

## RANDALL BALL

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## MASAI MARA BIG CAT PHOTO SAFARI

Photo Safari Tour Information Packet  
Tour Dates: Oct 15 - 23, 2021



Welcome to the October 2021 Masai Mara Big Cat Photo Safari! This packet contains important information that will help you prepare for our adventure. Please take some time to carefully review it. Please note that this itinerary is our general plan but is subject to change without notice due to weather, logistical considerations or other reasons. Below is my contact info. If you don't have the WhatsApp downloaded on your phone, please do so as it is very useful with communication overseas. You can make free phone calls over WiFi and we can set up group texts as well. Don't hesitate to contact me via phone, text, email or WhatsApp if you have any questions about the workshop:

Randall Ball  
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### OVERVIEW

## ITINERARY

### Oct 15th - Arrival in Nairobi

On arrival at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport you are met and transferred to Tamarind Tree Hotel in Nairobi. Overnight at Tamarind Tree Hotel.

### Oct 16th - Air Transfer to Sentinel Mara Tented Camp and first game drive

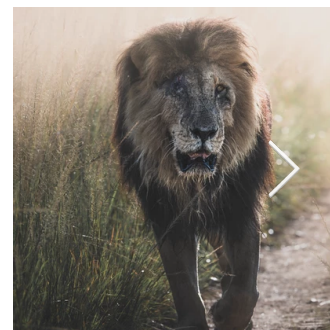
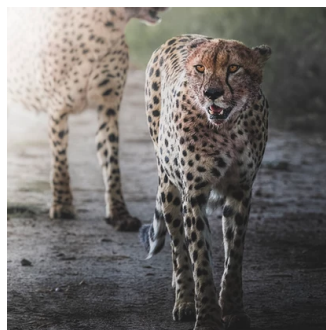
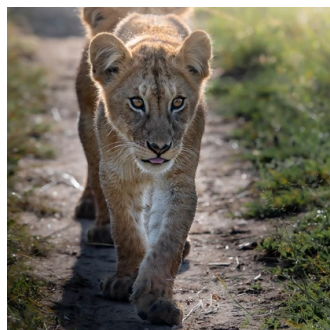
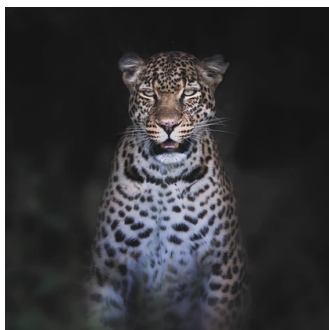
We will meet for breakfast and then be transferred to Wilson Airport (Nairobi's domestic airport). From there it is a one-hour flight to Mara Musiara Airstrip in the middle of the Masai Mara. Your adventure starts as soon as you land, so have your camera ready because you will encounter plenty of wildlife during the drive to camp. Lunch will be served on arrival in camp, followed by your first outing in the private game drive vehicle that will take you to all corners of this vast wilderness during the coming week. Dinner that night will be in camp, under a million stars.

### Oct 17th through Oct 22nd - Photographic Game Drives

Your days will be spent exploring Masai Mara's vast open plains and forested river banks, with the help of a highly skilled and experienced Masai guide and driver. Professional photographer Randall Ball will be on hand to provide photographic tuition and assistance, and there will be ample time to learn from his vast experience. To take advantage of the light and the best possible photo opportunities, each day starts before sunrise and ends after sunset. With over 100 mammal species and 570 bird species, the photo opportunities are endless. Your group will have option of packed breakfast and lunch, which will be enjoyed out on the savannah or return to camp for midday for lunch and image review, then back on game drive for afternoon. Back at the camp in the evenings you will enjoy cold drinks at the campfire while discussing that day's photographic adventures, before a wholesome dinner in the dining tent.

### Oct 23rd - Last Game Drive and Departure

Your group will again start the day early, as you search for your last special encounters in the best morning light. After another amazing morning you will return to camp for lunch, followed by a leisurely game drive transfer to airstrip in the park, for your 15h45 flight back to Nairobi. On arrival transportation will meet you at Wilson airport and transfer you to JKIA for your outbound flight. Should you wish to stay in Nairobi that night, please let us know and we will arrange alternative transfer arrangements.



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## OPTIONAL AMBOSELI EXTENTION ITINERARY

### Oct 23rd - Transfer to Amboseli

We will depart Sentinel Mara Camp and fly back to Wilson Airport and catch a transfer flight to Amboseli and be transferred to Kibo Safari Camp for our next three nights. We will try to get in an afternoon game drive once checked in.

### Oct 24th through Oct 25th - Photographic Game Drives

Your days will be spent exploring Amboseli's incredible views of Mt Kilimanjaro just across the border of Tanzania and its majestic herds of elephants, with the help of a highly skilled and experienced Masai guide and driver. Apart from guaranteed elephant sightings, you'll also see wildebeest and zebras, and you've a reasonable chance of spotting lions, cheetahs and hyenas. Professional photographer Randall Ball will be on hand to provide photographic tuition and assistance, and there will be ample time to learn from his vast experience. To take advantage of the light and the best possible photo opportunities, each day starts before sunrise and ends after sunset.

