



FM Keesling Travel

Up and Away

TANZANIA & RWANDA

RIVER CROSSING

A 12-Day Tanzania & Rwanda Wildlife Journey



Northern Serengeti • Mara River • Central Serengeti • Ngorongoro • Tarangire • Volcanoes National Park

CUSTOM CLIENT REVIEW ITINERARY

THE JOURNEY AT A GLANCE

Follow Tanzania's legendary Northern Circuit to the Mara River during the Great Migration, then continue seamlessly into Rwanda for intimate encounters with mountain gorillas and golden monkeys. From the river crossings of the Northern Serengeti and the wildlife-rich Ngorongoro Crater to Tarangire's elephants and Rwanda's volcanic highlands, this journey brings together East Africa's most dramatic wildlife experiences.

Duration	12 days / 11 nights
Destinations	Arusha • Northern & Central Serengeti • Ngorongoro Crater • Tarangire • Kigali • Volcanoes National Park
Signature experience	Great Migration • Mara River crossing season in the Northern Serengeti
Travel style	Safari game drives • domestic flights • en-suite tented camps and lodges • primate trekking

Trip Highlight

The journey begins in Arusha before flying to the Northern Serengeti, where the Mara River becomes the stage for the Great Migration's most dramatic chapter. Continue through the wildlife-rich Central Serengeti, Ngorongoro Crater and Tarangire before flying onward to Rwanda for conservation-focused visits, mountain gorilla trekking and golden monkey trekking.

Accommodation overview

- Arusha — Arusha Serena Lodge / Olerai Lodge (1 night)
- Northern Serengeti — Intimate Zebra Camp (2 nights)
- Central Serengeti — Intimate Camp (2 nights)
- Karatu / Ngorongoro — The Retreat at Ngorongoro (2 nights)
- Tarangire — Tarangire Greenland Retreat Camp (1 night)
- Kigali, Rwanda — Kigali Marriott (1 night)
- Musanze / Volcanoes National Park — Ingagi Park View Lodge (2 nights)

Planning note: Exact flight times, camp availability and final accommodation selection should be confirmed before booking. Mara River crossings are natural events and cannot be guaranteed on a particular day.

DAY 1

Arrival in Tanzania • Transfer to Arusha



ARUSHA • A GENTLE BEGINNING BESIDE LAKE DULUTI

Settle into Tanzania at the start of your Northern Circuit journey, with time to rest and acclimate before the safari begins.

On arrival at Kilimanjaro International Airport, you will be welcomed by your safari guide and transferred to Arusha, a scenic journey of approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes. Along the way, enjoy your first impressions of Tanzania as you pass through local communities and observe everyday life—an enriching introduction to the country.

On arrival at your hotel, you will have time to check in and relax after your journey, enjoying the peaceful surroundings as you settle in for the safari ahead.

OVERNIGHT / STAY

Arusha Serena Lodge / Olerai Lodge

DAY 2

Arusha → Northern Serengeti • Kogatende



NORTHERN SERENGETI • ARRIVAL AT THE MARA RIVER

Fly north into the Serengeti and begin the search for the Great Migration almost as soon as you land.

After an early breakfast, transfer to Arusha Airport for your scheduled flight north to Kogatende Airstrip. From the air, Tanzania unfolds below before you land in the remote Northern Serengeti. Your safari guides will welcome you and begin a game drive en route to camp, with opportunities for giraffe, antelope, lion and other wildlife along the way.

After lunch and time to settle into camp, depart at approximately 3:30 p.m. for an afternoon game drive toward the Mara River. During migration season, wildebeest and zebra gather along the riverbanks before attempting the crossing. Crocodiles patrol the water, while lions, hyenas, giraffes, topi, eland and hippos add to the extraordinary wildlife of the region.

Return to camp at sunset for dinner and an evening surrounded by the sounds of the Northern Serengeti.

OVERNIGHT / STAY

Intimate Zebra Camp • Northern Serengeti

DAY 3

Northern Serengeti • Following the Great Migration



MARA RIVER • THE GREAT MIGRATION IN MOTION

A full day in the Northern Serengeti maximizes your opportunity to follow the herds and witness the drama of the Mara River.

Begin before sunrise with an early game drive, when predators may still be active and the first golden light reaches the savanna. Breakfast will be enjoyed in the wild, surrounded by acacia woodland, open plains and the movement of wildlife across the landscape.

Continue toward the Mara River, following wildebeest and zebra as they gather near the banks. A crossing can build slowly as the herds hesitate, then erupt suddenly as animals surge into the water. Because the migration follows rainfall and grazing conditions, every day is different and no individual crossing can be guaranteed.

Lunch may be enjoyed at a scenic location away from the riverbanks or back at camp. The afternoon is devoted to tracking the migration and exploring the Northern Serengeti before returning to camp at sunset for dinner and overnight.

