

Tanzania

NATIONAL PARKS



ENGLISH

Tanzania

Welcome to the unrivalled, diverse beauty that we are proud to call our homeland. A land that we would love to share with you today and are actively preserving for future generations, therefore, one-quarter of the country has been set aside for conservation purposes. The world-renowned Serengeti National Park and the vast Selous Game Reserve are the pinnacle of a rich mosaic of protected areas that collectively, harbour an estimated 20 percent of Africa's large mammal population.



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Karibu Tanzania - Welcome!



Tanzania is a country of many faces and world records. In Tarangire you find yourself surrounded by an astonishing number of elephant – the highest density in the world. The Ngorongoro crater is home to the world's highest density of game – including many big cats. The annual migration of millions of wildebeests in Serengeti, accompanied by hundreds of thousands of zebra and gazelle is a unique spectacle that you will probably never forget. There are Mountains Kilimanjaro and Meru, the highest and fifth highest peaks on the continent respectively. The waterworld is equally spectacular, Lake Victoria, Tanganyika and Nyasa are the three largest freshwater bodies in Africa. Let's not forget Zanzibar, the magical 'spice island'. Without doubt the highlight of a vast Indian Ocean coastline studded with postcard-perfect beaches, stunning offshore diving sites, and mysterious mediaeval ruins.

And this is just the start

Rising from the sandy shores of Lake Tanganyika, the forested Gombe and Mahale Mountains National Parks vie with each other as the best place in the world to track wild chimpanzees. Closer to the coast, the isolated massifs of the little known Eastern Arc Mountains have been dubbed the 'African Galapagos' and rightfully so: their wealth of endemic plants and animals is breathtaking. The list of special places goes on and on.

Tanzania's daunting natural variety is mirrored by a cultural diversity embracing 120 distinct tribes: from the iconic Maasai pastoralists of the Rift Valley, to the Arab-influenced Swahili of the coast, to the Hadzabe hunter-gatherers of Lake Eyasi.

It is our people that bind all of Tanzania's attractions, with everyone taking pride in the deeply ingrained attitudes of tolerance and peacefulness. Indeed, for all its ethnic diversity, our beloved country managed to navigate a succession of political transformations without ever experiencing ethnic unrest. This makes Tanzania practically unique in Africa.

Twenty years ago, only the very lucky knew about the riches Tanzania has to offer. Today, it is recognised as one of Africa's most dynamic and popular travel destinations: a land whose staggering natural variety is complemented by the innate hospitality of the people who live there.

Sincerely yours,
A.J.H. Kijazi
Tanzania National Parks

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Arusha National Park

Exploring Tanzania's wide-open plains is a breath-taking experience in itself. So imagine being free to leave your vehicle and let some vertical adventure add to the drama.

In Arusha National Park, the majestic Mount Meru awaits, ready to be tamed on foot! The exhilaration of reaching the top only increases with Mount Kilimanjaro revealing its snowy peak to the East. The ultimate view over one of Africa's most picture perfect landscapes.

Arusha National Park gives you the opportunity to explore nature at its closest. There are good trekking facilities along the climbing route. The route passes through diverse habitats: swamps, open plains, montane forests and volcanoes, all packed within a distance of 35 km.

The most striking landmarks are Mount Meru and the Ngurdoto caldera, formed after volcanic eruptions between 1 and 3 million years ago. Mount Meru hasn't put on a show in over a century, but 6,000 years ago a huge explosion blew away the eastern edge, causing a massive landslide. It is also how the mesmerizing north-eastern Momela Lakes were born. Due to different levels of alkalinity, each of these seven lakes boasts its own spectacular greenish-blue tone. The water is dotted pink with lesser and greater flamingos, while every now and then you might meet the eyes of a hippopotamus. The extinct Ngurdoto volcano in the east is home to a mini Ngorongoro. Looking down from the crater rim you see montane forests – keep an eye open for the majestic Fig Tree Arch – while an open, swampy bottom spreads out below it, at an altitude of around 1,470 metres.

The extinct Ngurdoto volcano is home to a mini Ngorongoro

The entire park is full of life. You will encounter herds of buffalos (the park's most abundant species), zebra and giraffe often, but warthog, waterbuck, pairs of dik-dik and reedbuck are also frequent sights. Other mammals roaming the area are the elusive aardvark, the bush pig and the crested porcupine. The low braying call of the silvery-cheeked hornbill regularly penetrates the silence, just as the harsh rhythmic cry of the endangered black and white colobus monkey. And this is not the only acrobat in the dense forest; there are also plenty of vervet monkeys, blue monkeys and olive baboons to be seen. The well-trained spotter's





eye will be treated to almost 450 bird species. Although you won't hear the ferocious roar of a lion very often – the last temporary visit took place in the late 1990's – other big cats can be sighted. Keep an eye open for spotted hyena, wild cat, leopard and, on the slopes of Mount Meru, even a wandering elephant.

The well-trained spotter's eye will be treated to almost 450 bird species

But it's the feeling of solitude that might just be the best asset of Arusha National Park. Even being hemmed in by human settlements, Arusha Park is the quietest amongst the six best-known parks in northern Tanzania.

Walking up Meru: a spectacular four-day trek

Day 1: a 10 km trek from Momela to Miriakamba that takes about 5 hours (ascent 1,014 metres)

Day 2: a 4 km trek to Saddle hut that takes about 5 hours (ascent 1,056 meters)

Day 3: Rest day

Day 4: a 22 km trek to the summit and back to Momela that takes about 16-17 hours (ascent 996 metres, descent 3,066 metres)

The climb of Tanzania's second highest mountain starts in the wooded savannah roamed by buffalos and giraffes. Between an elevation of 1,500 en 3,300 metres you are surrounded by montane forests full of birds and monkeys. From here up to 3,900 metres giant heathers dominate the terrain. You conquer the final metres to the summit in a barren alpine zone and an upland desert.

NOTE: don't forget to look down every now and then for two very local species of chameleons. The conspicuous three-horned Jackson's chameleon – frequently seen around Miriakamba Hut – and the Ruwenzori side-striped chameleon, which might reveal itself around Saddle Hut.

- Arusha National Park is the second oldest park in Tanzania together with Lake Manyara. It was established in 1960.
- It's one of the smallest national parks: with its 542 km² (and only 35 km from east to west) it's 4% of the size of the Serengeti. The most recent enlargement took place in 2005: land was added on almost all sides and the area almost quadrupled.
- Height: from 1,450 metres (Momela Lakes) to 4,566 metres (summit of Mt Meru). The entrance gates and major park roads lay at around 1,500 metres.
- The park is easily accessible by road, a 35 km drive from Arusha town.

Majestic Mount Meru awaits, ready to be tamed on foot

Accommodation

Inside the park: Two mountain huts on Mt Meru rest house and several campsites.

Outside the park: several lodges at Usa River and many hotels and hostels in Arusha city.

What to do

Game driving, walking safaris, canoeing, climbing Mount Meru.

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Although you won't hear the ferocious roar of a lion very often, other big cats can be sighted



Gombe National Park

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The ancient forests may look tranquil and serene, but don't let looks fool you. Underneath the canopy, adventure awaits. Home to many marvellous creatures, one stands out in particular. Get ready for a thrilling encounter with our closest genetic relative: the chimpanzee.

Gombe is one of the smallest of Tanzania's national parks and is easily made up by the sheer excitement of meeting its famous inhabitants. It was Jane Goodall the world renowned conservationist that gave the fully habituated chimpanzees their celebrity status. Her behavioural research program started over half a century ago and is the oldest of its kind in the world, running until this day. Gombe is a haven for researchers, in part due to the large group sizes, with the Kasekela group of at least 40 chimps being the largest.

Eight different primate species are present

Herbivores and carnivores are a rarity on the steep Rift Wall and its fringes, making Gombe a dreamland for walking safaris. While trekking through the dense woods – there are hardly any





open areas in the park – prepare yourself for some remarkable encounters. Chimpanzees have true character that they like to express through wild gestures and yelps. With 98% of our genes shared; the feeling of bonding between our species can be a truly magical moment. Although the fierce display of a dominant male can be frightening, no harm is intended; he is just showing his power. Don't run away, just stay calm and make yourself small!

Gombe is a dreamland for walking safaris

But chimpanzees are not the only primates here; no less than eight different species are present. Scan the forest canopy for red-tailed monkeys, blue monkeys and colobuses while staying on the lookout for the habituated beachcomber olive baboons, themselves an object of another scientific study. Two nocturnal species occur: the Senegal galago and the South African galago (or bushbaby). Don't miss out on the wealth on offer in the air and under water either. Over 200 bird species fly around, varying from the African crowned eagle that hunts monkeys, to the iconic fish eagle, three kinds of kingfisher and the bright Peter's twinspots. Another remarkable character is the palm-nut vulture; a near-vegetarian common to Lake Tanganyika that prefers fruit over carcasses. The lake itself lies on the base of the Rift Valley and harbours about 350 various species of fish, most of them endemic.

- After being designated as a game reserve in 1943, it became a national park in 1968.
- It covers 56 km² – plus a 100 m wide strip of coastal water – and stretches 13 km from north to south.
- Height: 773 m to 1,500 m (Mitumba).
- Average temperatures: 26-30 °C (daytime) and 14-17 °C (night-time).
- Dry season: mid-May – October – November, wet season: November – mid-May (less rainy in January – February), no seasonal changes in the dense forest.
- Best time to visit: wet season, for plants and insects and better chimpanzee spotting (they don't roam as far in the wet season).
- Just like Mahale National Park, Gombe is a rather remote park, only accessible by boat.

