Day 1: Nairobi, Kenya
Our safari starts with a visit to Sheldrick’s Orphanage to enjoy time with the elephant and rhino calves during the play and feeding sessions. The orphanage is especially famous for perfecting the husbandry techniques to keep vulnerable orphaned elephants alive.

We also visit the Giraffe Park and have our Departure meeting. A fun evening out in one of Nairobi’s famous restaurants follows. It’s early to bed in preparation for an early start tomorrow.

Optional excursions: Sheldrick’s Elephant Orphanage, night out at Carnivores restaurant or similar.

Day 2: Nairobi to Masai Mara
Today the adventure truly begins as we head towards some of the best game parks East Africa has to offer. We travel via the Great Rift Valley where we get magnificent panoramic views of the Kenyan countryside. Approaching the Masai Mara all eyes start scanning the landscape for wildlife. The Mara rarely fails to please with lion, cheetah, hyena, zebra, giraffe, elephant, hippo, crocodile, gazelle and warthog all regulars. We camp tonight in the wild.

Days 3 - 4: Masai Mara to Naivasha
We rise early so we can enjoy further game drives. Some enjoy a dawn balloon safari as well. A visit to a Maasai village is also arranged where we can watch a traditional jumping dance before being shown around the village to learn a little about traditional ways.

We are then on our way to Lake Naivasha. Arriving at the Lake we can chill out with the black and white colobus monkeys and take high tea on the lawns at Elsamere, the home of Joy Adamson. We camp near the lakeshore. The grunts of hippos punctuate the night.

A cycling safari in Hell’s Gate National Park is a great opportunity to stretch your legs and get some exercise in the wilds of Africa amidst zebra, gazelle, eland and impala and the clear evidence of past volcanic activity. A visit to the Maasai Cultural Centre deep in the Park also gives further insight into the Maasai people. Guided walks to the Crater Lake Game Sanctuary are an alternative for today, and a hippo cruise can also be arranged to really enjoy the wildlife of the lake.

Optional excursions: Maasai village visit, balloon safari, Elsamere for afternoon tea, cycling in Hell’s Gate National Park, guided walk to Green Crater Lake, hippo cruise.

Days 5 - 6: Naivasha to Nakuru
Today we head further up country to camp near Nakuru National Park. The following day is spent in the Park.

Game drives in Lake Nakuru National Park take us through acacia forests, grasslands and candelabra euphorbia stands. There is the chance to see both black and white rhino, zebra, giraffe, eland and, with a little luck, lion and leopard. The soda lake can be pink with greater and lesser flamingo.

Day 7: Nakuru to Eldoret
Our drive today takes us through the Nandi Hills to Eldoret and Raj’s zany campsite.

Day 8: Eldoret to Jinja, Uganda
We cross into Uganda and arrive into Jinja, where we camp for a few days by the White Nile, just downstream from the Source of the Nile.

Days 9 – 11: Jinja
After several days on the road we enjoy a welcome break from traveling.

Jinja is Uganda’s adventure capital and we spend a few days here to take advantage of the multitude of activities available including the ‘Nile high’ bungee jump, white water rafting, quad-biking and horse-riding. There is the opportunity of volunteering in a nearby school with Soft Power, a locally run charity. You can also enjoy a village walk.

Optional excursions: White water rafting, village walks, bungee jump, kayaking, boat trips, voluntary work in a local school, quad biking, horse riding.

Day 12: Jinja to Entebbe
We are back on the truck heading to Entebbe on the shores of Lake Victoria, stopping in Kampala the capital of Uganda, on the way to shop, get to the bank and to e-mail.

Days 13 - 15: Entebbe to Queen Elizabeth National Park
En route to Queen Elizabeth we reach Mbarara stopping over at the RoyalMpambira Drum Makers on the way and the
Equator for a photo shoot. Roadside stalls sell fresh rotisserie meat such as ‘chix on sticks’.

Alternatively we can catch the ferry to Ngamba Island to visit the chimpanzees who now live on this island sanctuary in Lake Victoria. Many of the chimps here have been mistreated. During our visit we learn about their rehabilitation and come to understand more about their behaviour. The boat stops during the journey as well at the Equator so we can swim in the lake.

If we don’t visit the chimps here we arrange a trek to see chimpanzee in the wild in Kalinzu, Kyambura Gorge or Kibale Forest.

