

FIVE OF TANZANIA/'S BEST SAFARI DESTINATIONS



An African safari can be enjoyed in almost any corner of the continent with different perks on offer, from Zimbabwe's Victoria Falls to South Africa's boutique reserves and the big cats of Kenya. The reason why Tanzania is seen as one of the best African countries for a safari is because there are so many different packages to enjoy within its fifteen parks - such as tracking, specialized wildlife tours, boat rides, mountaineering, walking tours and hot air balloon rides

- and there is a park to suit all kinds of visitors. The following examples showcase the five best parks for those with a taste for adventure, wildlife enthusiasts with either a desire to expand their knowledge or see rare spectacles, anthropologists keen on the other side of Tanzanian safari and first timers wanting to see as much as possible.

For the collector - Ruaha National Park.

Starting with the more traditional type of safari destination, Ruaha offers precisely what most visitors are hoping for - a large selection of wildlife in a beautiful setting - and this makes it ideal for the collector, the type of visitor that wants to see as many species as possible and tick some rarities off the list. The park is famous for the river of the same name, which provides a crucial water source for vast numbers of animals that make up a vital part of the food chain. Impala, gazelle, kudu and waterbuck all risk taking a drink in the territory of predators like lions, hyenas and jackals. Additionally, the park is also home to endangered African wild dogs and a recovering population of elephants and other favourites like cheetah.

For the enthusiast - Serengeti National Park.

While Ruaha National Park offers a great taste of diversity and is perhaps the easier option, the Serengeti can provide a stunning display of a different kind that real wildlife enthusiasts will really appreciate. Here, zebra and wildebeest migrate in vast numbers into an ancient landscape that is also the permanent home of other must-see creatures like elephants, giraffes and hippos. The reason why this trip is best recommended to those keen to see the famous, dramatic event before their own eyes, rather than those keen to see a lot of different animals, is because of the unpredictability of it all. Timing is everything with the migration and travellers have to be prepared - both for the planning involved and the potential disappointment.

For the anthropologist - Ngorongoro Conservation Area.

Understandably, the draw of most Tanzanian safaris is the wildlife that can be seen, but that does not mean there are not other elements to enjoy and Ngorongoro Conservation Area is a great choice for budding anthropologists because of the links to the Maasai, some of whom still reside there, and ancient civilisations, Olduvai being home to some of the oldest records of man's existence. That is not to say that there isn't a lot of wildlife to be found there; the shape of the park, with its large crater, naturally brings together many species for a great safari experience and is home to a population of endangered black rhino.

For the ecologist - Katavi National Park.

On the other end of the scale, there are of course those that not only interested in seeing the different animals but also the different habitats to get a true sense of the wilderness and learn about the science and ecology of the area. For these self-confessed geeks, Katavi National Park is the place to go because of the diversity on offer. Said to be one of the most unspoilt areas in the country, Katavi lets tourists see birds and hippo in the flood plains, follow the tracks of elephants through the forest and enjoy all the other wonders of the bush and plains like the herds of roan and sable antelope.

For the explorer - Kilimanjaro National Park.

Finally, there is a national park where the main attraction needs no real introduction. Keen adventurers and explorers are sure to have a fantastic time riding through the plains at any of the aforementioned destinations but there is nothing quite like the prospect of climbing to the summit of one of the most famous mountains in the world. It may be one of the easiest mountains to climb, when compared to enormous, treacherous peaks like Everest, but it must be remembered that 40% of climbers return before reaching the top. Whether you reach the top and get to survey the vast Tanzanian landscape below you or marvel at the snowy peak from the base, it will still prove to be a breathtaking experience.

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