- To get to Kigoma: there are scheduled flights from Dar es Salaam and Arusha (private flights organised by safari companies), rail services from Dar es Salaam and a ferry service from Mpulungu in Zambia. Or go by road (4 days): from Dar es Salaam first 980 km on tarmac, then 780 km on earth road (difficult in the wet season).
- From Kigoma to Kasekela: by local lake-taxi (up to four hours), or motorboat (two hours, bookings through the park).

Don't miss out on the wealth on offer in the air and under water either

Accommodation

Inside the park: one private tented lodge, rest house, bandas, campsites at the Park (booking for rest house, bandas and campsites through the Park).

What to do

Guided chimpanzee tracking, guided walks alongside the beach, hiking, swimming and snorkelling. The site of Henry Stanley's and David Livingstone's famous encounter ("Dr Livingstone I presume") can be visited at Ujiji near Kigoma. Or watch the renowned dhow builders at work.

NOTE: Strict rules are in place to safeguard both you and the chimps. Allow yourself at least two days to go looking for them; Gombe is not a zoo so encounters cannot be guaranteed.

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Katavi National Park

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*The sheer number
of animals on show is
mindboggling, in
quantity and variety*

Only a handful of adventurous souls ever make it to Katavi. Those who do are treated to a mesmerizing experience. Tanzania's third largest national park, Katavi is a legendary wilderness: remote, free and undisturbed. The sheer number of animals on show is mindboggling, in quantity and variety.

Katavi is one of the few parks with the highest biodiversity in Africa. Your view changes from seasonally flooded grassland plains to the steep escarpments of the Rukwa Rift Valley. Yet the park is dominated by miombo savannah in its purest form. The large herds of antelope feel particularly at home; even the more elusive species. Katavi is one of only two parks home to both sable and roan antelope; the latter easier to spot than anywhere else.

If you're looking for the ultimate spot to tick your game-viewing boxes, head straight to the Katuma River and her floodplains, including the seasonal Lakes Katavi and Chada. Their appearance differs greatly between the wet and dry season. During the rains the grass grows up meters into the air, turning the barren grounds into seemingly endless green sheets. Waterbirds appear in abundance alongside the lakes. But it's during the dry season that game-viewing becomes truly overwhelming. The drier it gets, the more animals find their way to Katavi's remaining sources of drinking water.

The large herds of antelope feel particularly at home; even the more elusive species



Buffalo, elephant and zebra are the most abundant. Each population boasts thousands and thousands of individuals; herds of buffalo often triple the size one would find in the Serengeti. Add to that a great number of giraffe and other large mammals. All of them on the lookout for roaming lion prides, spotted hyena, cheetah, leopards and wild dog, excitedly working up an appetite all round them.

Katavi's many pools boast Tanzania's densest concentrations of hippo and crocodile

Katavi's many pools boast Tanzania's densest concentrations of hippo and crocodile. Especially in the dry season they flop together in the last remaining puddles, leading to spectacular territorial bouts. And beware of one of the most thrilling residents of the wooded savannah: the black mamba, the most poisonous snake on the continent that grows up to a dazzling 4 metres. The remoteness means animals aren't so used to humans and vehicles as they might be in more popular national parks. Katavi offers you a real sense of venturing into the wild, making the park even more special.

Katavi National Park was established in 1974, but doubled its size in 1997 to 4,471 km², becoming Tanzania's third largest national park.

- The Rukwa Game Reserve (4,000 km²) borders Katavi, together forming the Katavi-Rukwa eco-system.
- From northwest to southeast it stretches 125 km².
- Height: in general no higher than 960 m.

- The average temperature is 22-26 °C: 24-30 °C during the day (up to 40 °C at the end of the dry season), 16-18 °C during the night.
- Dry season: June – October, wet season: November – May (less rainy in January – February and the only period in the rainy season in which all park roads might be passable).
- Best time to visit: May to October.
- Katavi is accessible by road or air.
- By road, from Dar Es Salaam to Tunduma 980 km on good tarmac road followed by 435 km to Sitalike on rough road.
- By air, several companies organize private flights to either Mpanda airport or air strips at Sitalike or Ikuu inside the park.

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Katavi offers you a real sense of venturing into the wild

Accommodation

Inside the park: Rest house, bandas and campsites (booking through the Park). Privately owned tented lodges.
Outside the park: two basic hotels.

What to do

Game drives, guided walking, bird watching, photography and camping safaris. Or go to Lake Katavi and visit the tamarind tree inhabited by the spirit of the legendary hunter Katabi, after whom the park is named. Locals seeking for the spirit's blessing still leave offerings here.

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Kilimanjaro National Park

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Climbing Kilimanjaro scores high on countless ultimate to-do lists. Reaching the summit feels like being on top of Africa, with the whole continent lying at your feet. And best of all: most people reach the crater rim with no more than the right clothing, a humble attitude and a good measure of willpower.



Africa's snow-capped giant bursts out of the savannah to an almost haughty 5,895 metres. Mount Kilimanjaro is a stratovolcano and therefore boasts three peaks: Kibo (5,895 metres), Mawenzi (5,149 metres) and the Shira plateau (3,962 metres). Today, the volcano is still partly active. Don't expect any display from Shira and Mawenzi – both collapsed over a million years ago – but sleeping beauty Kibo is still capable of some action. During the past century its cone has been seen smoking and expelling ominous rumbling noises from deep down its core.

Reaching the summit feels like being on top of Africa

When the German missionary Johannes Rebmann wrote about a snow-capped peak on the Equator in 1848, people didn't take him seriously. But his words did trigger some daredevils to conquer the remarkable colossus. The first attempt in 1861 failed and it wasn't before 1889 that the German geographer Hans Meyer became the first foreigner to reach Kibo Peak. The summit was baptised Kaiser Wilhelm Spitze (Kaiser Wilhelm Peak), after the Prussian ruler Wilhelm I. After independence in 1961 it was given a more local name: Uhuru (Freedom) Peak.

All adults of normal health and fitness should be able to make it to the top. There is no need to bring serious climbing equipment, but waterproof, windproof and warm gear (don't forget mittens and a hat) is highly advisable. The conditions may change rapidly so bring a set of clothes for each day.



The six-day Marangu trail: the oldest way up Mount Kilimanjaro

Day 1: an 8 km trek from Marangu Gate to Mandara Hut that will take about 4-5 hours (ascent 760 m)

Day 2: an 11 km trek to Horombo Hut that will take about 5-6 hours (ascent 1,053 metres)

Day 3: Rest day

Day 4: an 11 km trek to Kibo Hut that takes about 4,5-6 hours (ascent 970 metres)

Day 5: a 21 km trek from Kibo Hut to Uhuru Peak, back to Kibo Hut and Horombo Hut that will take about 14-17,5 hours (ascent 1,142 metres, decent 2,112 metres)

Day 6: a 19 km trek to Marangu Gate that takes about 5-6 hours (decent 1,810 metres)

Alternatives

There are several other routes that take you to the summit of Kibo: Machame, Rongai, Umbwe and Londerosi/Lemosho. The Mweka route is used as a descent corridor for the Machame, Umbwe and Londerosi/Lemosho routes.

Note: although climbing Mount Kili is feasible for the many of us, no one said it is going to be easy. Keep in mind that it will be a challenging hiking experience at all times and the oxygen content of the air on top is 40% of that of sea level.

- Kilimanjaro National Park is a World Heritage Site and established in 1973 (yet officially opened in 1977).
- From west to east it stretches 45 km.
- Height: from 2,700 metres (Mandara) to 5,895 metres (Kibo).
- The park is easily accessible, arrival by tarmac road (steep slopes in the last section).
- It's a 123 km drive from the town of Arusha, which will take about 2 hours: 1 hour to the town of Moshi (first 80 km). From there it takes another hour to Marangu Gate (1,970 metres), through the village of Himo.
- Although there are lots of hikers on popular Marangu route all year round, it is relatively quiet on the less frequently used routes.

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All adults of normal health and fitness should be able to make it to the top

It is not only about reaching the top however. Climbing Mount Kilimanjaro is a journey from the tropics to the Arctic and back. The higher you climb, the colder it gets; Mount Kili encompasses several major climatic zones. You start from the surrounding hot, tropical region (800-1,900 metres). You then walk through the dense and lush montane forest (1,900-2,900 metres) inhabited with primates, antelopes and even elephants. After the forest you reach the bushy and grassy heath and moorland (2,900-4,000 metres) with huge heather and giant, alien-looking lobelias. The final vertical kilometre takes you through sparse, barren alpine desert (4,000-5,000 metres) to the chilly summit (up to 5,895 metres), consisting of lava desert and glacier patches. Mission accomplished: a vertical tour around the world in unrivalled beauty.

Accommodation

On the mountain: several huts on the Marangu route and campsites on the other routes.

Outside the park: several hotels and campsites in Moshi town and the village of Marangu.

Note: advance booking through tour operators is required.



Kitulo National Park

Kitulo is where plant lovers come as close to paradise as they can get. Welcome to Bustani ya Mungu - The Garden of God, also dubbed the Serengeti of Flowers. And rightfully so. More than 350 different vascular plants make this one of the world's ultimate floral displays. Make sure to witness it in the rainy season, when the spectacle is in full bloom.

Yes, some small yet hardy mountain reedbuck and eland still roam the open grassland. And yes, you hear the shrieks of Angola pied colobus and blue monkey emanating from the forest. Even the endangered Kipunji monkey – Africa's first new species of monkey for over 20 years – has been discovered in the area, together with a very tiny forest-dwelling bush-baby. Yet Kitulo isn't the kind of park to visit for your game spotters' list; it is a botanist and hiker's dream, with a floral diversity that can be overwhelming.

