



JOURNEYS BY DESIGN  
— DISTINCTIVE AFRICAN TRAVEL —



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**Charity Auction April 13<sup>th</sup> 2017**

**Once Girl Can, 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Fundraiser**

**A stunning tailor-made Kenyan safari for two people combining:**

*Mara Expedition Camp, Maasai Mara (3 nights)*

*and*

*Oi Donyo Lodge, Chyuilu Hills, Amboseli National Park (3nights)*



*“Journeys by Design opened our eyes to a world of experiences we never could have imagined”*

**Ralph Lauren**

## Introduction

Congratulations! We are delighted that you are the winner of a superb prize of a six night safari adventure for two people, combining two beautiful camps in the Masai Mara and the Chyulu Hills in Kenya.

The itinerary we have personally crafted for you includes a seamless ground arrangement with VIP service throughout, from the moment that you land to the moment that you take off again for home. We will meet you off your international flight, arrange all transfers and accommodation and can be reached 24hours a day in the unlikely event of an emergency.

We fly you to the fabled Maasai Mara, deemed by many as one of the wonders of the wildlife world. This is an opportunity to really immerse in true safari with fabulous wildlife viewing opportunities. This can also be the perfect spot to catch a glimpse of the Great Migration. The camp we are taking you to, is part of the Great Plains portfolio so you will be guaranteed first class guiding, service, cuisine and accommodation. **Mara Expedition camp** is the brainchild of Dereck and Beverly Joubert, two exceptionally talented creatives – a film maker and photographer team, who, as far as I am concerned, have created one of the best safari experiences in the Maasai Mara. The Joubert's not only capture a little of the old world safaris, in their authentic presentation, they push the level of service to another level. And furthermore part of the cost of safaris also supports some excellent conservation initiatives.





We next take you to the Chyulu Hills, where you will stay at your second Great Plains property. **Oi Donyo Lodge** is a paradise, where Mount Kilimanjaro's summit is in magnificent view. Designed to merge outdoor and indoor living, a series of unique suites and villas (no two are the same) appears to emerge from the arid landscape. It is a very special place and wonderful for wildlife, cycling, walking and sleep outs on a star-bed.



Journeys by Design are finding that more and more people are looking for responsible travel, a fact that chimes with one of our core principles: the vital importance of sustainable tourism. In this respect, we maintain a high ethical stance. We design luxury safaris that support conservation and community initiatives. We ensure you enjoy the most superb safari experiences, in full knowledge you are also contributing to wildlife preservation and supporting local communities. We are selling a lifestyle choice, with values – not just a holiday.

**Will Jones – Journeys by Design**

**March 2017**

## Your private itinerary

### Day one **Mara Expedition Camp, Maasai Mara**

Depending on timing of international flights (you may need to arrive a night before) you will be met upon arrival at Nairobi airport. Here you will be helped with your luggage and transferred to Wilson airport for your scheduled flight to the Maasai Mara. You will be met on arrival and transferred by way of game drive to the brand new Mara Expedition Camp. You will stay here for three nights on a full board basis.

Mara Expedition Camp only opened in July last year. Lying just inside the north-central border of the Maasai Mara Game Reserve, it is an oasis surrounded by wildlife-rich savannahs and dense riverside forest. The camp is subtly placed, intended to be invisible to any passers-by.



*Typical design of the main mess tent*

Drawing on the safari of yesteryear, Mara Expedition incorporates contemporary functionality with authentic décor. The main tent, consisting of draped light-coloured canvas, has a sense of safari romance of times of old colonial, but inviting, but also a highly functional place to gather to dine. The spaces are adorned with hand-picked pieces from African markets, adding to the rich environs. A main dining table graced with candelabras and chandeliers hosts breakfast and dinners. It is a warm, yet refreshing space. Just outside the tent, mere steps away, is the fire pit – place where many stories are swapped.

The custom-designed tents open on the horizontal for an indoor/outdoor living space, at ground level. High ceilings, careful design and tasteful décor create a place that, while humble, befits royalty.



The private veranda, dressing area and en-suite facilities provide ample space to unpack, unwind and soak in the magic of this special spot on the river's edge.



*Your tent exterior*



The chefs at Mara Expedition craft their own recipes, using fresh local ingredients and immense creativity. The result is a daily menu which delights all types of diners. Expect to be wowed, and certainly never to go hungry. Complimentary refreshments and snacks are served on all game drives and include tea and coffee and soft drinks on the morning drive and the traditional "sundowner" cocktails in the late afternoon. Special meals and dietary requirements can be catered for on request.



