
THOMSON SAFARIS

Our home. Your adventure.

Africa Through the Lens: Plains and Crater Safari

May 27 - June 7, 2015

Booked Itinerary for Randy Hanna

YOUR ITINERARY

5/27/15
Wednesday

Depart From North America

5/28/15
Thursday

Arrival into Arusha

Arrive this evening into Arusha where you will be warmly welcomed.

✳ **Transfer With Group to Your Lodge**

Thomson Safaris will meet you at the airport and transfer you to your comfortable lodge.

Accommodations: Rivertrees Country Inn

5/29/15
Friday

Arusha to Serengeti National Park

Fly from the busy town of Arusha to the quiet, open plains of the Serengeti. There are often stunning views during the one-hour flight over the farm-dotted highlands and valleys below. Upon landing in the Serengeti, you will be greeted by your guide and begin your safari adventure. The word "Serengeti" derives from the Maasai "Siringet" and has been artistically translated as "the land that flows on forever". Serengeti National Park covers thousands of miles of pristine land and offers not only expansive vistas but the largest migration of mammals on earth, including 1.5 million wildebeest.

✳ **Flight from Arusha to the Central Serengeti**

✳ **Extra Baggage Allowance on Internal Flight(s)**

You will have an additional baggage allowance on your internal flight. The total weight of your bags cannot exceed 50 pounds.

✳ **Meet Your Guides at the Airstrip**

You will be welcomed by your guides upon arrival at the airstrip. They will accompany you throughout your safari, offering cultural insights, wildlife spotting expertise and in-depth knowledge of wildlife behavior.

✳ **Safari Briefing**

Your head guide will brief you on your itinerary and review the expectations for your safari, giving you a taste of what's to come. Please ask the guide questions at this time and as they come up during the safari.

✳ **Lunch at Your Nyumba**

What better way to enjoy a view of the Serengeti plains than over a satisfying, relaxing lunch at camp.



✳ **Afternoon Wildlife Viewing in the Serengeti**

Spend an afternoon wildlife viewing in the Serengeti. The big cats often spend these hours lying drowsily about the plains and up in the trees while many antelope and other animals continue to graze.

✳ **Photo Tech Tent**

Your group will have exclusive access to a photo tent while staying at Thomson Camps. Chairs, tables, lighting and a generator are provided in this tent so you can clean and recharge equipment and download photos. Please note that the generator will be turned off promptly at 9pm each night in order to preserve the pristine ambiance of the wilderness at night.

Accommodations: Central Serengeti Nyumba

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

5/30/15
Saturday

Serengeti National Park

The Serengeti, Tanzania's second largest national park, covers nearly 6,000 square miles of grassland plains, savannah, kopjes, hills, woodlands, and riverine forests. The Grumeti, Mbalageti, and Mara river systems serve as critical water sources and are often excellent sites for wildlife viewing. Beyond the heralded migration of wildebeest and zebra, the Serengeti is best known for its big predators, including cheetah and leopard, as well as large prides of lions and clans of hyenas. Other commonly seen animals include gazelle, buffalo, giraffe, topi, hartebeest, ostrich, and jackal, but it is the full diversity of wildlife and habitats that you will truly find amazing. The greater Serengeti ecosystem actually covers the Ngorongoro Conservation Area, the Maasai Mara in Kenya, and numerous surrounding wildlife-protected lands that combine for a total of almost 17,000 square miles, which is larger than the states of Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island all together.

✳ **Full Day of Wildlife Viewing in the Serengeti**

Go on a wildlife viewing drive in the Serengeti for a full day. Your expert guide will point out wildlife that few others could hope to spot, whether a leopard well-concealed in the trees or a lion deep in the savannah grasses.

✳ **Picnic Lunch**

Enjoy your lunch outdoors in a scenic spot.

✳ **Evening at Your Nyumba**

Spend some time at your Nyumba in the Serengeti this evening. Before dinner, enjoy a workout, utilizing the Nyumba's Keep Fit Kit, or just put your feet up and relax in and around the dining tent, exchanging safari tales with your fellow travelers.