*A floral marvel that is also
captivating to birdwatchers*

The rounded hills and vast, montane and Afroalpine grassland – the most important of its kind in Tanzania – are dotted with the most striking flowers you can imagine, amongst which 45 kinds of orchid. Over 30 of these are endemic to Tanzania, 15 to the Kitulo/Kipengere range and 10 to the Kitulo/Uporoto range. And it's not just the blooms that catch your eye, the Kitulo Plateau and surroundings form the essential water basin for the Great Ruaha River. The thundering water, cascading down in a spectacular waterfall in the Numbe Forest makes visiting the eastern corner of the park a must.





It won't come as a surprise that this floral marvel is also captivating to birdwatchers. Here, you stand the rare chance of spotting the massive Denham's bustard. Or you might be treated to a breeding colony of the endangered blue swallow, or come face to face with special species such as the Kipengere seedeater, short-tailed pipit, churring cisticola and mountain marsh widow.

And just when you think you have seen it all, you could stumble upon endemic species of butterfly, lizard and frog. Even the Poroto three-horned chameleon - one of the rarest on the continent - is found here. Kitulo truly is a Garden of God.

Kitulo is a botanist and hiker's dream, with a floral diversity that can be overwhelming

- Kitulo National park was established in 2005 for its botanical importance, a first for tropical Africa.
- It covers 466 km² and stretches 37 km from north-west to south-east.
- Height: up to 2,700 m (the highest peak lies just outside the park).
- Temperatures vary greatly: from 23-25°C (daytime) and 10°C (night-time) in September – October, to 13-15°C (daytime) and 0°C (night-time) in June – July.
- Dry season: June – mid-October, wet season: late October – May.
- Best time to visit: December – April: wildflower peak. September – November: drier and sunnier, so more comfortable for hiking, but less rewarding to botanists.
- The park is very remote, accessible by road in a 4x4 vehicle.

- Most common route: Dar es Salaam to the village of Chimala (815 km) on tarmac, followed by 45 km on rough road to Mwakapembe gate (total 860 km/2 days); the park's HQ lies 10 km before Mwakapembe gate, at the village of Matamba.
- There are plans for a western gate at Kikondo, that will be accessible through Mbeya town and the Tukuyu road.
- Alternative: from Songwe international airport at Mbeya take the TAZARA railway (three times a week); by road it takes 123 km, through Chimala.

Accommodation

Inside the park: two public and special campsites on the plateau (bookings through the Park).

Outside the park: simple guesthouses in the village of Matamba, 10 km from the gate, numerous (more luxurious) accommodation in Mbeya city and two moderately priced church-run hostels on Matema Beach.

Here, you stand the rare chance of spotting the massive Denham's bustard

What to do

Guided walking safari, bird watching, hiking to Mount Rungwe and Mtorwi or go for a half-day hike from the park across the large uniform bamboo zone of the Livingstone Mountains – home of some of the most special mammals on earth – that leads to the marvelous Matema beach on Lake Nyasa.

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Mahale National Park

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From deep within the green heart of Africa rise the mysterious Mahale Mountains, a global biodiversity hotspot. You will find no better place to encounter wild chimps and a wide variety of other species, many of which are only found here.

When Stanley spoke those famous words “Doctor Livingstone, I presume”, he was only 100 km north of here. And Livingstone could not have picked a better place to hide. Picture rugged jungle covered peaks towering almost two kilometres above you, only to plunge into the deep blue water and white beaches of Lake Tanganyika. True eye-candy that is still a secret to most people.

The area is dubbed Nkungwe after the park’s largest mountain, held sacred by the local Tongwe people. It is dominated by mountains and forest with a huge variety of plants. No less than 1,200 species have been recorded, but the actual number is estimated around 2,000. And it is right here, in this elevated jungle, that you will find the most numerous and varied primates – ten different species – in the entire country.

Mahale is true eye-candy that is still a secret to most people

The thrilling highlight of your visit is chimpanzee tracking. Every trace of dung or half-eaten fruit pulling you further into the jungle. While Gombe hosts chimps too, Mahale is undisputedly the best place for an encounter. The park is home to Africa’s eastern most population of wild chimpanzee, with about 600 individuals in 15 groups. They have been fully habituated to human visitors after a Japanese research project in the 1960’s.

Other primates whose shrieks echo from the slopes are the red and Angola colobus, red-tailed and blue monkeys and yellow baboon. But there’s more to a visit than just monkeys.

TAKE NO LIBERTIES
WITH GAME ANIMALS



Alongside the western shore tame warthogs and bush pigs wander around, with the occasional giraffe or even the rare roan and sable antelope to spice things up. With Katavi National Park less than 100 km away, several mammals are believed to roam between Mahale and its neighbour. Butterflies sprinkle the park with colour, while bird species such as the bamboo warbler and Stuhlman's starling are seen nowhere else in Tanzania.

The thrilling highlight of your visit is chimpanzee tracking

The incredibly clear Lake Tanganyika adds aquatic biodiversity. It is the second deepest and largest fresh water lake of the world, possibly containing one sixth of all freshwater on earth. While the lake harbours an estimated 1,000 fish species, it is also the only Tanzanian nature reserve where both the Nile crocodile and the slender-snouted crocodile feel at home.

- Mahale Mountains National Park was established in 1984.
- It covers 1613 km² and stretches 60 km from north-west to south-east.
- Height: 773 – 2,462 m (Mt Nkungwe). The chain of mountains divides the park in two.
- The average temperatures around the lake are 26-30 °C (daytime, sometimes up to 35 °C) and 15-18 °C (night-time); much lower up in the mountains.
- Dry season: mid-May – October – November, wet season: November – mid-May (less rainy in January – February); no seasonal changes in the forest.
- Best time to visit: June – October, which is best for forest walks (although the light rains of October – November should be fine too).
- Mahale is one of the most remote parks, only accessible by boat or air.

- By boat: Take MV Liemba to the village of Mgambo (8-10 hours) on Wednesday, return on Saturday followed by 20 km trip to Bilenge, Park HQ by rented motor boat, or take a local taxi (2 days) or take a fast boat (3 hours) directly to Mahale (booking through TANAPA).
- By air: scheduled flights from Arusha to Bilenge HQ (most frequent in June – October), several safari companies organise private flights from Arusha, Kilimanjaro, Dar es Salaam and Zanzibar.

Accommodation

Inside the park: Rest house, campsites, bandas at Kasiha and two privately owned tented lodges.

Booking for rest house and bandas through the Park.

The incredibly clear Lake Tanganyika adds aquatic biodiversity

What to do

Swimming, snorkelling, diving, boat trips for bird watching, sport fishing, guide chimpanzee tracking in the forest and guided mountain hiking of one day up to seven – it only takes a day to conquer the 2,100 meters of the second highest mountain of the park, Mt Mhesabantu. Or take an adventurous history lesson, by tracing the Tongwe people's ancient pilgrimage to the mountain spirits, before you cool off in the fascinating clean water of the lake.

NOTE: Strict rules are in place to safeguard both you and the chimps. Allow yourself at least two days to go looking for them; Mahale is not a zoo so encounters cannot be guaranteed.

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Lake Manyara National Park

Ernest Hemmingway called Manyara the loveliest lake he had seen in Africa. And he might have been right. Stretched out at the base of the mighty Rift Valley escarpment, with shorelines coloured pink by thousands of flamingos and great game viewing in a small area, it is a true African gem indeed.

Locked in between the Rift Valley Escarpment, Lake Manyara, the village of Mto wa Mbu and several farms, the 30% land area of Lake Manyara National Park is an exceptional jewel. It is part of the expansive Maasai ecosystem and a corridor for the great migration of huge herds of mammals towards the north and the south. Lake Manyara is highly alkaline and shallow, without any outgoing rivers. Even in the rainiest month, April, depth doesn't reach more than 2,5 metres, almost dropping to zero in the dry season. From the top of the Rift Wall the natural Marang forest towers above you. Here you might encounter big-tusked elephants on their quest for food and water.

The park is a corridor for the great migration of huge herds of mammals towards the north and the south



Manyara is also home to another forest: an evergreen, jungle-like area full of monkeys enjoying the many, remarkably high trees. The most dominant of them all is the spectacular sycamore fig, hardly to be missed thanks to its creamy yellow and brown bark. Other stunning specimens typical for Lake Manyara National Park are the huge baobabs that you will find all over the Rift Wall. The lushness of the forest derives from groundwater seeping down from the extinct Ngorongoro volcano. This underground life artery can be experienced directly in the hot springs in the south of the park where sulphurous water bubbles out, steaming hot to the touch.

Despite the rather small strip of land, Lake Manyara National Park won't let you down when it comes to wildlife spotting

Despite the rather small strip of land, Lake Manyara National Park won't let you down when it comes to wildlife spotting. There are over 500 bird species; even an amateur will be able to detect an impressive hundred a day. Flamingos dot the lake surface, joined by myriad other water birds that are best spotted at the end of the dry season. The most astonishing encounter in the forest is the silvery-cheeked hornbill and there's no better place than Lake Manyara to encounter a palm-nut vulture. And that's just the start. Practically all large mammals roam the grassy floodplains, as residents or migratory visitors. Although lion, spotted hyena, serval, caracal, leopard and cheetah are more prolific in other parks, keeping an eye out will reap high rewards here. Don't forget to look up; the narrow belt of acacia woodland is the favourite playground of Manyara's fabulous tree-resting lions – the reasons behind this peculiar behaviour remains a mystery even today. You will tick the boxes for buffalo, elephant, zebra, wildebeest, warthog, baboon, many kinds of antelope and Maasai giraffe. An interesting fact about the latter is that the older the

male, the darker the skin. Manyara happens to showcase some unusually dark males. If you're keen on an encounter with a pair of hard-to-spot Klipspringers, try your luck on the edge of the groundwater forest, where their silhouette is often visible above steamy hot springs.