Our next highlight is Queen Elizabeth National Park, where we book a game cruise on the Kazinga Channel. This is a relaxed way to view game, as we drift past pods of hippo, with a prime view of the game that can come to the waters edge. This park is rich in birdlife including colourful kingfishers that can be quite often seen hovering above the water before diving to catch their unsuspecting prey. Lion, elephant, hyena and leopard are also resident here.

Optional excursion: Ngamba Island Chimpanzee Sanctuary, or chimp trek in the wild.

Day 16: Queen Elizabeth National Park to Kabale
Travelling on we reach Kabale for our last night in Uganda.

Days 17 – 19: Kabale to Ruhengeri, Rwanda
Crossing into Rwanda, the ‘land of a thousand hills’, we stop in the capital city of Kigale, to visit the Genocide Memorial and Museum. We then head to the Ruhengeri region near the Parc National des Volcans. Or alternatively we camp near one of the Ugandan gorilla parks.

The Virungas are home to some 720 mountain gorillas. Here, on the upper slopes of ancient volcanic ranges, we arrange a trek to see one of the planets’ most unique and endangered species in their natural surroundings. The mountain gorillas live at altitudes of up to 3,500 feet, amidst dense vegetation and active volcanoes. Gorillas are herbivores and spend much of their time eating, sleeping, grooming and playing. They live in family groups under the charge of an older dominant male, known as a silverback, who can weigh up to 350 lbs. Despite their great size, they are shy and gentle creatures in great danger of extinction.

Optional excursions: Genocide Memorial and Museum, mountain gorilla trek, in either Parc National des Volcans (Rwanda) or Bwindi Impenetrable Forest (Uganda), golden monkeys trek, visit to Dian Fossey’s grave, Batwa (Pygmy) village visit, orphanage visit.

Day 20: Ruhengeri to Nyakhanazi, Tanzania
Exiting Rwanda, we head into Tanzania south of Lake Victoria taking a road less traveled moving through rural Africa. This is a chance for a glimpse of the markets, schools and day to day life of the ‘real Africa’. We stay in a simple local African hotel tonight.

Days 21 – 23: Nyakhanazi, Tanzania to Seronera, Serengeti, Tanzania
We take the road to Mwanza situated on the shores of Lake Victoria en route to the Serengeti. Following our stay by Lake Victoria we reach the Grumeti Conservancy. Here we can take evening game drives and guided game walks. We enter Serengeti at Ikoma Gate with regular wonderful sightings of the large cats, lion, cheetah and leopard in this section of the park.

Our drive through the Serengeti provides a true sense of the endlessness of the Serengeti plains. The park affords viewing of a wealth of plain’s game including the migratory herds. At certain times of year when in season we can be surrounded by thousands of wildebeest, zebra and Thomson’s gazelle. Day 23 finds us camped with the truck in the centre of the Park.

Optional excursions: Guided game walks in the Grumeti, evening game drives.

Day 24: Serengeti National Park to Ngorongoro Conservation Area
We get an early start for more game drives across the 14,000 square kilometers of the park. Here too we see the famous kopjes, (small rocky outcrops) from where lions nonchalantly oversee their surrounds and on which multicoloured agama lizards bask in the sun. On leaving the park we visit a Maasai boma and are treated to the traditional jumping dance, and can also stop at the Olduvai Gorge Museum. Tonight we camp above the Ngorongoro Crater, the world’s largest extinct volcano.

Optional excursions: Balloon safari, Maasai boma, Olduvai Gorge Museum.

Day 25: Ngorongoro Crater to Arusha
The actual Ngorongoro Crater is just a small portion of the 8,288 square kilometer Ngorongoro Conservation Area. The Crater is 20 kilometers across with walls 600 meter high - a perfectly intact volcanic caldera. From the lookout at the rim we can watch birds ride the thermals, and mists and clouds roll back to reveal a landscape of lakes and forests. Our land cruisers take us down the steep winding tracks onto the Crater floor. On a good day we might see ‘The Big Five’ including lion, leopard, elephant, rhino, buffalo, as well as plains game including zebra, gazelle, impala, wildebeest and hippo.