Accommodations: Central Serengeti Nyumba

Meals Included: Breakfast, Boxed Lunch, Dinner

5/31/15
Sunday

Serengeti National Park

What is the story behind the Big Five? It actually has nothing to do with the size of the animals. In the 1800s, colonial trophy hunters named buffalo, rhino, elephant, lion, and leopard as the most difficult animals to hunt on foot. Thus, they were named the Big Five. Years later, tourism companies adopted the term and the list became the so-called five must-see animals while on safari. While it is possible to spot all the listed animals on your trip, leopard and rhino sometimes prove difficult to track down as they are both solitary, reclusive species. Ultimately, however, wildlife viewing in the Serengeti will be nothing short of amazing.



✳ **Continue Your Exploration of the Serengeti**

Explore the pristine landscapes of the Serengeti with your guide's uncanny wildlife spotting instincts leading the way. Expansive plains, rolling hills, dramatic granite outcrops and riverine valleys are home to an endless variety of fascinating creatures, from the lowly dung beetle to the impressive elephant.

✳ **Evening at Your Camp**

Spend some time at your camp in the Serengeti this evening. Before dinner, put your feet up and relax in and around the dining tent, exchanging safari tales with your fellow travelers.

Accommodations: Central Serengeti Nyumba

Meals Included: Breakfast, Boxed Lunch, Dinner

6/1/15
Monday

Serengeti National Park

Most of us know about the "Great Migration" from nature programs that capture some of the most thrilling moments on film. Often misunderstood, the migration is a perpetual, year-round process involving over one million wildebeest and 200,000 zebra who roam the plains quietly, in search of food and water. While some antelope and hyena may follow the herds, other animals remain in their territories or have separate migratory patterns. The migration's most dramatic moments often occur when large numbers of wildebeest and zebra make river crossings, during which they must elude predators in a desperate fight for survival. There is no telling exactly when these highly dramatic movements will occur, but all safari-goers are sure to see plenty of wildebeest and zebra while in Tanzania.

✳ **Continue Wildlife Viewing in the Serengeti**

Spend more time seeking out wildlife and exploring the Serengeti's rich landscapes. The so-called Big Five and the Great Migration are the most well-known of the Serengeti's offerings, but there is much more to see. Thousands of equally fascinating dramas of a smaller scale play themselves out on these endless plains.

✳ **Relax at Your Nyumba**

Once you return from wildlife viewing, take time to sit by the fire and relax. Exchange stories of the day, write in your journals or simply enjoy the fresh evening breeze.

Accommodations: Central Serengeti Nyumba

Meals Included: Breakfast, Boxed Lunch, Dinner

6/2/15
Tuesday

Serengeti National Park

The most social of the big cats, lions live in groups called prides, comprised mostly of females and cubs and only 1-2 adult males. Typically prides have 6-12 lions, but can sometimes have more than 30 members. Superior hunters, lionesses inherit the same territories as their mothers while young males roam until they drive out old males from other prides to take over leadership. As lionesses hunt in groups and often at night, you are more likely to see prides as they languidly stretch out in the brush, underneath an acacia tree, or in the shade of a large rock formation. Particularly in the Serengeti, males who reside around savannahs and plains develop large dark manes as they grow older. The lion's roar, a familiar sound in the Serengeti at night, can be heard from over five miles away.



❖ **Optional Serengeti Balloon Excursion**

Those with advance reservations will have the opportunity to balloon across the plains during one of your mornings in the Serengeti. A pre-dawn wake-up call leaves you time to drive to the balloon launch site in order to catch the most dramatic light. Then take to the skies just as the sun rises. Glide over the plains and acacia treetops, taking in spectacular views of the Seronera River Valley and the surrounding plains. After your descent, enjoy a magnificent champagne breakfast right in the midst of the Serengeti wilderness.

❖ **Morning Wildlife Viewing in the Serengeti**

There is nothing as marvelous as traversing the plains of the Serengeti just after dawn and through the morning hours. Look for herds of wildebeest, zebra, giraffe, impala, eland, topi, and more out on the savanna.

❖ **Picnic Lunch**

Enjoy your lunch outdoors in a scenic spot.

❖ **Another Afternoon of Wildlife Viewing in the Serengeti**

❖ **Optional Afternoon at Your Camp**

Forgo scheduled activities and remain at your camp this afternoon. You may wish to write in your journal, do some reading, or get some exercise using one of the camp's Keep Fit Kits.