- Lake Manyara National Park is Tanzania's second oldest National Park, together with Arusha National Park, and was established in 1960.
- With its 648 km² (only 30% is land) it is Tanzania's third smallest national park; it stretches 32 km from south to north at its broadest point.
- Height: from 960 m (Lake Manyara) to 1,600 m (highest point of the Rift Wall in the south).
- The park is easily accessible, both by air and good tarmac road.
- By road: from Arusha to the village of Mto wa Mbu (115 km/2 hours); from Mto wa Mbu it is less than 2 km to the main gate.
- By air: several safari companies organise private flights from Arusha (airstrip on the rim of the Rift Wall).
- Best time to visit - all year round.

Accommodation

Inside the park: one private lodge (southern end of the park), bandas, a public campsite and several special campsites. (Booking through the Park).

Outside the park: several private lodges and guest houses at Mto wa Mbu village.

What to do

Canoeing when the water level is sufficient, game drives (day and night), walking safaris, bird watching, bush meal and several cultural programs at Mto wa Mbu.

Park contacts: lake.manyara@tanzaniaparks.com

Hotlines: +255 689 062 294 / +255 767 536 137

The narrow belt of acacia woodland is the favourite playground of Manyara's fabulous tree-resting lions



Mikumi National Park

The seemingly infinite horizon and rich wildlife make you feel like being on the Serengeti Plains – but you are not. Welcome to the Mkata Floodplain, the flagship attraction of Mikumi, safely tucked in between the Rubeho and Uluguru mountains. Picturesque at every time of day, the light at dusk and dawn makes a visit to the plains truly mesmerizing.

The floodplain is home of many mighty baobabs and the borassus palm, the latter lending its local name 'Mikumi' to the park. Mikumi consists of two distinct parts: open plains in the north and woodland savannah in the south, divided by the road from Dar es Salaam to Iringa. This makes the park extremely accessible for visitors. But don't be afraid that the road will ruin your safari experience. The only roar you will hear is not of cars, but of the king of the jungle.

The light at dusk and dawn makes a visit to the plains truly mesmerizing

The concentration of wildlife is remarkably high; no less than 15,000 large mammals roam the area. Mikumi is connected to the Selous in the south. With animals flocking through the corridor, it provides a vital artery to the park's wildlife. Wildebeest, eland, zebra, buffalo, warthog, yellow baboon, vervet monkey, spotted hyena, lion and impala are a frequent sighting. Just as large herds of elephants. In the late 1980's their numbers dropped rapidly after intensive poaching, but fortunately the population bounced back thanks to the efforts of TANAPA and other stake holders towards improving ant poaching in the area. The beautiful sable antelope and kudu love foraging in the miombo-covered foothills of the surrounding mountains. The giraffe might be more of an



elusive creature here, but its exceptionally light features add to the magic of a sighting. Another striking encounter you might have is with a lion, lazily draped over a tree branch. Behaviour that is typical in Manyara, yet not fully understood. Birdlife is rich and colourful; over 400 species can be seen and heard. Many migratory birds join the locals, especially during the Palearctic winter, when the abundant insects and amphibians of Mikumi form a feeding frenzy. And while hippos entertain the crowd in the pools north of the main entrance gate, they are often cheered on by many different waterbirds.

The only roar you will hear is not of cars, but of the king of the jungle

- Mikumi National Park was established in 1964. In 1975, it was connected to the Selous, with which it forms an integrated ecosystem.
- It covers 3,230 km² and stretches 90 km from north to south.
- Easily accessible from Dar es Salaam: a highway is leading directly to and from the city.
- Height: 430 m (northern plains) - 700 m (average of the hilly south).

- Average temperature: June – September 25-28 °C (daytime), November – April around 30 °C (sometimes 40 °C). Average night-time temperature: 16-19 °C (never below 12 °C).
- Dry season: June – November, wet season: December – May (less rainy in January – February).
- Best time to visit: June – October.
- Mikumi is easily accessible by road, train and air.
- By road: 300 km/4 hours from Dar es Salaam on a good tarmac road.
- By air: scheduled flights from Dar es Salaam to an airstrip at Kikoboga. Several safari companies organise private flights.

Accommodation

Inside the park: three lodges, one hostel, several bandas, public campsites, special campsites and a rest house (bookings for hostel, bandas and special campsites through the Park).

What to do

Game drives, guided walking safaris, bird watching, photography and camping.

Park contacts: mikumi@tanzaniaparks.com

Hotlines: +255 689 062 334 / +255 767 536 135

The concentration of wildlife is remarkably high



Mkomazi National Park

20

Mkomazi is a surprisingly little known natural treasure and a welcome stepping stone between the northern safari circuit and the east coast. You become immersed in the vast beauty surrounding you perched below the lush Usambara and Pare Eastern Arc Mountains, while catching a glimpse of snow-capped peak of Kilimanjaro in the distance. Here, wildlife is not about quantity, but about quality.

*Here, wildlife is not
about quantity,
but about quality*

Mkomazi lies south of the arid Sahel zone and shares a large stretch of border with Tsavo National Park in Kenya. Although its name derives from the Pare tribe's word for 'scoop of water', the park serves as a grazing zone for mammals from dryer adjacent areas. All residential flora and fauna are remarkably well adapted to drought. Characteristic for this are the many mighty baobabs, while half of the plant species are endemic.

The number of mammals isn't as high as in the more famous parks – particularly in the dry season the plains are too arid for big herds of grazers – yet the variety is remarkable. Elephants feel equally at home here as in the bordering Tsavo. Together with other migratory species, such as zebra, giraffe, hartebeest, kongoni, buffalo and eland, you can spot them all over the park. Mkomazi will undoubtedly treat you to a truly special sighting of rare wildlife species. It is the only area in Tanzania where spotting generuk, oryx and lesser kudu, is just a matter of a little patience. What's more, Mkomazi is a refuge for the endangered black rhino and wild dog. Two conservation projects are booking promising results: the Mkomazi Rhino Sanctuary – that resulted in successful breeding – and the Wild Dog Capture and Translocation Programme that successfully released a few dozen dogs into the wild in the last decade.



Mkomazi will undoubtedly treat you to a truly special sighting of rare wildlife species

The treasure hunt continues with spectacular avifauna. Apart from the usual suspects in northern Tanzania, you could encounter species that are hardly to be found anywhere else. So keep an eye out for Friedmann's lark, the violet wood-hoopoe, Somali long-billed crombec and Shelley's starling. The cobalt-chested vulturine guineafowl and large ground birds such as ostrich, secretary bird and kori bustard are also typical residents. When you spot a hyrax don't forget to look up: a colossal verreaux's eagle might be circling above your head, eagerly awaiting his chance to strike....

- Mkomazi began as a game reserve in 1951.
- Conservation work plays an important role: in 1989 the Tony Fitzjohn/George Adamson African Wildlife Preservation Trust (TFJGAWPT) was established. Conservation was further intensified by TANAPA when Mkomazi became a National Park in 2008.
- It covers 3,276 km² and stretches 130 km from northwest to southeast.
- Height: 230-760 m, plus several mountains in the west: Maji Kununua (1,594 m, Kinondo 1,620 m).

- Dry season: mid-May – October, wet season: November – mid-May (least rainy in January – February, heaviest rains in April). Mkomazi is the least rainy National Park of Tanzania.
- Average temperature: 22-26 °C (daytime: 28-36 °C daytime, occasionally up to 40 °C, night-time: 17-18 °C, occasionally 10 °C).
- Best time to visit: All year round.
- The park is easily accessible by road and by air.
- By road: 202 km/3 hours from Arusha town (195 km on a good tarmac road, last 7 km on a rough road).
- By air: several safari companies organise private flights from Arusha.

Mkomazi is a refuge for the endangered black rhino and wild dog

Accommodation

Inside the park: One tented camp, public and special campsites (booking for the latter through TANAPA).

Outside the park: several accommodation facility at the town of Same.

What to do

Game drives, guided walking safari, photography and bird watching.

Park contacts: mkomazi@tanzaniaparks.com

Hotlines: +255 689 062 336 / +255 767 536 132

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Ruaha National Park

Ruaha combines the untrammelled wilderness of Katavi with the jaw-dropping vastness and wildlife of Serengeti and Tarangire. In the largest national park of East Africa your safari begins the moment the airstrip comes into sight, the pilot deftly maneuvering past the giraffe and zebra roaming around.



Flowing across the base of the Rift Valley at an altitude of almost 1,000m, the great river that gives Ruaha its name is also its life artery. While the waters turn wild during the torrential rains at the peak of the wet season, the floods subside, calming down into tranquil pools. Where there is water there is life, and the fine network of game viewing trails follows the main river and seasonal tributaries.

Fans of the greater kudu are in the right place

With the vast savannah dotted with mighty baobabs, hills and rocky outcrops and its river valleys full of palm trees, the park is exceptionally beautiful.

Your safari begins the moment the airstrip comes into sight



Almost the entire cast of the Tanzanian savannah show is to be seen, with the antelope as the undisputed star. Since Ruaha combines acacia savannah of East Africa and the miombo woodland of Southern Africa, there is an unusually high diversity of this elegant species. Fans of the greater kudu are in the right place. Nowhere else is the population flourishing as it is here. And Ruaha is one of only two parks home to both roan and sable antelope; the latter easier to spot than anywhere else.

Unfortunately for these humble herbivores, they always need to be on their guard, with a hungry carnivore never far away. Lions are especially numerous, although their favourite meal – wildebeest – is scarce. Even wild dogs are found in Ruaha, one of the most important refuge for this highly endangered species.

Since the park had three different types of habitats within its boundaries – tree and scrub savannah, miombo savannah and wetlands – the avifauna is remarkably rich. With over 550 bird species, even a short morning walk will be extremely rewarding. And don't forget to look down, or you might miss the chance to spot both species of monitor lizard: the Nile monitor and the more elusive white-throated savannah monitor.