OVERNIGHT / STAY

Intimate Zebra Camp • Northern Serengeti



DAY 4

Northern Serengeti → Central Serengeti



CENTRAL SERENGETI • JOURNEY TO THE HEART OF THE PARK

Travel south through changing Serengeti landscapes, with the journey itself becoming a full day of wildlife viewing.

After breakfast, set out on a game drive en route to the Central Serengeti. The landscape gradually changes from the northern river country to sweeping plains and the iconic granite kopjes that rise from the grasslands like natural fortresses.

These rocky outcrops provide shelter and vantage points for lions and leopards, while the surrounding plains support elephants, giraffes, antelope and abundant birdlife. Arrive at camp around midday for lunch and time to relax before heading out again.

The afternoon game drive explores the Central Serengeti until sunset. Return to camp for a refreshing shower, dinner and a peaceful evening beneath the African sky.

OVERNIGHT / STAY

Intimate Camp • Central Serengeti

DAY 5

Central Serengeti • Full-Day Safari Experience



SERENGETI • A FULL DAY IN THE WILD

An unhurried full-day safari allows your guide to follow wildlife and changing conditions rather than a fixed route.

Your day begins at 6:00 a.m. with an early morning game drive. Carrying breakfast, pause in the wilderness as dawn spreads across the plains and nocturnal animals retreat from their nightly hunts.

Continue exploring the Serengeti from open grasslands to kopjes, searching for wildebeest, zebra, lions, cheetahs, leopards, hyenas, elephants and the park's remarkable birdlife. Lunch may be enjoyed at a designated picnic site or back at camp before another afternoon game drive.

Continue until sunset, when the golden light often creates some of the day's most memorable wildlife encounters. Return to camp for dinner and another night in the Central Serengeti.

OVERNIGHT / STAY

Intimate Camp • Central Serengeti

DAY 6

Central Serengeti → Karatu • Game Drive En Route



KARATU • FROM OPEN PLAINS TO HIGHLAND FOREST

A change of landscape and pace provides a welcome transition before the next day's descent into the extraordinary Ngorongoro Crater.

Begin with an early wake-up and a warm cup of tea or coffee before setting out on a sunrise game drive with a packed breakfast. The morning offers another opportunity to watch the Serengeti awaken, with grazing herds, elephants, predators and abundant birdlife.

By late morning, return to camp for lunch and a short rest before checking out. In the early afternoon, depart the Serengeti and travel toward Karatu with game viewing en route.

The drive becomes a scenic transition from open plains into the lush, rolling highlands, with glimpses of Maasai homesteads and fertile farmland along the way.

Arrive at The Retreat at Ngorongoro in the late afternoon and enjoy a relaxed evening in the cooler highland setting.

OVERNIGHT / STAY

The Retreat at Ngorongoro • Karatu

DAY 7

Ngorongoro Crater • Into the Heart of the Caldera



NGORONGORO • A WORLD WITHIN A WORLD

Few safari experiences compare with descending into the crater and watching wildlife unfold against the dramatic walls of this immense volcanic caldera.

After an early breakfast at the lodge, depart at approximately 6:30 a.m. with a packed lunch and descend into Ngorongoro Crater.

The crater is an extraordinary natural amphitheatre, formed millions of years ago by volcanic activity. Its enclosed ecosystem supports an exceptional concentration and diversity of wildlife. Across the crater floor, look for lions, elephants, buffalo, zebra, wildebeest and hippos, with the possibility of encountering the rare black rhino.

Lunch will be enjoyed at a designated picnic area. Afterwards, continue the game drive toward Lake Magadi, a shallow alkaline lake that attracts flamingos and other waterbirds, while hippos may be seen in the shallows.

By evening, ascend the crater walls and return to the lodge for dinner and a restful night in the Ngorongoro highlands.

OVERNIGHT / STAY

The Retreat at Ngorongoro • Karatu



DAY 8

Tarangire National Park • The Elephant Kingdom



TARANGIRE • ELEPHANTS BENEATH ANCIENT BAOBABS

Tarangire provides a striking contrast to the Serengeti, with its baobab-dotted scenery and exceptional elephant viewing.

After an early breakfast, set out with a packed lunch for a full day in Tarangire National Park, celebrated for its elephants, ancient baobabs and distinctive landscapes.

As the day unfolds, watch for elephant herds, giraffes, buffalo and an extraordinary range of birdlife. The Tarangire River is a vital source of water and a focal point for wildlife, creating rewarding opportunities for observation and photography.

At midday, pause at a scenic picnic site for lunch surrounded by the sounds of the park. As afternoon gives way to evening, continue toward your accommodation and arrive in time to enjoy the changing light over the Tarangire landscape.

Dinner and overnight follow at your safari camp.

OVERNIGHT / STAY

Tarangire Greenland Retreat Camp

DAY 9

Farewell to Tanzania • Journey to Rwanda



FAREWELL TO TANZANIA • ONWARD TO RWANDA

Enjoy one final taste of Tanzania in Arusha before continuing by air to Kigali and the next chapter of the journey.