The Maasai continue to live their traditional way of life on the Crater rim. Shunning modern ways, they dye their hair with ochre and live on a diet of milk and cattle blood. From the Crater we travel to Arusha, via the village of Mto Wa Mbu, where Maasai display their ebony carvings, spears and bead work. Time at Arusha also allows for a village walk and group barbecue.

Days 26 – 27: Arusha to Dar es Salaam
The next morning we head south towards Dar es Salaam. On a lucky day the cloud lifts enough to allow a glimpse of snow clad Kilimanjaro, the Continent’s highest peak. Over the two day drive south, we can get an insight into the way of life here - women cart water, children tend goats and vendors offer everything imaginable for sale from the side of the road - food, fruit, eggs, chickens, samsas, as well as jewellery, carvings and bags of charcoal. Arriving at Dar es Salaam we park up by the Indian Ocean coast and enjoy a seafood barbecue.

Days 28 – 31: Optional stay on Zanzibar Island
You can now have a break from truck life for four days on the exotic spice island of Zanzibar visiting the traditional ancient capital of Stone Town, with its maze of narrow, winding streets, coral brick houses and bazaars. A spice tour provides some history of the island centered on the slave and spice trades. Visit the red colobus monkeys in Jozani Forest and Prison Island with its giant tortoise. Swim and snorkel in the crystal clear coral waters. Relax on the long white beaches and enjoy the fresh local seafood during our beach cottage stay.
Further details as to arrangements for your optional time on Zanzibar Island: We make core arrangements well ahead of time so we are assured our groups are comfortable in popular beach cottages to the north of the island and for a night in the capital. The tour leader travels over to the island with the group as well to ensure that all runs smoothly.

Other excursions available include snorkeling at Prison Island famous for its giant tortoise, as well as Mnemma Atoll, dolphin boat trips, a trek in Jozani forest to see the red colobus monkeys and fishing. Scuba diving can be arranged from the Dive Centre near our beach cottages.

Day 32: Zanzibar Island to Dar es Salaam
Heading back to Stone Town, we then catch the ferry back to Dar es Salaam for a last night by the Indian Ocean before continuing south and west towards Malawi.

Day 33: Dar es Salaam to Iringa
We travel through Mikumi National Park, where elephant, giraffe, zebra and antelope may be spotted on the roadside, and into Baobab Valley marked by thousands of the “upside down tree”. Continuing past the Ruaha River we reach our campsite at Iringa for our last night in Tanzania.

Day 34: Iringa to Lake Malawi, Malawi
Through the mountains of the southern Rift Valley we arrive in Malawi, known as ‘Africa’s warm heart’.

Days 35 – 37: Lake Malawi
Traveling south down the fresh water lake, we take time to stop off at beach camp sites dotted down the lake.

Famous for its hospitality we enjoy time in local fishing villages, including a meal with traditional dancing. In the nearby markets barter with craftsmen selling African artefacts including traditional Malawi chairs. A visit to the community school can also be arranged.

A wide variety of water sports including snorkeling, wind surfing and scuba diving are on offer as well bareback horse-riding in the bush and the lake itself. Hiking in Malawi’s beautiful surrounds is also available. A barbecue or pig on the spit on the beach is regularly arranged during our stay as well.

Optional excursions: Water sports, including snorkeling, wind surfing, water skiing and scuba diving, horse riding, village visits including a traditional meal and dancing, Livingstonia hike.

Days 38 – 40: Lake Malawi to Lusaka
Departing the Lake we stop over in Lilongwe before leaving Malawi. Our next destination is Lusaka, the capital of Zambia. Here we can shop for supplies and get to the bank and an internet café.

Optional excursion: Lilongwe Wildlife Centre

Days 41 – 43: Lusaka to Lake Kariba, Zimbabwe
Travelling to Lake Kariba we hire a houseboat to cruise for a couple of nights break from truck life and to spend time in Matusadona National Park. Kariba is a setting of awe-inspiring beauty. Whilst cruising, we can view elephant, cape buffalo, kudu, waterbuck and, if we’re really lucky, lion as they come down to drink at the water’s edge. The lake is also home to crocodile, hippo and a rich bird population. As the day draws to a close, fossilized leadwood trees stand as stark sentinels against a backdrop of magnificent gold-red colours as the sun sets and reflects in the lake. The houseboat stay often proves to be a photographer’s dream.