With over 550 bird species, even a short morning walk will be extremely rewarding

- Ruaha National Park was established in 1964.
- It is Tanzania's largest national park, covering 20,200 km².
- From north-east to south-west it stretches 260 km.
- Height: in general up to 1,000 m, with some peaks in the west reaching 1,800 m.

- Average temperatures: 25-30 °C (daytime) and 15-18 °C (at night). October and November are hottest months (35-42 °C), with July having the coldest nights (as low as 5 °C).
- Dry season: May – October, good for spotting large mammals.
- Wet season: November – April (less rainy in December – February), good for bird-watching, lush scenery and wildflowers.
- Best time to visit: July – October.
- The park is rather remote, but accessible by road and air.
- By road: 500 km from Dar es Salaam to Iringa town on good tarmac road, followed by 120 km on rough road (total driving time: 10 hours). Or take the rough road from Arusha through Dodoma (860 km/2 days, difficult in wet season).
- By air: daily scheduled flights from Arusha and Dar es Salaam. Several safari companies offer private flights.

The park is one of the most important refuges for the highly endangered wild dog

Accommodation

Inside the park: five lodges, one resthouse, two public campsites, a few special campsites and bandas (bookings for special campsites and bandas through the Park).

Outside the park: a several lodges (close to the boundaries).

What to do

Photographing, bird watching, camping and bush lunch.

Park contacts: ruaha@tanzaniaparks.com

Hotlines: +255 689 062 338 / +255 767 536 129

Rubondo Island National Park

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Landing on Rubondo is like stepping out of a time machine into Jurassic Park. The pristine tropical forests, beaches and lakes are all yours to explore; the island doesn't have human inhabitants.

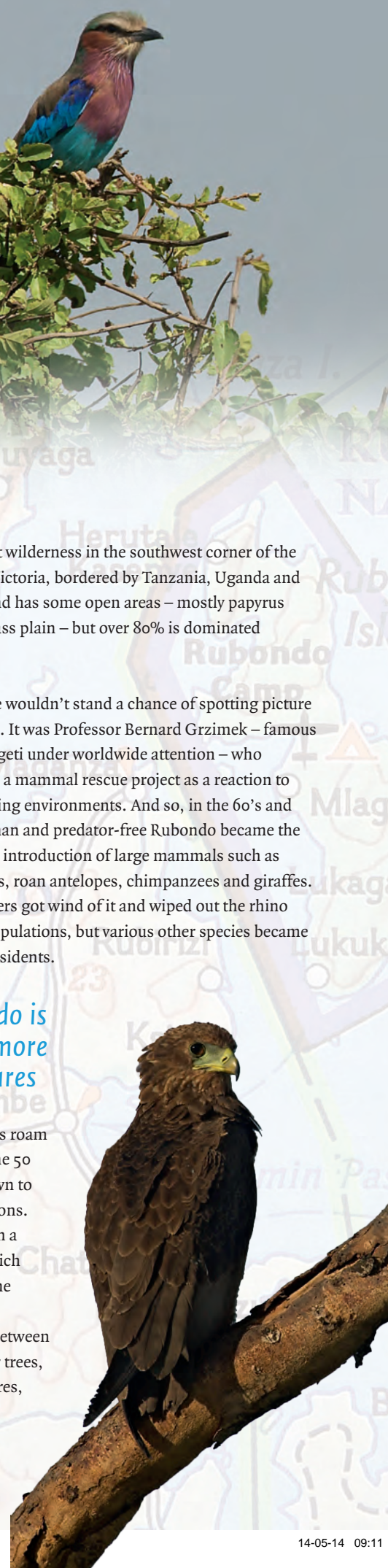
The pristine tropical forests, beaches and lakes are all yours to explore; the island doesn't have human inhabitants

You find this unspoilt wilderness in the southwest corner of the large, shallow Lake Victoria, bordered by Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya. The hilly island has some open areas – mostly papyrus swamps and long grass plain – but over 80% is dominated by forest.

Before the 1960's one wouldn't stand a chance of spotting picture perfect safari wildlife. It was Professor Bernard Grzimek – famous for putting the Serengeti under worldwide attention – who included Rubondo in a mammal rescue project as a reaction to poaching and shrinking environments. And so, in the 60's and 70's, the remote human and predator-free Rubondo became the perfect refuge for the introduction of large mammals such as rhinoceros, elephants, roan antelopes, chimpanzees and giraffes. Unfortunately poachers got wind of it and wiped out the rhino and roan antelope populations, but various other species became often-encountered residents.

Rubondo is home to the more elusive treasures

Two elephant families roam the forest. Many of the 50 individuals have grown to astonishing proportions. There are no less than a hundred giraffes, which tend to hang out in the southernmost areas. Bushbucks wade in between figs, palms and other trees, hippos roam the shores, yellow-spotted otters frolic in rocky coves,





crocodiles peek out at you with their eyes protruding from the shimmering waters and the scream of a chimpanzee often breaks the silence.

Rubondo isn't the island of big cats, nor of large herds of grazers; it is home to the more elusive treasures. One of the most striking creatures hiding in the wetlands and the forest watery borders is the sitatunga antelope. A sighting is a special treat: you will hardly ever spot it anywhere else in Tanzania. Another famous resident is the wild chimpanzee, which was introduced between 1966-1969. The population has been growing ever since and is slightly more habituated nowadays. Furthermore, the entire island is buzzing with butterflies. Luckily they seem to have a preference for animal droppings, which sees them leave the flowery forest and makes them much easier to spot.

Although actual numbers are still unknown, the avifauna on the island is exceptionally rich and estimated at over 400 nesting birds. The grey parrot, introduced in 2000 when 34 birds were rescued from illegal trade, is a spectacular newcomer.

The loud shrieks can be heard throughout the forest.

Another noisy specimen is the African fish eagle, with its black, white and chestnut feather pattern a frequent sight above the shorelines. Those that cannot get enough of bird watching head for the three Birds Islands to tick the boxes for the great cormorant, the long-tailed cormorant and the African darter.

The third island, also known as Crocodile Island, adds to the excitement with great numbers of Nile crocodiles, a sighting you won't easily forget.

- The Rubondo Island National Park is established in 1977 and together with the Biharamulo Game Reserve and Burigi Game Reserve it forms the most significant conservation unit in Lake Victoria, the world's third largest freshwater lake.
- It covers 456 km² (of which 240 km² is land) and stretches 30 km from north to south.
- Height: from 1,130 m (lakeshore) to 1,278 m (Rwamtola Hills).
- The average temperature is 22 °C all year round (25-32 °C daytime, 15-20 °C night-time).
- The island is only reachable by boat or air.
- By boat: take the ferry from Mwanza to Nkome, 10 hours. Boat available daily, then contact the park for pick up by boat to park HQ. Or start by car from Mwanza to Mganza (150 km), then contact the park for pick up.
- By air: Scheduled and chartered flights from Arusha, Bukoba, Kilimanjaro, Dar es Salaam, Mwanza and other major cities.

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The avifauna on the island is exceptionally rich

Accommodation

One tented lodge, one resthouse, some good level bandas, one public campsite and two special campsites (bookings for the resthouse, bandas and special campsites contact the Park).

What to do

Guided hiking, walking safari, sport fishing for the exceptionally big local Nile perch, that sometime weigh more than rook and boat trips to spot breeding birds and Nile crocodiles.

Park contacts: sitatunga@tanzaniaparks.com

Hotlines: +255 689 062 340 / +255 767 536 123

Saadani National Park

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Saadani is a one of a kind paradise where beach life meets wilderness. This gives you not only the opportunity to plunge into the Indian Ocean straight after your safari, but also to be submerged in a unique display of both marine and mainland flora and fauna in a naturally fascinating setting.

Saadani is the only wildlife sanctuary in Tanzania bordering the Indian Ocean. Gazetted in 2005, it encompasses a well-preserved ecosystem including the former Saadani game reserve, the former Mkwaja ranch area, the Wami River as well as the Zaraninge Forest. Many villages are dotted around the boundaries of the park. Saadani village itself once was an important harbour-town and slave-trading centre in East Africa. Nowadays it is a small Swahili village of about 800 inhabitants whose livelihood is mostly fishing.

Bird watchers will be treated to not-often-seen migratory birds that love the shore

The coastal vegetation zones range from seashore full of palm trees, through the tidal mangrove forest that form a buffer between ocean and land, to the Wami River shore where the huge sycamore fig is found. Its semi open woodlands closely resemble Selous GR, while the vast grassy area close to the tourism office is named 'Serengeti Ndogo' (Small Serengeti) and lives up to the expectations.



Saadani is where crab meets elephant and the roar of a lion might interrupt your tanning. All the usual suspects, such as zebra, buffalo, elephant, warthog, giraffe, wildebeest and waterbuck are present. But you also stand a high chance of capturing different types of hartebeest, the big-eyed Rondo Galago and the elusive sable antelope on camera during your jeep or walking safari. Lion, leopard and spotted hyena might be harder to find, but this makes a sighting an even greater joy.

The vast grassy area is named 'Serengeti Ndogo' (Small Serengeti) and lives up to the expectations

Taking a boat on the Wami River will definitely add to the fun; here you are as close as one likes to get to hippo, crocodile and flamingo. Bird watchers will also be treated to not-often-seen migratory birds that love the shore, such as different kinds of sandpiper, Eurasian oystercatcher and the common greenshank. On the beach you get to enjoy even more special sightings: breeding green turtles – Saadani's beaches are one of Tanzania's best breeding sites – with dolphins and humpback whales putting on their show in the Indian Ocean beyond.

- Starting as a Game Reserve in 1962, Saadani became the 13th National Park in Tanzania in 2005.
- Since the nineties several new areas have been added to the park, resulting in the Saadani ecosystem that covers 1,100 km² (around 15 km shoreline). From south to north it stretches 69 km.
- Height: the majority of the park is at sea level. Although the highest point is 350 m, most elevations don't go beyond 40 m.
- Tides: spring tides of up to 1,5 m can flow inland.
- Saadani has a tropical, hot climate with an average temperature of 25-27 °C all year round (30 °C daytime, 20-24 °C night-time).