*Interior and exterior of communal area*





Activities at Mara Expedition are designed to suit individual guests' needs, and can include game drives, guided walks, bush-picnics, bird viewing and cultural visits to local community settlements. Just this year, they have also launched Ride Kenya, where horse-riding is now available as an activity, which is a breath-taking experience for those who enjoy riding. This needs to be booked in advance.



There is also the option of Bushwalks to include some tracking with the Maasai – fire lighting with sticks and elephant dung, along with bow and arrow and spear throwing. You can also visit a local School should you wish. This does come with small additional costs so if this is something you are interested in then we can look into this in more detail.

Safari vehicles are specially designed Land Cruisers - totally open-sided (a rarity in the Mara), the 300-degree view provides ideal circumstances for photography. Each vehicle comes fully-equipped with a stocked fridge and photography tools.

Hot-air ballooning over the Mara is available at additional cost, and is a truly stunning way to experience the landscape and an unforgettable sunrise. If culture is of interest too, then a visit to a Maasai bomas as well as community projects (supported by Mara Expedition camp) are possible, and a wonderful insight into the region's local people.





## The Area - Maasai Mara

One of the world's last great wildlife sanctuaries, the Maasai Mara is home to over three million large animals, covers a staggering 1,500 sq km of mixed terrain, and, despite its popularity, harbours areas that are both isolated and filled with life.

However, even this vast wilderness is under threat. A well-meaning - and well-supported - policy of reserves and parks has seen a steady decline in hoofed populations (Maasai Mara giraffe numbers, for example, are down by 95%, and impala, warthog and hartebeest numbers have been similarly reduced), resulting in an increase in types of herbage that overwhelm other species, and which are of no use to local pastoralists, whose cattle are weakened and made less valuable by overused grazing lands.



All is not lost. Great tracts of the Maasai Mara National Reserve remain relatively untouched; ideas taken from success stories (Kenya's Laikipia, for example) are being considered; and the kind of responsible tourism we like to promote is beginning to take shape on a national level. Which is just as well. Contiguous with Tanzania's Serengeti, the Maasai Mara part hosts the spectacular annual wildebeest migration. Little compares - in terms of experiencing the wild - with the sight of thousands of these animals crossing the Mara.

Best viewed as systems, and ones that are complex, beautiful, full of surprises, places like the Maasai Mara deserve our understanding, and it is for this reason that we use areas of the park that are not under threat.



## Note on activities

The camp managers and guides are responsible for ensuring that you are well taken care of and at no stage should you be left wondering what to do or where to go next. The options will be made clear to you by your guide who will identify himself on arrival at the lodge. However, in a nut-shell, wildlife is best viewed during the cooler hours of the day, i.e., early morning and late afternoon. The morning activities are normally decided upon the evening before and afternoon activities are arranged over lunch.

We would suggest an early rise and breakfast on most mornings to take advantage of the morning game viewing – this may be a game drive or an escorted nature walk – returning late morning where you will sit out the heat of the day or reading your books. Lunch is normally buffet.

An alternative is to head out early and return for a late breakfast. Clearly if you see a lot of wildlife then you will stay out longer than if you saw very little – for this reason there is no fixed amount of time spent on any activity. Then at about four in the afternoon you will normally meet for tea and head out from there for another late afternoon drive or walk returning in time for a shower before dinner, drinks and bed.

Although we design the overall structure of your itinerary, the specific day-to-day running of activities is very much down to your individual wishes and the management team in each camp or lodge. Many of the activities will be determined by local game dispersal patterns.