Accommodations: Central Serengeti Nyumba

Meals Included: Breakfast, Boxed Lunch, Dinner

6/3/15

Wednesday

Serengeti National Park to Ngorongoro Conservation Area

Drive from the Serengeti to the Ngorongoro Conservation Area. You will pass one of the greatest prehistoric sites in Olduvai Gorge, where archeologists have been making thrilling fossil discoveries for nearly a century. After cutting across the desert-like bush country, you will arrive at a range of hills that lead to Ngorongoro. You will pass Maasai herding their cattle alongside the road. The Maasai are allowed to live in boma settlements throughout the conservation area. The famed Ngorongoro Crater has one of the greatest concentrations of wildlife in the world.

❖ **Wildlife Viewing as You Depart the Serengeti**

As you follow the meandering path out of Serengeti National Park, take in the gorgeous scenery and wildlife viewing before moving on to the next part of your adventure.

❖ **Visit Olduvai Gorge**

Make a short stop at Olduvai Gorge, a deep ravine and site of fossilized remains of animals and hominids that date as far back as two million years. A brief lecture and small museum tour are included.

❖ **Boxed Lunch en Route**

❖ **Maasai Boma Visit**

Immerse yourself in the semi-nomadic culture of the Maasai by visiting a boma, which is a settlement of circular mud-and-dung Maasai homes. Many Maasai still roam the plains of northern Tanzania with their herds of cattle, maintaining their traditions while adapting to new ways of life. Learn more about their extraordinary culture as you tour the boma and take in the scenes of village life.



✳ **Special Tanzanian Dinner**

Enjoy a traditional Tanzanian dinner this evening. Rich with spices and fresh local vegetables, this is a chance to sample the best of local cuisine. (Please note that this does not include game meat.)

✳ **Relax at Your Nyumba**

Take some time to rest at your Nyumba, enjoying the views as you write in your journal or simply put your feet up and relax.

Accommodations: Ngorongoro Nyumba

Meals Included: Breakfast, Boxed Lunch, Dinner

6/4/15
Thursday

Ngorongoro Conservation Area

Spend a day in Ngorongoro Conservation Area, a habitat rich in culture and teeming with wildlife. Sometimes there are more than 30,000 animals in and around the crater, including black rhino, cheetah, lion, hyena, eland, and numerous antelope. On the floor of the crater, the alkaline Lake Magadi serves as an important water source, also attracting flamingo flocks during the dry season. Nearby, the small Leraï Forest, with its yellow fever acacia trees, provides shade and shelter for wildlife. You will often see baboons, vervet monkeys, and even elephants in its thicket. Thorny bush, grasslands, hippo pools and a second small lake are also found on the floor. You'll soon see why Ngorongoro is considered to be among the world's great wonders.

✳ **Full Day of Wildlife Viewing in Ngorongoro Crater**

Descend into the Ngorongoro Crater, where you are likely to find an abundance of wildlife. Over a full day of wildlife viewing, you might even see rhinoceros. The diversity of species often inspires awe.

✳ **Picnic Lunch on the Crater Floor**

To maximize your wildlife viewing time on the crater floor, enjoy your picnic lunch near a hippo pool.

✳ **Rest at Your Nyumba**

Rest at your Nyumba, taking in the hypnotic sounds of the wilderness around you.

Accommodations: Ngorongoro Nyumba

Meals Included: Breakfast, Boxed Lunch, Dinner

6/5/15
Friday

Ngorongoro Conservation Area to Ngorongoro Highlands

Make a short drive from the Conservation Area to the Ngorongoro Highlands. As you travel down a winding road, you are rewarded with expansive vistas of the surrounding plains. At the top of the escarpment lie the lush Ngorongoro Highlands where the region's rich volcanic soil makes for some of the most fertile land in Tanzania.

✳ **Daniel Tewa Visit**

Visit the home of Daniel Tewa, a charismatic local historian, storyteller, and respected member of the Iraqw people. Daniel will impress you with his encyclopedic knowledge of Tanzanian cultures and history. His wife, Elizabeth, a skilled artisan who has made hundreds of fancifully beaded "wedding skirts" in her lifetime, will be able to explain the iconography used in these works of art. You'll also be able to come inside the mound-like traditional Iraqw home, which Tewa built beside his own modern biogas-powered house to preserve his heritage and the environment.