- Dry season: July – September, wet season: November – May (less rainy in December – February).
- Best time to visit: June – September.
- The park is accessible by road or air.
- By road: 1) Dar es Salaam – Chalinze – village of Mandra (good tarmac road, 160 km/2-3 hours) then village of Mandra – Mvave Gate – Saadani National Park tourism office (rough road, 65 km/2 hours).
2) Town of Tanga – Pangani – Mkwaja Gate (earth road, 120 km/3-5 hours).
3) Dar es Salaam – Bagamoyo – Saadani
- By air: several safari companies organise private flights from Dar es Salaam Zanzibar and other major Cities.

Accommodation

Inside the park: one private lodge, bandas, rest house and campsites. Booking for bandas, rest house and campsites contact the Park.

Outside the park: one lodge (close to the border).

What to do

Game drives, boat trips, guided hiking, bird watching, sun bathing and visiting the Saadani fishing village which used to be a buzzing trading centre.

Park contacts: saadani@tanzaniaparks.com

Hotlines: +255 689 062 346 / +255 767 536 133

Saadani is a one of a kind paradise where beach life meets wilderness

Saanane Island National Park

The fascinating Saanane Island recently became a National Park. A status that is well deserved. The island is a true gem, with green river beds, naturally sculpted rocky hills and landscapes surrounded by tropical waters. All of which is decorated by a wild array of birds, fish, insects and flowers, with a unique view over Lake Victoria and the landmarks of Mwanza City added to the spectacle.



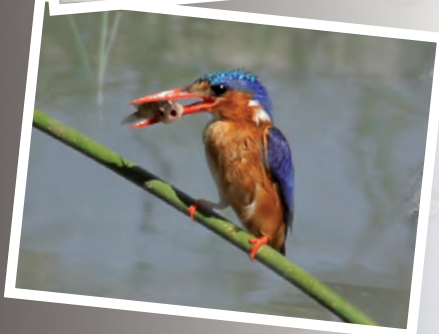
Saanane is the first National Park ever located within a city and the smallest in both Tanzania and East Africa, probably even in the world. Here, surrounded by Africa's largest lake, you will find a peaceful hideaway away from the buzz of the city of Mwanza.

The Island was named after Mzee Saanane Chawandi, a local farmer and fisherman. In 1964 the Government established Tanzania's first ever zoo here. The objective being to promote conservation education and to provide recreation to the people of Mwanza. In the late 1960s, Saanane was teeming with wildlife, of which many animals were eventually relocated to Rubondo Island, also in Lake Victoria.

Saanane is the first National Park ever located within a city

In 1991 the Island was declared a Game Reserve, to strengthen and promote conservation. Today, the island is home to free roaming mammals such as zebra impala, rock hyrax, velvet monkey and wild cat. And it is the only place in Tanzania where you might encounter the De-brazza's monkey.

Be prepared to enter a reptilian playground. Enjoy your lunch near the floats of crocodiles that use the island as breeding ground. Or look around for monitor lizards, agama lizards, pancake and leopard tortoises and many snake species, particularly python.





*Saanane is a peaceful gem,
surrounded by Africa's largest lake*

As a bird watcher you might enjoy the island even more. Over 70 species of bird life have been recorded, including resident and migratory birds attracted to the unique mix of terrestrial and aquatic environment.

Be prepared to enter a reptilian playground

- The Park covers a total of 2,15 km² (both aquatic and land mess) including two islets – Chankende Kubwa and Chankende Ndogo in the south.
- Getting there: Mwanza can be reached by rail, ship, air or by road, followed by a boat trip to Saanane.
- By air: take a flight from either Dar es Salaam or Kilimanjaro International Airport to Mwanza.
- By road and boat: you can drive to Mwanza from Dar es Salaam, Kigoma, Kilimanjaro, Arusha and Tabora to mention a few, or travel by ferry from Uganda, Kenya, Bukoba and nearby islands. From Mwanza it only takes a short boat ride (about 10 minutes).
- Best time to visit: All year round. November – March for the most varied bird species and greenest scenery, June – August is Saanane's dry season and great for picnics, game viewing and rock hiking.

*It is the only place in Tanzania
where you might encounter the
De-Brazza's monkey*

Accommodation

Outside the park: luxury and budgets hotels and lodges in Mwanza.

Inside the park: Exclusive camping (booking through the Park).

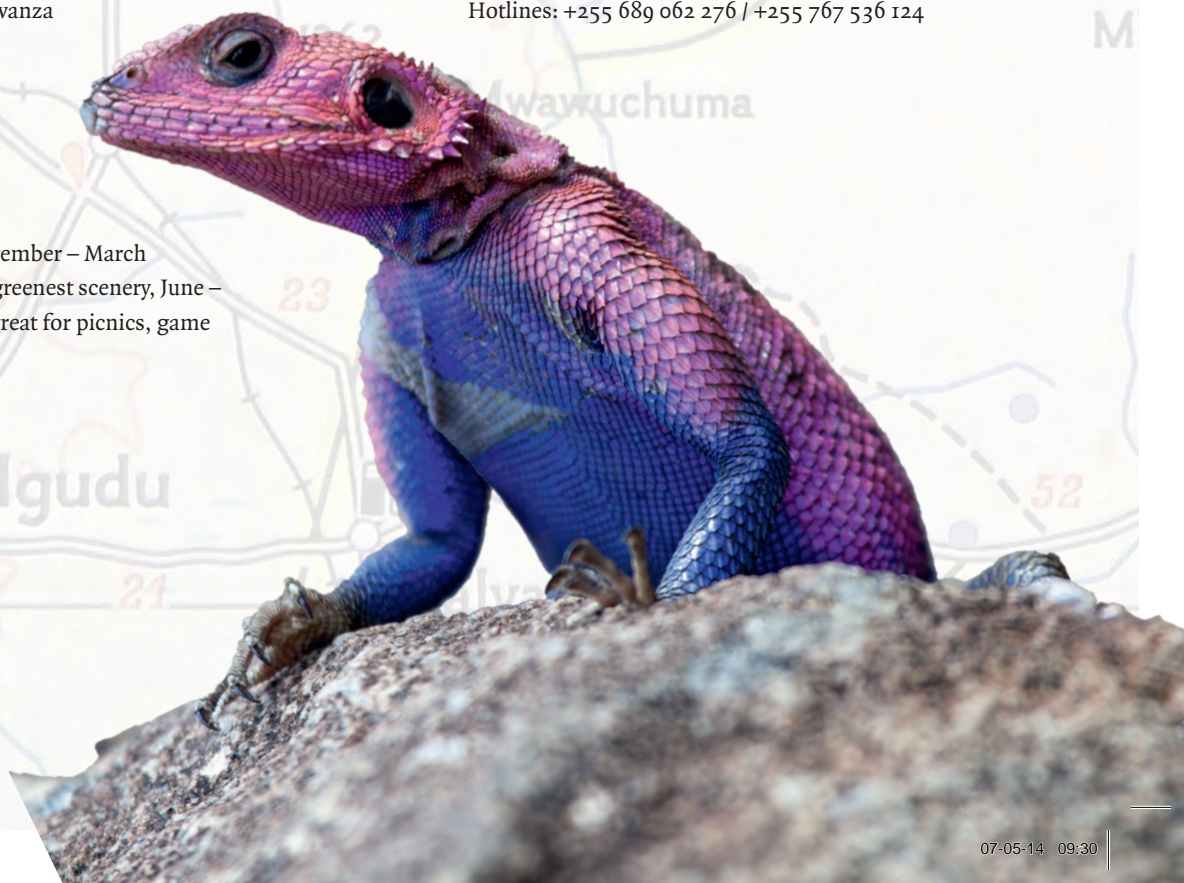
What to do

Game viewing, bird watching, canoeing, (rock) hiking, picnicking, boat excursions (need prior arrangements). Sport fishing and water spots will be arranged in the future.

Park contacts: saanane@tanzaniaparks.com

Hotlines: +255 689 062 276 / +255 767 536 124

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Serengeti National Park

Being surrounded by millions of wildebeest, zebra and gazelle is a phenomenon you will never forget. In their annual migration north they stampede over open plains, plunge into rivers almost as if they are possessed and are endlessly chased by predators. The Serengeti is a World Heritage Site, biosphere reserve and one of the New Seven Wonders of Africa.



The park lives up to its ancient Maasai name 'Siringet', meaning 'endless open plains'. The landscape is of mesmerizing beauty. While a sizeable part of the park is made up of seasonally flooded plains, forest and shrub savannah, the Serengeti is mostly about one thing: grass. Golden in the dry season, green and dotted with wildflowers after the rains. It has perfectly adapted to continuous grazing, turning the Serengeti into heaven for large herbivores. Every now and then kopjes – 2,5 billion-year-old rocky outcrops – interrupt the infinite horizon.

The Serengeti offers arguably the most dazzling game viewing in Africa

Together with Loliondo Game Controlled Area, Ngorongoro Conservation Area, Maswa Game Reserve, Grumeti Game Controlled Area, Ikorongo Game Controlled Area, and the South-Kenyan Masai Mara National Reserve, the Serengeti-Mara ecosystem covers no less than 35,000 km². At its heart lies a 27,000 km² 'island' that most animals never travel in and out of. This is where the most breath-taking phenomenon of the planet takes place: the great migration. Undisputed star of the show is the gnu antelope, or wildebeest, meaning 'wild cattle' in Afrikaans. Each year in February, a few months before the start of the exodus north, hundreds of thousands of calves are born in a couple of weeks. Many of them are almost immediately chased by eagerly waiting cheetahs, leopards and prides of lion, but there is no appetite big enough to devour 15,000 new-borns on peak days.