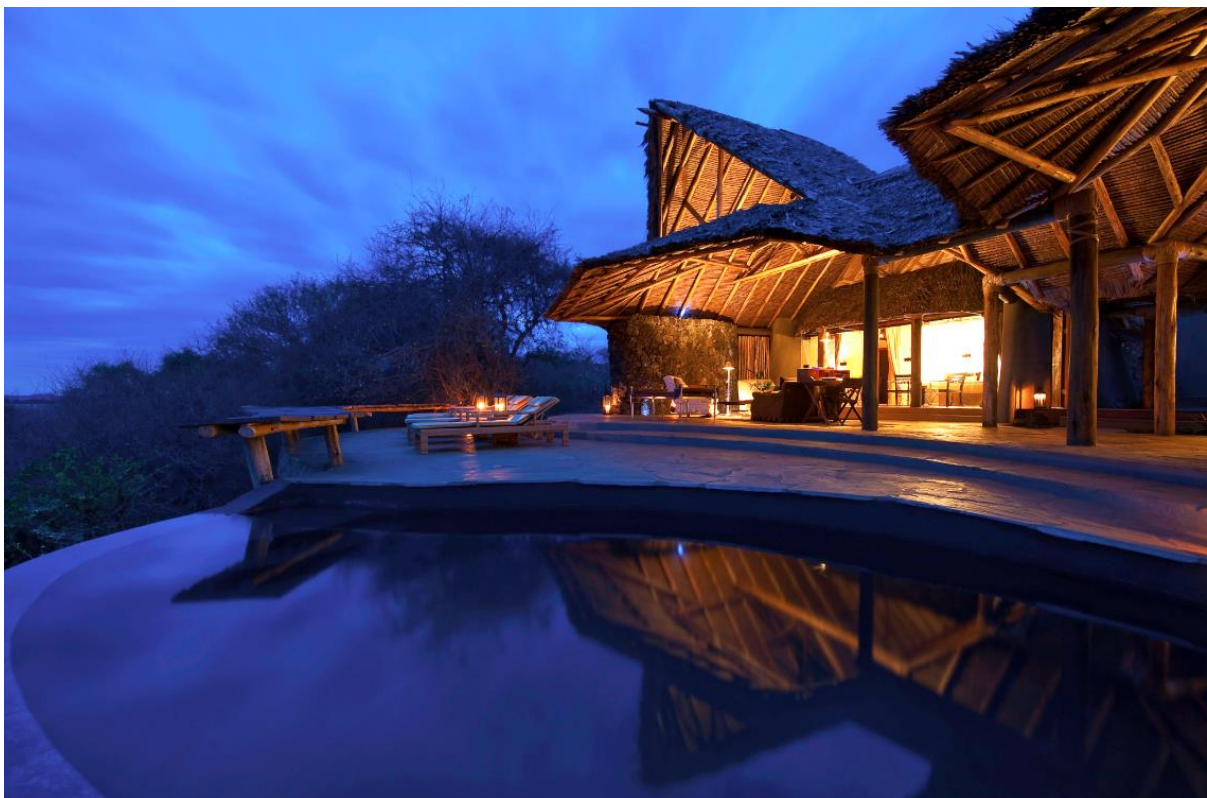
**Day four**

**Oi Donyo Lodge, Chyulu Hills, Amboseli National Park**

This morning, you will be transferred back to the Mara airstrip for your approximate 50 minute flight to the Chyulu Hills. Upon arrival you will be met and transferred by road to Oi Donyo Lodge for three night's stay on a full board basis.



*Oi Donyo from the air and the beautiful communal lounge and pool area, below*



Located in southeast Kenya, in the Chyulu Hills, between Amboseli and Tsavo West, and home to the now famous East African safari-hand Richard Bonham, Ol Donyo Lodge has for years been the favoured destination for a loyal, well-heeled and well-travelled clientele. Its 2008 refurbishment has only served to further cement a reputation for providing a service that is luxurious, responsible and extraordinarily creative.



*Your room interior and exterior*





Initially set up by Richard and representatives of the local community, Ol Donyo Lodge is situated on the Maasai owned Mbirikani Group Ranch, whose 275 000 odd acres now constitute a huge wild area in which, thanks to various conservation initiatives, both fauna and flora are flourishing.

A stone, wood and thatch build, the main lodge overlooks a waterhole, and consists of a beautifully designed living and dining area. With an emphasis placed on creating a space that is both intimate and large, huge iron chandeliers and an enormous fireplace combine with a design that favours winding spaces over straight lines, the arch over the rectangle, a range of artefacts and furniture over a single style - producing an effect that is welcoming and, at the same time, awe inspiring. Below, but still elevated enough to act as a game viewing platform in its own right, is the pool, complete with lounge and dining area.





*The pool area commands wonderful views over the landscape and local wildlife*

With room for 20 guests, the sleeping accommodation is housed in 7 discreetly placed stone and thatch villas, which break down into 10 guest suites. Each villa of Ol Donyo Lodge is named, has its own architectural characteristics, and offers, by way of space, a slightly different living arrangement. Each is built to the highest of standards, is designed with an eye for both luxury and function. The bathrooms, for example, all contain stand-alone baths and most have star bed decking, private pools and outdoor showers.



*Star-bed*



Activities include daily 4x4 game drives to Amboseli National Park, riding safaris - horses to suit riders of all abilities, and an open air hide right next to the water hole where you can sit and wait for an up-close experience with the wildlife that come to the waterhole to drink. There is also a star-bed experience, when you can sleep out under the stars and listen to the sounds of the night.





