

## Samburu and the Big 5 - (9 days, 8 nights)



In Central Kenya you can find the so-called 'northern safari circuit'. It is one of the least visited areas in Kenya, because it lies far away from the immensely popular Masai Mara and Amboseli reserves in the southern part of the country. Nevertheless, Central Kenya is teeming with wildlife, and what is more, except for having a big chance of encountering the Big 5, this region also houses the Special 5, elegant animals that can only be seen together here. A circuit, therefore, that will steal your heart.

Ingrid Vekemans, your tour leader and professional nature photographer, has been travelling to Africa every year for more than 30 years and has lost her heart on the continent. She feels at home there and looks forward to sharing her knowledge and passion with the group.

This trip takes place in the high season for a reason. The high season is the dry season in Kenya. Therefore, the wildlife will be more concentrated around areas where water is available and the vegetation is much less thick. For these two reasons we will be able to spot many more animals than in the low season.

During this trip we will be staying in comfortable tented camps and lodges in the middle of nature. This way you can enjoy the setting and relax before and after the intense game drives.

The trip is aimed at people who love nature and wildlife, and who love photographing it (of course non-photographing partners are also welcome!). Unlike normal group tours, we will be looking especially for photographic opportunities, and will take whatever time is required if the situation is interesting from a photographer's point of view. The group is small, which enables a personal approach and provides enough space in the vehicle for the photographic equipment - we will be using 8-seater 4x4 vehicles for a maximum of four people per vehicle. Hence two vehicles will be our transport and Ingrid will split her time evenly between them.

Besides photographing together, and immediate advice and tips, on the no-travel days you can expect more time with Ingrid. On these days there will be dedicated 'feedback' sessions after lunch, where a selection of photos from each participant can be discussed.

A typical day starts early, so we can make optimal use of the first, soft morning light. This often results in the most memorable photographs. Also, this is the time of the day where most animal activity can be seen. Most days we will be taking a packed breakfast, which we can enjoy enroute in a scenic area. In the late morning and early afternoon, when the temperature rises, you will be at the camp, relaxing and/or viewing photos, making a selection for the feedback session. Late afternoon we will set off again to take photos until the light disappears. (Please note that it is obviously not obligatory to participate in all game drives – often good photo opportunities exist within the camps themselves). There is time to freshen up before dinner after which you can linger to discuss the events of the day, or you may prefer the peace and quiet of your room or tent. After all, tomorrow will undoubtedly be another exciting day!

**THIS SAFARI IS OPERATED BY**



## Day 1

Today the participants arrive in Nairobi. They will be taken to their hotel for the night.

## Day 2

After breakfast we will be picked up at the hotel in Nairobi and we will drive to our first home in the Aberdares, where we will arrive by lunch time. We stay at a rustic lodge, situated in the midst of colourful gardens where the many flowers attract a great number of birds. Also various mammals, like water bucks, eland, warthog, bushbuck and impala, wander around the grounds. After a general briefing, we go for a walk through the gardens where we have plenty of time to extensively photograph the different types of birds and mammals, and where all participants are personally followed up by Ingrid. After this pleasant start, we have a chat by the fire before enjoying our first group dinner, followed by a refreshing night's sleep.



## Day 3

Today, after breakfast, we head to the Solio Conservancy, which is close to our lodge. This is a private nature reserve, which has set itself the protection of the black rhino as a goal. There are now over 100 black rhinos in the park, but you can also find the world's largest white rhino population here, as well as many other animal species. Lions, cheetahs, leopards, giraffes, antelopes, buffalos, zebras, warthogs and of course a great variety of birds populate this park.

The entire day is spent on photography, only interrupted for a picknick lunch and feedback moments. After our safari, we had back to the lodge for dinner and a good night's rest.

#### **Day 4**

After breakfast we drive to Samburu/Buffalo Springs where we will continue our adventure. We can already spot and photograph animals on the way. Our new home is a camp in the middle of the reserve, on the banks of the Ewaso Nyiro river with its many visitors. More removed from the standard Kenya safari circuit, this park with its meandering river exudes an atmosphere of tranquillity and serenity. We have lunch in the camp, enjoy the beautiful surroundings, and in the late afternoon set off for our first safari in this area.



#### **Day 5-6**

Further exploration of this area with morning and afternoon game drives. There is always the possibility to have photo discussions with Ingrid after lunch, followed by a rest, a swim or more photography inside the camp.

Every morning will find us setting off early to further explore the area where we're staying, looking for new animals and/or photo opportunities.

The reserve is characterized by rocky hills in rolling lowland plains where acacia trees give an extra African vibe. The Ewaso Nyiro river and the Buffalo Springs are the lifelines of this otherwise dry area, where animals come to quench their thirst and many predators await their chance to attack. Here we have good chances to spend time with lions, cheetahs, elephants and giraffes, but the area is particularly known for a few animal species that can hardly be found anywhere else in Africa. Besides the Vulturine guineafowl, we will probably see the 'Special 5': The Somali ostrich, the Reticulated giraffe, the thin-striped Grevy zebra, the gerenuk and the Beisa oryx all populate this stunning park. Apart from these stars of Samburu, there are obviously also leopards, buffalos, bat-eared foxes, hippos, crocodiles and hundreds of bird species.



