone who has been to Africa will tell you, the people are what makes the place so special. For those looking for something a little different, why not complete a safari skills course, complete with modules on tracking, conservation management, breeding, anti-poaching procedures and much more.

No visit to Kenya would be complete without a safari, and with the Masai Mara, Buffalo Springs, Amboseli and Lakes Nakuru, Naivasha and Baringo, you are certainly spoilt for choice. Each offers a distinctly different habitat and wildlife experience. Other options for a rest and relaxation phase after a trek or community project would be the idyllic beaches of the Indian Ocean coast or the ancient Arab trading island of Lamu.

Kenya is also easy to link to Tanzania and Uganda so that itineraries can include a visit to the mountain gorillas or a trek up Kilimanjaro for instance.

Please contact us for more information on all the possibilities. We will take time to listen to your requirements and work together with you and tour operators in putting together an itinerary and proposal.



Suggested Itineraries

2/3 weeks

DAY 1 Fly London/Nairobi.

2 Drive North to Mt. Kenya National Park.

3 Commence Mt. Kenya trek.

4/5 Trekking on Mt Kenya and summit day.

6 End trek, drive north to Buffalo Springs and Samburu Reserve.

7 Dawn and evening game drives.

8 Drive Lake Nakuru NP, game drive.

9 Dawn game drive; Drive Lake Naivasha; visit Crescent Island.

10 Drive to Masai village for short community project.

12/13 In Masai village.

14 Return to Nairobi Fly to Lamu Island; boat transfer.

15/16 Free on Lamu; various optional activities.

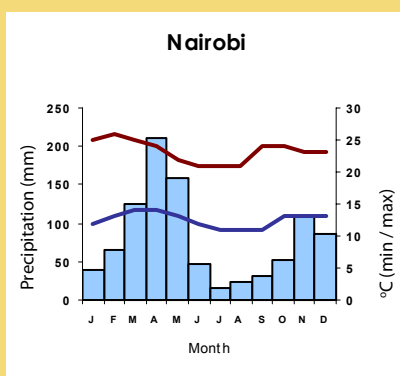
17 Fly London.

18 Arrive London.

Geography & Climate

Kenya's geography varies from tropical beaches and 5,000m mountains to lush grasslands and harsh deserts. The central highlands are dominated by the mighty rift valley - running from as far north as Jordan and Syria, south through Ethiopia, Lake Turkana, the Cherangani Hills, past the plains of the Masai Mara and on into Tanzania and Mozambique. Formed by two divergent plate boundaries, and home to an extraordinary array of soda lakes, volcanoes and wildlife it is without doubt an impressive sight.

Like its neighbour Tanzania, Kenya's climate is defined by its wet and dry seasons. Much of the highland country is cooler than the country's tropical situation would suggest. The "long rains" usually occur later than Tanzania's, running from April to early July and are followed by the main dry season which lasts until the end of October. This is the best time to visit as the views and wildlife watching possibilities are at their best. November sees the "short rains", but this period of rainfall is often not as intense as the main rain season earlier in the year. January and February are also normally good times to visit.



1 month (Kenya and Tanzania)

DAY 1 - 9: as per 2/3 week itinerary.

10/16 Drive to Masai village for an extended community project (restoration work, irrigation construction or teaching); or transfer to the Masai Mara for a safari skills course which includes 5 days of game drives, lectures, practical work, research and bush walks under the expert instruction of a qualified game warden.

17 Cross border into Tanzania, drive to Ngorongoro National Park.

18 Game Drive in Ngorongoro Caldera, followed by drive to Arusha and on to Kilimanjaro National Park.

19 Commence Kilimanjaro trek.

20/24 on Kilimanjaro.

25 Finish trek, long drive to Dar es Salaam.

26 Boat transfer to Zanzibar.

27/29 Free time on the glorious beaches of Zanzibar.

30 return to Dar es Salaam, fly UK.

31 Arrive UK.

National Holidays

1 Jan: New Years Day.

March / April: Easter - Good Friday and Easter Monday.

1 May: Labour Day.

1 June: Madaraka Day.

10 Oct: Moi Day.

20 Oct: Kenyatta Day.

25/26 Dec: Christmas.

Other: Ramadan, Eid al-Kebir, Eid al-Fitr, (dates vary according to Islamic calendar).

Festivals

International Camel Derby: Organised by the International Camel Race Association and held in the arid north of the country, usually over a weekend either in August or September. This festival is an action packed weekend and a lot of fun.

Dugong Festival and Lamu Donkey Racing: Residents of this historical spice island hold a festival in May each year under the name of the "Lamu Dugong festival" which incorporates the famous donkey race. The festival lasts a week and is used to create awareness about the need to protect the Dugong (sea cow) found near the islands, which is an endangered species.



Regulations & Red Tape

A full passport, valid for 6 months after your return date, is required for travel to Kenya. British passport holders need a visa (currently US\$50) which can be obtained on arrival or prior to departure in the UK.

Useful Addresses

Kenya High Commission in the UK

45 Portland Place, London W1B 1AS

Tel: 0207 636 2371/5

Web: www.kenyahighcommission.net

Opening hours: Mon-Fri: visa applications 0930-1400, collections 1400-1530.

Kenya Tourist Board in the UK

c/o Hills Balfour, Notcutt House

36 Southwark Bridge Road,

London, SE1 9EU

Tel: 0207 202 6373 (option 1)

Web: www.magicalkenya.com

Price Guide

Prices vary enormously depending on the length and style of trip required, as well as the number of participants involved. Prices for a two week itinerary start at around £1,900 per person (including international flights) rising to around £3,500 for extended expeditions.

More Information

To discuss the tour and expedition possibilities that Kenya offers in greater detail, and to get free, impartial advice on suitable tour operators please contact:

The Specialist Travel Consultancy

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