✳ **Lunch at Gibb's Farm**

Savor lunch at Gibb's Farm, where nearly every ingredient comes fresh from the estate's organic farm. With delicacies to suit every palate, this is sure to be a memorable meal.

✳ **Gibb's Farm Optional Afternoon Activities**

You may choose to spend the afternoon relaxing on the verandah with tea, or taking advantage of innumerable optional activities: a farm or garden tour, bird watching, coffee roasting, and more.

✳ **Gibb's Farm Tembo Fire**

This evening, relax at the Tembo Fire, an open-air sitting area nestled at the foot of the organic gardens. The tradition of the nightly campfire began as a purely practical measure to ensure that elephants - or "tembo" in Swahili - are not tempted to feast in the organic gardens at night. It soon became a popular place to sit and relax at the end of the day. Now, with a comfortable seating area and full bar, the Tembo Fire makes a wonderful place for conversation, story-telling or star-gazing.

Accommodations: Gibb's Farm - Cottage Room

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

6/6/15
Saturday

Departure

Depart the highlands for Arusha, where, after a day of leisurely activities, you will catch your departing flight. As you bid farewell to Tanzania, think of all the fabulous stories and photos of your adventure, which you will share with friends and family when you arrive home and for years to come.

✳ **Stop at Cultural Heritage Center**

A shopping mainstay in Arusha, the Cultural Heritage Center attracts many travelers each year with its abundance of wooden carvings, artifacts, apparel, and crafts. The center also has Tanzanite and other gemstones for sale. While the center caters mostly to tourists, they also have wonderful cultural displays and a separate wing that displays some of the finest African art in Tanzania.

✳ **Farewell Lunch at River House**

During a special farewell lunch in Arusha, you will have time to say goodbye to your safari companions as you prepare for your departures. You may wish to exchange addresses or take some final photographs, to help preserve fond memories of an extraordinary trip.

✳ **Day Room in Arusha**

Enjoy a day room in Arusha, resting up and readying yourself for your departure.

✳ **Snack at Mount Meru Hotel**

Enjoy a light snack at the lodge.

✳ **Transfer as a Group to the Airport**

Accommodations: Day Room at Mount Meru Hotel

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Snack

6/7/15
Sunday

Return to North America



Each passenger is allowed one duffle bag, weighing no more than 15kgs (33lbs), unless otherwise noted.

Passengers traveling on Delta/KLM US to East Africa flights purchased through Thomson Safaris are currently allowed 2 free checked bags up to 50lbs each. Please Note: while on safari and when flying domestically within Tanzania, most trips are restricted to one safari duffle up to 33lbs, unless otherwise noted in your trip details. Kilimanjaro treks and some specialty trips may have exceptions.

http://klm.com/travel/us_en/prepare_for_travel/baggage/baggage_allowance/index.htm



ACCOMMODATIONS

Rivertrees Country Inn

Set beside the rushing waters of the Usa River on the outskirts of Arusha, Rivertrees Country Inn has colonial charm and simple but elegant style with modern-day amenities and fantastic cuisine. Besides its delightful farmhouse guestrooms, the inn also has two spacious luxury cottages and a lovely, open-air, thatched-roof kitchen and dining area, with décor reminiscent of its country heritage as a former German colonial farm and coffee estate.

You can enjoy easy walks through the inn's gorgeous gardens and along the river, which is lined by yellow acacias and giant fig trees, both abundant in vibrant birdlife. The inn has a pool, internet services, and a small gift shop. Rivertrees supports its nearby community, including groups for women and vulnerable children. The inn will make for a fine storybook beginning or ending to your adventure.

Central Serengeti Nyumba

Thomson's signature Serengeti Nyumba is the perfect balance of luxury, comfort and wilderness. These tents were exclusively designed for Thomson Safaris and cannot be found anywhere else. In the spacious, walk-in tents, you will find all the comforts you need out in the bush: artfully crafted furnishings, cozy bedding with fine linens, solar-powered, eco-friendly lighting, and an en-suite bathroom with shower and self-contained pump-flush toilet. We've taken special care to think of all the details that will make you comfortable during your stay without being excessive or leaving a heavy footprint on the landscape.