## Day 7

We take all our luggage and a picknick breakfast for our morning game drive. From lunch time onwards we will stay on the opposite side of the river in a luxury tented camp. On the way there we have our usual game drive. This new tented camp has a photography hide at a gorgeous waterhole, where guests can spend the night if so desired. At night our group will have exclusive use of this hut. There is only room for 4 photographers in the photography hide, so Ingrid will make a rotation plan, to make sure everybody who wishes to use the hide has the same chances to do their night photography. But before we start in the hide, of course we will go for another late afternoon safari and a group dinner.



## Day 8

At the break of dawn, we will leave with our picknick breakfast, to look for the animals that – like us – start their morning activities early. The middle of the day can be very hot, so late morning we will return to the camp, so that everybody has ample time to rest. After all, there is another late afternoon game drive planned, followed by a night in the photography hide for the second part of our group. Please note that using the overnight hide is by no means obligatory.



## Day 9

After one last morning game drive, we will alas also have to head back to Nairobi, where we are expected for a relaxed last evening meal. Unfortunately, our group trip has come to an end. From here participants can take a flight home. Another possibility is to spend one or more extra nights in Nairobi or at the tropical Mombasa coast with its blue water and white beaches, before flying home totally rested and refreshed.



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**ATTENTION: a change to the above travel schedule is always possible, if the circumstances dictate.**

## **PRACTICALITIES**

### **TUI**

The safari is organised by TUI tours, part of TUI Belgium n.v. The TUI group is the largest tourism group in the world.

You can apply for your reservation with the TUI Belgium n.v. headquarters. To this end you can use the 'PRICE INQUIRY' button on top of the page of this respective trip on the website [www.ingridvekemans.com](http://www.ingridvekemans.com).

The invoice and booking terms and conditions will be sent to you by TUI Belgium n.v.. TUI Belgium n.v.'s general and special conditions are applicable in so far as they do not deviate from the below mentioned terms.

You can find all information on <https://www.tui.be/nl/reisvoorwaarden>. In case of cancellation by the traveller - special cancellation conditions: In case of advance payment of accommodation or other services the cancellation costs can be as high as 100% relatively long before departure. This amount should be increased with the compensation charged by the airline and the administration costs in accordance with the time of cancellation.

The **price** of the trip is 6370€ per person and is based on sharing a double or twin room. The supplement for a single room will be 980€. An advance of 500€ per person will be requested at the time of reservation of the trip, and as soon as departure is guaranteed, a second advance of 1200€ per person will be asked. All prices mentioned on this website are subject to change in case of increase of local taxes or park income fees, and fuel increases.

**Safari period:** 11 – 19 September 2027

**The price is inclusive of** airport transfers; accommodation in comfortable to luxury hotels, lodges and tented camps (8 nights); all meals; soft drinks, beers and house wines in the second lodge in Samburu; exclusive use of the night photography hide in the second camp in Samburu; transport by 4x4 vehicles throughout; bottled water in the vehicles; game drives (two per day unless on travel days); Flying Doctors service; experienced drivers/guides; park entry fees; guiding and advice about the animals and how to photograph them; photo analyses and an experienced and passionate tour leader!

**The price excludes** the international flight and related taxes, eTA for Kenya, passport costs, travel insurance, soft drinks and alcoholic beverages (except in the second lodge in Samburu, where certain drinks are included), tips, personal expenses.

**Minimum number of participants:** minimum 5 (maximum 7) participants

**Minimum age for participants:** 16

As soon as the minimum number of participants is reached, you will be contacted by TUI. TUI will then make you flight proposals for the **international flights**. You can then choose whether to book your flight through TUI or to take care of your international flights yourself. The international flights can only be booked from 1 October 2026.

**Insurance:** It is strongly recommended for every participant to have cancellation and travel insurance.

**Force majeure:** The photo safaris are normally accompanied by Ingrid Vekemans. Only if Ingrid Vekemans would be prevented through force majeure an alternative - equivalent replacement will be sought in view of a good execution of the travel contract.

**Luggage restrictions:** In order to be sure to have enough freedom to move around the vehicle on travel days, maximum one soft travel bag (dimensions maximum h 40cm x d 40cm x l 80cm) per person is allowed as well as the camera bag. Only if every participant sticks to this restriction, the trip will be comfortable for all. The maximum allowed weight of your luggage will depend on the airline with which you book your flight.

**Requirements for the participants:** Beginners, as well as more experienced photographers (and their partners) are welcome to join this trip. In order to get the most out of the photographic opportunities, it is however advised that you know the basics of photography (regarding ISO/shutter speed/aperture and light metering), such as you might learn in a basic digital photography or a wildlife photography workshop. The trip is physically not very demanding because we will always be photographing out of a vehicle. The game drives, however, will start very early in the morning and can last a long time depending on what we see. Participants therefore must be in good health. It can be surprisingly cold in the Aberdares (day 2 and 3), so make sure to pack some warm clothing!

Participants have to take care of any necessary **vaccinations and medications**. For more information, check <https://www.wanda.be/en>. The information on this website needs to be evaluated by the participant in consultation with a qualified physician. Participants have to make sure they have a **valid international passport (valid at least another 6 months after the date of return) and an eTA** for Kenya. The latter has to be requested online a few weeks before departure, but you will receive instructions for this well in advance. Indicative price: 35 USD per person. For the last update: see <http://diplomatie.belgium.be>.

**Finally**, respect for nature and the animals is a must!

Participants have to be aware that Africa sometimes requires patience and understanding: roads can be bumpy and things may not work as efficiently as at home. The pace of life is slower, which should ultimately benefit us all.