Even apart from the migrating wildebeest, zebra and gazelle, the Serengeti offers arguably the most dazzling game viewing in Africa. Approximately 3,800 lions, 350 cheetahs 7,500 spotted hyenas, over 12,000 giraffes and 11,000 elephants roam the savannah. The cat-sized hyrax is often spotted at the kopjes. And all three African jackal can be seen, just as the elusive serval cat, aardwolf and rhino.



The extensive birdlife adds to the magic of an early morning game drive: this is the time when their concert is at its most varied. All the essential species of northern Tanzania, plus endemic ones are present, adding up to 520 species.

The great migration: a trek for water and fresh grazing

Annually, the 1,100,000 wildebeests cover a distance of approximately 800 km. Most of the year they graze in the southeastern part of the ecosystem: from November till May. But once the pastures wither they head for the western Serengeti where they'll spend June and July, before continuing their journey north towards the juicy grasses of the Masai Mara. But the wildebeest aren't the only migratory animals; they are joined by extensive herds of zebra and sometimes Thomson's gazelle. Grant gazelle are migratory too, but cover shorter distances and tend to move on their own.

NOTE: the route and timing of the wildebeest migration is unpredictable. Allow at least three days to be assured of seeing them on your visit and extend your stay if you would like to see the main predators as well. You stand the best chance of seeing the migration between November and May.

Although the Serengeti-Mara ecosystem has probably been functioning for at least a million years, humans arrived quite recently. The nomadic Maasai people and their cattle appeared in the late 18th century. And it wasn't before 1959 that the outside world got to know the Serengeti, when the German zoologist Bernhard Grzimek and his son Michael published their book 'Serengeti darf nicht sterben' (Serengeti shall not die).

The extensive birdlife adds to the magic of an early morning game drive

- Serengeti National Park is Tanzania's oldest National Park (established in 1951).
- Serengeti is a World Heritage Site, biosphere reserve and one of the Seven New Wonders of Africa.
- With 14,763 km² it is Tanzania's second largest national park; from south to north it stretches 210 km.
- The open areas of around 4,000 km² are the size of an average East African national park; around 10,000 km² of the plains continue uninterrupted in the adjacent Ngorongoro Conservation Area and Loliondo Game Controlled Area.
- Height: from 1,200 m (western end) to 2,000 m (eastern and northern areas). Seronera: 1,530 m, Ndutu: 1,630 m, south-eastern open plains: 1,700-1,750 m, Lobo: slightly less than 2,000 m.

- Dry season: from late May to October – November.
- Wet season: from October – November to May (less rainy in January – February).
- Temperatures: 20-25 °C (monthly average), 27-32 °C (daytime), 13-16 °C (night-time), all slightly higher in the rainy season. Coolest season: May – August (night temperatures sometimes < 10 °C).
- Best time to visit to see the great migration: November – December – May.
- The park is easily accessible by road and air, the main roads are passable year round.
- By road: 255 km from Arusha town to Naabi Hill (entry point for the Serengeti National Park), 5-6 hours. From Naabi to Seronera (park HQ): 1 hour. From Musoma, Sirari and Mwanza: 3 hours.
- By air: daily scheduled flights from Arusha to Seronera, several safari companies offer private flights. The Lobo, Ndutu and Kirawira airstrips are open as well.

Being surrounded by millions of wildebeest, zebra and gazelle is a phenomenon you will never forget

Accommodation

Inside the park: over 10 lodges, luxury tented camps, several campsites, rest houses and hostel (bookings for special campsites should be made through TANAPA). Outside the park: several campsites and tented lodges, close to the park's boundaries.

What to do

Game drive, balloon safaris, short nature hike at Naabi hills, Walking safaris, Photographing safaris, Camping, bush meal and visits to historical and cultural sites.

Park contacts: serengeti@tanzaniaparks.com
Hotlines: +255 689 062 243 /
+255 767 536 125

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The landscape is of mesmerizing beauty

Tarangire National Park

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Tarangire. A gathering of giants in a picture perfect African landscape. The undulating savannah woodland, dotted with majestic baobabs – many of which are estimated to be over 2000 years old – is home to the largest elephant population in northern Tanzania. And when the dust blows the plains dry, game viewing is nothing less than breathtaking. Late in the dry season, the park hosts the highest density of wildlife of almost anywhere on the whole continent.

An absence of lakes is the secret to the abundance of wildlife; the Tarangire River is the only permanent source of water, besides Silale Swamp, an arm of the main river. It flows northwards throughout the length of the park and forms a life-providing artery for visiting wild animals. When the blazing sun vaporizes the last drops of moisture from the plains in early June – this is where all animals return, one after another.

Most wildlife gathers in the central and northern areas of the park. The sight of thousands upon thousands of zebra and wildebeest is something you won't easily forget. It provides a feeding frenzy for lions – the park's most abundant residents – , leopards and spotted hyenas, which eagerly await their next chance to hunt. In fact, all five of Africa's greatest wild animals are present. Although the cheetah number varies with the occurrence of gazelles, you stand a high chance of seeing it.



Tarangire is one of the few places on earth where you can enjoy a picture perfect African natural environment



The oryx might be an absent beauty in most of the other parks, it is a proud visitor of Tarangire. Here, just a few mammals are rare residents, such as the greater and lesser kudu. And as for the elusive wild dog and peculiar long-necked generuk: you need a very well-trained eye indeed – or just a stroke of luck. But without much effort you can tick the checkboxes for giraffe, waterbuck, bushbuck, buffalo, eland, impala, gazelle and warthog. Bird lovers are treated to a palette of over 500 breeding species – nowhere in the world you will find more in one habitat. And wet or dry, an encounter with elephants just cannot be avoided.

Late in the dry season, Tarangire hosts the highest density of wildlife in Tanzania

- Tarangire National Park was established in 1970.
- It measures 2,850 km², 90 km from south to north, and lies at an altitude of 900-1,100 metres, with some scattered hills up to 1,600 metres.
- The park knows seasonal variation: the dry season lasts from June to October (with risk of bushfires). The wet period lasts from November to May (less rainy December – February). August – October is best for seeing migratory wildlife, but there is abundant resident wildlife all year round.

- The park is easily accessible by road or air. By road: 114 km from Arusha town on a good tarmac road, last 7 km on dirt roads (less than 2 hours in total). By air: private flights are organised by safari companies from Arusha town.
- The main roads are drivable throughout the year, but roads in the river valley and on the flood plains are hard to pass in the wet season.

Tarangire is a gathering of giants in a picture perfect African landscape

Accommodation

Inside the park: three lodges, two luxury tented camps, rest houses, hostel and several camp sites. Booking for rest house, hostel and campsite contact the Park. Outside the park: several other lodges just outside the park's boundaries.

What to do

Game driving, guided walking safaris, balloon safaris and bird watching.

Park contacts: tnp@tanzaniaparks.com
Hotlines: +255 689 062 248 / +255 767 536 139

Udzungwa National Park

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Stretching all the way from Malawi and Mozambique, the Eastern Arc Mountains' biodiversity is at its most magnificent in Udzungwa. This is where you can track some of Africa's rarest species, some of them never seen by western eyes before 1990.

Udzungwa is blessed with a unique backdrop: an uninterrupted string of forest-clad mountains and cascades. The jaw-dropping Sanje waterfall is one of many providing the surrounding region with precious water resources. Ranging from lowlands to altitudes of over two kilometres, the area is covered by a staggering 3,300 plant species and around 600 types of trees – open areas are hard to find.

The star-chestnut without any side branches for the first 15-20 meters is one of the most striking trees you will come across. Some other notable trees species include the fig tree with its huge buttressed trunk, the red mahogany that grows up to 60 meters and the plum tree, whose ripening purple fruits are magnets for elephants.

This diverse jungle attracts the most stunning creatures, from mammals to birds to amphibians. The most typical mammalian inhabitants are primates: the woods host no less than nine different species. The Iringa red colobus, the Sanje mangabey and Udzungwa galago occur nowhere else than here. Over 250 forest bird species, many of which are endangered or endemic, can be spotted. Keep an eye out for special treats such as the white-winged apalis, Udzungwa Forest Partridge and dappled mountain-Robin. Or just follow your ears: the silvery-cheeked hornbill, Livingstone's turaco and crested guineafowl are hard to be missed.





Although butterflies are much easier to spot in the field, the most eye-catching ones live in the forest, such as the poisonous *Pseudacraea*. And out of ten different chameleon species, one, the spiny-flanked chameleon, is found only in Udzungwa and four other are endemic to Tanzania.

This chain of secluded mountains has rightfully been dubbed the African Galapagos

With all these miniature marvels you'll almost forget that there is bigger game to encounter too. Lions roam in and out from neighbouring parks. Bushbuck, bush pig, klipspringer and Harvey's duiker and blue duiker are common sights. You might also catch a glimpse of the shy suni – a very tiny antelope –, the rare puku antelope or the larger Abbott's duiker, found nowhere outside of Tanzania and not often seen.

Very few visitors ever delve deep into this jungle, leaving one with a special feeling of solitude. With so many creatures endemic to the area, this chain of secluded mountains has rightfully been dubbed the African Galapagos.

Seven hiking trails

Udzungwa is a heaven for hikers. The park offers a number of spectacular waterfalls that you can visit and has an excellent network of forest trails. A popular 5 km-hike (4-5 hours) takes you to Sanje Waterfall (170 m), of which the lowermost waterfall cascades 70 m into the forest beneath, leaving a misty spray behind.