If you enjoy fishing try throwing a line in the Lake which is famous for tiger fish. There are also tender boats we can take out for fishing and to get up close to game at the water’s edge. The boats have bedrooms so we can enjoy sleeping in a bed again as well and our meals are prepared by the houseboat crew. There is a splash pool or jacuzzi and we usually have a party as well on one of the evenings we are on the Lake.

Optional excursion: Houseboat cruise on Lake Kariba.

Days 44 – 46: Kariba to Gweru
South west to Gweru in Zimbabwe’s Midlands and we spend three nights relaxing in the bushland grounds of the Antelope Park at Gweru. Truly unique in providing up close contact with lion this destination is a favourite for many travellers. Here you can walk with lion in the African bush, play with lion cubs as well as head out on elephant rides. Game viewing on horseback, on foot or in a vehicle can be arranged, or enjoy a boat ride, and canoe and fish on the scenic lake found in the Park.

Optional excursions: Lion walks, lion cub feeding, cub viewing, elephant riding, elephant swimming, canoeing, carriage rides and horse riding.

Day 47: Gweru to Bulawayo
A short drive this morning and we arrive in Bulawayo with its wide tree-lined streets. The Matopo Hills and National Park are situated nearby, a dramatic ancient landscape of granite boulders that has been sculpted out through millions of years of weathering resulting in “whaleback” domes and castle like formations of balancing rocks. The Hills are regarded as a sacred place of ancient spiritual significance and have served as a shrine and refuge. The park is home to both black and white rhino, as well as leopard, giraffe, zebra and jackal and has a large number of raptors. We head out with local professional guides on foot to trek the endangered black and white rhino in this beautiful park.

Optional excursion: Extra game drives in Matopos National Park.

Day 48: Bulawayo to Victoria Falls
We travel through to Victoria Falls on the banks of the Zambezi River at the point where the river plunges over the mighty Victoria Falls, one of the natural wonders of the world.

Days 49 – 51: Victoria Falls
The Victoria Falls are the largest waterfalls in the world. They were named after Queen Victoria by David Livingstone, but their indigenous name Mosi Oa Tunya – “the smoke that thunders” - rings very tune, the sound of the water falling being heard far from the actual river itself. Whilst here spend time in the National Park overlooking the Falls, and for some astonishing views of the Falls take a ‘Flight of the Angels’ over the Falls in a microlight or helicopter.

There are also many other activities on offer here. The world famous Zambezi whitewater rafting on grade 5 rapids live up to their adrenalin pumping reputation. There is also bungee jumping and the gorge swing – rap jump activities, jet boating, horse and elephant rides as well as canoeing and interactive drumming.

We usually meet up at night for meals in local cheap eating places. One of our last nights is spent together on an evening sunset cruise on the Zambezi – a perfect way to end a day drifting down the Zambezi past hippo and elephant as the sun sets.

**Day 52: Victoria Falls to Kasane**

From the Falls we leave to camp at Kasane. We head out on a game cruise on the Chobe River to particularly enjoy Chobe’s famous elephant herds who can regularly be seen ‘mucking around’ in and by the waterfront to our delight as we cruise down the river. Game drives can also be arranged to explore deeper into the park.

Optional excursions: A game cruise on the Chobe River, Guided game drives in Chobe National Park.

**Days 53 – 54: Kasane to Johannesburg**

We make our way from Botswana to South Africa arriving into Johannesburg, “the City of Gold” late afternoon on the last day. We spend our last night at The Ritz Backpackers of Johannesburg and enjoy a meal together in a local restaurant.

The Ritz can assist you with bookings in Johannesburg including visiting Soweto and Sun City. The Apartheid Museum is also highly recommended. Talk with them also if you wish to explore further including pony trekking in Lesotho, hikes in the Drakensberg Mountains and traveling through to the KwaZulu-Natal coast for some excellent surfing.

If you want to head further afield in South Africa with us, have a look at our Add-On Garden Route Safari. This visits highlights along the South African coastline, including the beaches of Jeffrey’s Bay, the Bloukrans bungee, Addo Elephant Park, finishing back in Johannesburg. We can also arrange safaris in Kruger National Park.

**Please note** safari itineraries are given as a guide only. A safari is a journey and true journeys in Africa unfold and are of an adventurous nature. The unexpected can arise, so do allow for this.

Feel free to give us a call about your overland safari. We look forward to talking with you about your travel plans.

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