*The Hide, where you can get up-close to the local wildlife, whilst enjoying lunch  
Below, stunning views of Mount Kilimanjaro while horse-riding*





## **Amboseli National Park and the Chyulu Hills**

Located in Kajiado District, Rift Valley Province, Amboseli National Park is at the centre of an 8000 sq km ecosystem that includes the Chyulu Hills and Taita, and extends across the border into Tanzania.

Just 260 km south of Nairobi, Amboseli itself covers just 400 sq km, and, given its desert-like complexion, appears incapable of supporting anything but the most specialist of animals - its name derives from the Masaai word Empusei, which means 'salty, dry place.' In fact, due to the closeness of Kilimanjaro, whose snow and ice melt resurfaces in two springs (there are 5 in total), the exact opposite is true, and the area is teeming with life.



The groundwater is relatively close to the surface, causing the plains to be broken up by sudden eruptions of green. A swamp habitat has evolved around the springs, attracting wildebeest, hippo, impala, buffalo, zebra, leopard, lion, cheetah and wild dog. If anything, Amboseli National Park is best known for its enormous (and growing) population of elephants, and is considered one of the best places to film elephant in the wild. Bird-wise, the area is reported to hold over 400 species, including two types of falcon and a variety of kingfisher.



Chyulu National Park, while less known, and quite different, is an equally beautiful spot. Consisting mainly of volcanic cones, and containing the world's largest lava tube, it relies wholly on the rains for water, which go on (as groundwater) to supply the plains below. It is home to buffalo, eland, bushbuck, elephant, leopard, wildebeest and zebra.



Situated in the Taita-Tavita district, Taita is largely composed of its hills, which rise to a height of approximately 2.200m. The area varies ecologically, the different habitats formed in response to the varying levels of rainfall. The lowlands get as little as 500mm per year, and the highlands receive three times as much. As a result, around Voi, a town straddling the Mombasa Rd, the land is mainly plains, while the Taita Hills are home to indigenous cloud forests.

Though all of outstanding beauty, the areas are not without their problems. The land is largely Masaai, whose population has grown exponentially in the last forty years. In Amboseli and its surrounding Masaai-run ranches, the need for more land has forced wildlife out, resulting in a decline of crucial species of herbivore (the white rhino, for example). This loss has impacted on the area's flora. Plants eaten by species of now absent wildlife flourish at the expense of those eaten by cattle, sheep and goats, whose diminishing stocks have been further affected by over-grazing. The end result is an impoverished ecosystem: the cattle are weak and disease-ridden; the Masaai are struggling to survive; and the area's wildlife is in decline (for the first time). The situation in Taita is slightly different. Here the land is rich in nutrients, and population growth (especially in the hills, where it is exceptionally dense) has resulted in deforestation, loss of water and soil erosion.

Clearly, in both circumstances, the region is best served by sustainable tourism, and by the knowledge that traditional ways of life are guaranteed (rather than obstructed) by healthy wildlife populations.





**Day seven**

**Depart**

This morning you will be transferred back to Ol Donyo airstrip for your scheduled flight back to Wilson airport. Here you will be met on landing and transferred in a vehicle to Nairobi international airport, where you will be helped with you luggage and check-in, before boarding your international flight home.

**- End of Services -**



**Your itinerary includes:**

*A seamless and private ground handling service with*

*VIP airport handling services*

*All Safari accommodation on a full board basis*

*All private transfers by road*

*All safari activities on a shared basis*

*Scheduled flights as stipulated on safari*

*Park and conservation fees*

*All drinks on safari (except champagnes and premium brands) and laundry service*

*Complimentary membership to the Flying Doctors*

*Laundry*

**This excludes:**

*International flights to Nairobi*

*Kenyan visas on arrival*

*Overnight accommodation in Nairobi, if required*

*Travel Insurance*

*Gratuities for guides / drivers / hotel staff*

*Hot-air balloon ride and any other additional activities that are an extra cost (horse riding at Mara Expeditions)*

*Items of a personal nature and tips*

*Any new changes to government taxes or levies that are beyond our control*



*'World's top ten super-agent'*

**Financial Times**

**Note:** Safari can only be used outside of peak season. Valid for travel in the periods 01 November -19 December 2017, 11 January-31 March 2018, 01 November-19 December 2018. Potential to use during 1 April to 31 May 2018, subject to availability. If safari is required during peak time, can negotiate supplemental cost. Itinerary is only valid until 19<sup>th</sup> December 2018 and cannot be transferred or taken in exchange for cash.