Other trails that take you through mesmerizing scenery:

- Prince Bernhard trail (1 hour)
- Sonjo trail (1 km/1 hour)
- Njokamoni trail (5 km/5 hours)
- Campsite 3 trail (14 km/1 day)
- Mt Mwanihana (38 km/3 days)
- Rumemo trail (65 km/5 days)
- The Udzungwa Mountains National Park was established in 1992, mainly due to its vegetational value.
- It covers 1,990 km² and stretches 80 km from southwest to northeast.
- Height: 250 m - 2,576 m (Mt Luhomero).
- The temperatures depend on season and altitude and vary greatly.
- Only the miombo savannah area knows a dry (May – October) and wet season (October – May); trekking routes might get rather slippery in March – May.
- Best time to visit: the dry season, but be prepared for rain anytime.
- The park is accessible year round, but can be slippery in the rains.
- The park is rather easily accessible by road. Dar es Salaam – town of Mikumi (315 km/4 hours) on good tarmac road, followed by 63 km (1.5 hours) to Mangu'ula main gate on a partly earth road. The western gates aren't connected to Mangu'ula: Msosa gate lies 10 km from Mtandika and Udekwa gate lies 63 km from Ilula (on trans-national highway).

Accommodation

Inside the park: several public and special campsites at Mangu'ula gate and alongside hiking paths (booking through the Park). Outside the park: Twiga hotel and rest house (booking through the Park) and several hotels at Mangu'ula and Mikumi towns.

What to do

Camping safaris, guided hiking to the waterfalls and the forest, multiple-day mountain climbing, bird watching and cultural tourism to the cultural and historical sites in and outside the park.

Park contacts: udzungwa@tanzaniaparks.com

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The role of the parks

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Tanzania is currently home to 16 national parks and their primary roles are conservation and tourism. Many of them form the core area of a far larger protected ecosystem. They have been set aside to preserve the country's rich natural heritage and to provide secure breeding grounds where fauna and flora can thrive, safe from the conflicting interests of a growing human population and provide for human benefits and enjoyment through tourism.

The existing park system protects a number of internationally recognised hot spots of biodiversity and World Heritage sites. Each one of them restores the balance for the surrounding areas affected by deforestation, agriculture and urbanisation. The gazetting of Saadani and Kitulo National Parks included coastal and montane habitats, that enjoyed a lower level of protection before. Furthermore, Tanzania National Parks (TANAPA) is continuously expanding certain parks and improving traditional migration corridors connecting protected areas.

By visiting Tanzania you support a developing country's extraordinary investment in the future. In spite of population pressures, Tanzania has dedicated more than 45,000 square kilometres to national parks. Including other reserves, conservation areas and marine parks, this totals more than one third of its territory – a far higher proportion than most of the world's wealthier nations.

Tourism

Tourism provides valuable revenue used to support the conservation work of the national parks. The income also enables wildlife research and improves the education and livelihood of local communities. In addition, tourism helps to generate international awareness of conservation issues,



while the physical presence of tourists can help deter illegal poaching activity, assisting the park rangers with their game management work.

Fortunately, TANAPA has resisted the temptation to cash in on the short-term gains of mass tourism. Understanding our responsibility – to both Tanzania and the world – in the conservation and management of a global resource, we are committed to low impact, sustainable visitation to protect the environment from irreversible damage while providing a first class ecotourism destination.

Human activity is closely monitored and all development is strictly regulated. Buildings in the parks must be unobtrusive and waste disposal is carefully controlled. Park visitors and facilities are widely spread to prevent harassment of animals and to minimise the human impact on the environment. Even in the Serengeti, Tanzania's most popular park, almost half the area – more than 7,000 square kilometres – remains a wilderness zone with no roads.

The local people

However, guardianship of this rich resource relies on the goodwill of the parks' neighbours. By sharing the rewards of conservation and delivering tangible benefits, TANAPA is working hard to ensure that local communities have a sense of ownership and a vested interest in the future of the parks. A percentage of park revenues is used to assist community development initiatives, such as schools, health dispensaries, water schemes and roads. Villagers are encouraged to develop cultural tourism projects to cultivate their own financial returns from park visitors. Many locals are employed within the parks by lodges and tour operators. TANAPA particularly cooperates with local people in the fight against poachers.

Poaching involves not only the commercial hunting of elephants and rhinoceroses for ivory and rhino horn. It is also entails subsistence activities such as honey collection, illegal fishing and hunting for the pot, felling trees for construction or firewood and picking traditional but scarce medicinal plants. When villagers depend on the park for employment, and witness the community benefit from the presence of a park, they are more likely to defend the protected area and to report poaching. TANAPA works with communities to teach sustainable environmental management, assist with tree planting, establish nurseries and promote cultural and wildlife conservation.

Looking ahead

The future depends on those who will inherit the parks. TANAPA is taking the lead in educating local people by providing study materials and teacher training for schools and showing conservation videos in villages. Schools and community groups are offered free visits to the parks to demonstrate the importance of preserving these habitats.

The support of research projects is an important facet of TANAPA's commitment to the future. Tanzania's chimpanzees are the subject of the longest-running study of its kind in the world. Scientists working in Tanzania's parks continue to find hitherto undiscovered species of butterflies, birds, beetles and plants. And regular surveys are undertaken to monitor the distribution and number of animals, test water quality, identify disease outbreaks and check invasion by exotic species.

The national parks are a lifeline for animals that would otherwise face extinction by human hands. They offer refuge to many endangered and vulnerable species, safeguard shrinking habitats and provide protected breeding sanctuaries in which threatened species can recover. With everyone's support, these vital ecosystems will be preserved for the benefit of future generations.



Travel tips

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Language

Swahili is the National language of Tanzania, however English is widely spoken, but learning a few words of Swahili can be useful and will be appreciated greatly by the local people.

Currency

Tanzanian shilling (Tsh/Tzs) divided into 100 cents.

Major foreign currencies – such as US\$, Euro and travellers cheques are accepted and are convertible at banks and Forex bureaus in the main towns and tourist areas. Apart from most high-end lodges, credit cards are not widely accepted. Some banks in major cities offer ATM for credit/debit cards. Parks fees are payable using special TANAPA cards available at local CRDB & Ezim bank. Alternatively payment by Mastercard & Visa card are accepted. Avoid changing money in the street.

Major Airlines

KLM, Swiss air, Qatar, Emirates, Oman, South African, Ethiopian, Kenya Airways, Turkish, Egypt, Rwanda air, Uganda air, Precision air, Fast Jet and Air Tanzania.

Health

Yellow fever vaccination is required if travelling from susceptible countries. Malaria is endemic but is preventable: use insect repellent, cover up at sundown, sleep under a mosquito net and take anti-malaria prophylactics as advised by your doctor. Drink only boiled or bottled water and drinks.

Parks hours

Gates open at 06:30 hrs. and close at 18:00 hrs.



Climate

Generally dry and hot with cool nights/mornings in June – October; short rains from November to mid-December and long rains March – May, but the seasons can vary. The coastal strip is hot and humid all year round. Temperatures on Mount Kilimanjaro and Meru drop to below freezing.

Clothes

Pack lightweight, washable clothes plus a sweater for early morning game drives, as well as a sun hat, sunglasses and sunscreen. Long sleeves and trousers in light-coloured fabrics help discourage insect bites. Shorts for women are acceptable. Women should carry a wrap to cover legs in the villages and towns as revealing clothes can cause offence, especially in Zanzibar and Muslim areas. On the beach and within the confines of beach hotels normal swimwear is acceptable. If you have plans to climb Kilimanjaro or Meru, bring thermal underwear, light layers, a sweater, rain jacket, proper socks and sturdy boots.

On safari

Distances in Tanzania are vast and travel by road can be wearing. Plan to spend more time in fewer parks. You'll see more and won't return home exhausted. Keep your distance from animals and be quiet to avoid distressing the wildlife. Follow instructions of rangers or guides. Don't leave your vehicle in the parks except in designated places. Keep to recognised tracks to avoid damaging vegetation.

Photography

Protect your camera from dust and keep equipment and film cool. It is courteous to ask permission before photographing local people. If you intend to take a lot of people pictures, please bring an instant printer with you so that you can leave a picture with the people you photograph.

Insurance

Take out travel insurance to cover loss of baggage or valuables, personal accident and medical expenses.

Tipping

Tipping is not obligatory, but a tip for exceptional service.

Time

3 hrs + GMT.

Electricity

230V, but power failures, surges and dips are common. Bring a universal adaptor and a torch (flashlight) or headlamp.

Cuisine

Local and international cuisine are served in hotels and lodges.

Car hire

Self-drive vehicles are available mainly for local errands or tarmac use. 4x4 vehicles for safaris usually have to be hired with a driver.

Driving

People drive on the left side of the road. An international licence is required. Plan long safaris carefully, ensuring your vehicle is road worthy. Please bring two spare tyres, an operational jack and tool kit. Carry extra fuel, spares and water.

Travel with children

Tanzanians love children and are especially helpful to mothers. However, canned baby food, powdered milk and disposable nappies may not be available outside major towns.

Visas

Check current requirements with the nearest Tanzanian High Commission, embassy or consulate, or your travel agent.

Security

Tanzania is a generally safe country, but do use common sense. Keep an eye on your belongings. Don't walk in the towns or cities at night – take a taxi instead. Don't carry cameras or large amounts of cash and beware of pickpockets. Use hotel safety deposit boxes to safeguard valuables and obtain a receipt. Leave valuable jewellery at home.

Entry points

- By road: Namanga, Tunduma, Horohoro, Sirari, Mtukula and Holili
- By air: Julius Nyerere International Airport (Dar es Salaam) Amani Abeid Karume International Airport (Zanzibar) Kilimanjaro International Airport and Mwanza Airport
- By ship: Dar es Salaam, Zanzibar, Pemba, Tanga and Mtwara to the Indian Ocean. Mwanza, Bukoba and Musoma - to the Lake Victoria.

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