After breakfast, begin the drive back to Arusha, retracing the landscapes that have framed your safari. These final hours provide a chance to reflect on the wildlife encounters and changing scenery of the journey.

Upon arrival in Arusha, lunch will be at Arusha Coffee Lodge, a peaceful retreat set amid one of the region's coffee-growing areas. Enjoy time to relax and explore the lodge before your transfer to Kilimanjaro International Airport or your hotel if you are extending your stay.

Afternoon Schedule

After lunch explore Shanga, the wonderful artisan coop and shops onsite. This coop takes the disadvantage and handicapped and provide skills, dignity and a living. The coop employees are highly skilled. You can also explore the Tanzanite shop. Tanzanite is a beautiful blue gem that is only found in Tanzania.

After our stopover at Arusha Coffee Lodge we will depart for Kilimanjaro Airport at 2:30 pm in plenty of time to check in for our departing flight to Kigali via Nairobi, Kenya.

On arrival at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport Kenya, we have arranged lounge access so you can get something to eat, charge your devices and freshen up in time for your departure to Kigali. The flight is 90 minutes to Kigali, however there is a time zone change.

On arrival in Kigali, your Rwanda team will be waiting to welcome you and transfer you to the Kigali Marriott for check-in and overnight. With a later start planned the following morning, there will be time for a full night's rest before the Rwanda portion of the journey begins.

OVERNIGHT / STAY**Kigali Marriott • Kigali**

DAY 10

Kigali • Volcanoes National Park

**RWANDA • MEMORY, CONSERVATION & THE LAND OF A THOUSAND HILLS**

A thoughtful introduction to Rwanda combines the country's history with its remarkable story of reconciliation and conservation before the journey continues into the volcanic highlands.

At 10:00 a.m., meet your driver-guides in the hotel lobby and depart for the Kigali Genocide Memorial. The visit is moving, educational and deeply reflective, providing important context for Rwanda's history, the 1994 genocide and the country's extraordinary rebuilding and reconciliation.

After the memorial, continue to Hôtel des Mille Collines for lunch before beginning the scenic drive north toward Musanze and Volcanoes National Park. On arrival, visit the Ellen DeGeneres Campus of the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund, a 12-acre conservation and research campus dedicated to protecting mountain gorillas and inspiring the next generation of conservationists.

Later, check in at your accommodation and freshen up before a special 6:00 p.m. presentation with the Gorilla Doctors. Their veterinary teams play a critical role in protecting the small and vulnerable mountain gorilla population by treating illness and injury and helping safeguard the health of the gorilla families.

Dinner follows the presentation, with the evening at leisure in the foothills of Volcanoes National Park.

OVERNIGHT / STAY**Musanze • Ingagi Park View Lodge**

DAY 11



Volcanoes National Park • Mountain Gorilla Trek



Few wildlife experiences are as personal or as memorable as meeting a family of mountain gorillas in the misty forests of Volcanoes National Park.

After an early breakfast, transfer to park headquarters for a briefing on the trek, gorilla behavior and trail conditions. You will then be assigned to a trekking group and set out with experienced rangers into the forest.

Depending on the gorillas' movements, the trek may take approximately two to six hours over rugged and sometimes steep terrain. Once the gorilla family is located, you will spend about one unforgettable hour observing these remarkable primates at close quarters.

After the trek, return to the lodge to freshen up, enjoy lunch and relax. An optional community walk may be available for guests who would like to learn more about life in the communities surrounding Volcanoes National Park.

OVERNIGHT / STAY

Musanze • Ingagi Park View Lodge

DAY 12

Golden Monkey Trek • Return to Kigali



VOLCANOES NATIONAL PARK • ONE LAST WILD ENCOUNTER

The final day offers one more close encounter in Rwanda's highland forest before returning to Kigali for a farewell dinner and onward journey.

This morning, trek in search of the rare and energetic golden monkeys, an experience included in the tour package. Guests who prefer a second mountain gorilla trek may choose that option instead for the additional cost stated in the original proposal.

After the morning activity, return to the lodge to freshen up and enjoy lunch before checking out. The scenic drive back to Kigali takes approximately three hours, with arrival expected in the late afternoon.

Time permitting, visit a local market for souvenir shopping before gathering at Repub Lounge for a farewell dinner featuring elevated Rwandan dishes - a fitting opportunity to share stories from the journey.

After dinner, your driver-guides will transfer you to Kigali International Airport in time for your departing flight. We wish you a safe onward journey, carrying memories of Tanzania and Rwanda long after you return home.

A NOTE FOR OUR TRAVELERS

This itinerary is designed to balance exceptional wildlife viewing, meaningful cultural context and comfortable accommodations, with enough time in each ecosystem for the journey to unfold naturally.

Game viewing is a wildlife experience, not a scheduled performance. Sightings, animal movements, road conditions and exact drive times can vary from day to day. Your safari guide will adjust the day's route and timing to make the most of current conditions.

Early departures are intentional. Dawn and the cooler hours of the morning can be among the most rewarding times for wildlife viewing, particularly during the calving season.