Oversized, fine-mesh windows allow the breezes to circulate while keeping insects out. At the front of your tent, enjoy a private seating area with a stunning view of the vast Serengeti plains. Meals are taken in a custom-designed dining tent and are made with fresh, local produce by skilled chefs. Freshly baked breads, homemade soups, salads, a variety of healthful, delicious entrees and, of course, decadent desserts highlight the daily menus.

Our favorite cozy spot is the campfire, from where you can marvel at the billions of stars visible in the quiet, clear, pollution-free night sky.

Ngorongoro Nyumba

This Nyumba is located at the rim of Ngorongoro Crater where it is poised for optimal access not only to the nearby cultural treasures, but also to the crater floor where you will experience exceptional wildlife viewing. The air here has a heavenly fresh scent, though the high elevation (about 7,200 feet) makes for potentially chilly nights; it will be important to bring warm clothes, per your packing list.

The exceptional camp crew will make sure you have everything you need to stay comfortable, for example, making sure hot showers are available in your en suite bathroom, preparing delicious four-course meals and offering you drinks or snacks around the roaring camp fire.



Gibb's Farm

Gibb's Farm artfully blends nature, culture and eco-friendly amenities to provide what is sure to be a relaxing and memorable stay. Gibb's Farm awakens the senses in a nurturing, peaceful luxury inn environment, a unique and authentic experience based upon East African traditions and hospitality.

Mount Meru Hotel

An Arusha mainstay near the busy downtown area, the Mount Meru Hotel sits on a 15-acre garden and provides comfortable, modern accommodations. Amenities include cable TV in all rooms, internet access, currency exchange facilities, concierge, massage services, babysitting on request, playground for children, outdoor swimming pool, sun bed, a volleyball court, and a nearby golf course. The Themi Grill serves both international and African cuisine.



TRIP DETAILS

Pricing

\$7,990	Adult
\$1,500	Single Accommodations
\$540	Optional Serengeti Balloon Safari

Included On Safari

- Accommodations Based on Double Occupancy
- Meals as Noted in Itinerary, Inclusive of Restaurant Staff Tips
- All Park Fees
- Complete Preparation Materials Including Helpful Tips, Packing List, Trip Expectations, Tipping Guidelines, Etc.
- Access to a Personal Safari Consultant by Phone or Email, Five Days a Week
- Full-Color, 120-Page Safari Journal
- Safari Briefings Throughout Your Trip
- Services of Professional Safari Guides and Drivers
- Services of Nyumba Camp Staff Including Chef and Wait Staff
- Tech Tent at Thomson Nyumbas for Charging Electronics until 9:00pm Each Night
- Land Transportation in a Customized, 4-Wheel Drive Safari Vehicle
- Maximum of 3 Travelers per Land Rover
- Unlimited Mileage in Safari Vehicles
- Guaranteed Window Seating in Safari Vehicles
- Complimentary Bottled Drinking Water in Your Vehicle Throughout Your Safari
- Snacks in the Vehicle
- Bean Bags
- Scenic Internal Flight(s) as Noted in Itinerary
- Extra Weight Allowance for Internal Flights up to 50 Pounds
- Guided Walks with a Naturalist, when Available
- Village, School, and Cultural Visits as Noted in Itinerary
- Keep Fit Kit at Each Nyumba Camp
- Special Tanzanian Dinner at Ngorongoro Crater
- Airport Transfers for Delta/KLM Flights on Scheduled Arrival and Departure Days
- Baggage Handling
- Farewell Lunch

Not Included On Safari

- *International Flight and Related Fees (Fuel, Baggage, Seat Assignments, etc.)
- *Fees for Passport, Visa, or Immunizations
- *Meals and Expenses en Route to Tanzania
- *Cost of Hospitalization or Evacuation
- *Beer, Wine, Spirits, and Soda
- *Laundry, Phone, Internet, and Items of a Personal Nature
- *Tips for Guides, Drivers, and Camp Staff



Please note: Thomson Safaris (TS) will attempt to adhere to this itinerary as much as possible. Any unforeseeable changes in fees, such as fuel surcharges, increased park fees or other fees that are out of TS control, will be the responsibility of the guest. Some conditions (political, climatic, environmental, cultural, or wildlife migrations) may also necessitate changes in the itinerary. TS reserves the right to alter any itinerary at any time, if necessary. We will attempt to notify participants of changes as far in advance as possible. Costs incurred by such changes will be the responsibility of the participant.