### Oct 26th - Last Game Drive and Departure

Your group will again start the day early, as you search for your last special encounters in the best morning light. After another amazing morning you will return to camp for lunch, followed by a leisurely game drive transfer to airstrip in the park, for your flight back to Nairobi. On arrival transportation will meet you at Wilson airport and transfer you to JKIA for your outbound flight. Should you wish to stay in NBO that night, please let us know and we will arrange alternative transfer arrangements.



## **IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

### **HEALTH & SAFETY**

**COVID Considerations** – Negative PCR COVID Tests are mandatory before entry into Kenya. **All airline passengers from the United States ages two years and older must provide a negative COVID-19 PCR viral test taken within 72 hours of travel.**

We highly encourage getting vaccinated before the trip as a safeguard against coming down with symptoms in the wilderness and as a courtesy to your fellow travelers. We will need to get COVID-19 PCR tests before departing Kenya as well. These will be arranged by Kibo Safari Camp and will be an additional charge based on testing facility. In regards to masks, Kenya still requires masks in all public places especially in Nairobi. At the safari camp and in game vehicle the requirements are not as stringent and it is typically up to the individual.

### **YELLOW FEVER VACCINE**

For your protection, vaccination is recommended for all travellers 9 months of age and older since part of this country is in the Yellow Fever endemic zone. Vaccination is also recommended if going on a safari.

### **MALARIA**

CDC recommends that travelers going to certain areas of Kenya take prescription medicine to prevent malaria. Depending on the medicine you take, you will need to start taking this medicine multiple days before your trip, as well as during and after your trip. You should consult with your doctor on the best advice regarding malaria medication.

### **KENYA VISA's**

All US residents require a VISA to enter Kenya. Single Entry VISA's are \$50 USD and you can apply online at <https://evisa.go.ke/single-entry-visa.html>. I personally would wait until September before applying. It usually only takes a day or two to receive them.

### **GRATUITIES**

Tips and gratuities are not included. You may tip at your discretion in either Kenyan Shilling or USD (recommended 10 USD per guest/day to the Masai guide and 5 USD per guest/day to the camp staff). In my own experience, I generally bring a couple of envelopes and place the tips in them along with a note of gratitude for the guides and the camp staff. As a note, there is an ATM at the airport that you can get Kenyan Shillings that I recommend using for both safety and convenience. There are no ATM's available at the safari camps.

### **TRANSFERS**

All transfers are included in the tour. You will be met at the airport by our representative and transferred to the hotel. We will meet in the lobby (I will email the times later) for breakfast and then depart to Wilson Airport for our flight to Sentinel Mara Camp. After the tour you will be transferred to either Jomo Kenyatta Airport (NBO) for your international flight or to a hotel if requested.

### **DAYROOM OR ADDITIONAL STAY IN HOTEL**

If your international flight is later in the evening and you would like a dayroom to relax before your flight or if you would like to stay over in Nairobi, please let us know and one will be arranged for an additional fee.

### **PACKING SUGGESTIONS**

#### **PLASTIC BAG BAN**

Kenya has a plastic bag ban, **DO NOT BRING** any plastic bags with you such as grocery bags, ziplock bags, etc. You may bring the small plastic makeup/toiletry bags that zip up/ziplock.

#### **CLOTHING**

Here are my suggestions, bring neutral colored clothing, (khaki, olive, green, brown). The weather will be lows of mid 40s and highs of 75-80F. It is a little chilly on the morning game drives and late evenings. There are laundry services at camp.

2-3 pairs pants. Also those zip off pants/shorts are perfect.

1-2 pairs shorts/skirts

2-3 long sleeve shirts (Columbia fishing shirts with the roll up sleeves are perfect)

2-3 t-shirts

Underwear and socks

Sports bra for women (Some roads are very well maintained and can be rough)

Fleece or jacket, preferably like a Goretex (may get some rain)

Insulated vest (for layering)

Sneakers/hiking boots/shower shoes

Wide Brim Boonie Hat/ baseball cap

Sunglasses (with a leash or retainer)

Smart phone with retainer leash (see Amazon.com for phone leash options)

Lip balm, sunscreen

Mosquito lotion w/ DEET

Toiletries

Any medications

Bandana or buff

Small scarf/towel for covering camera while on drives, helps with keeping dust off. Shower caps also work.

Headlamp

Use a soft sided duffle bag, they pack better on the commuter planes. Hard sided luggage not recommended

Note: There is a weight limit on the Safairlink flights of 15kg, we do arrange for a freight seat to help with the camera equipment weight. Please pack as light as possible.

### **CAMERA EQUIPMENT SUGGESTIONS**

Digital or Mirrorless Camera (2 bodies is preferable, but not mandatory)

Telephoto lenses (ideally covering 24-70mm, 70-200mm, and 200-400mm range)

Lens cleaning equipment

Lens filters: UV Haze, Polarizer

Extra batteries

Battery charger (charging available in camp and on vehicle)

Plug adaptor for your plug to UK standard

Memory cards (bring extra)

Camera bag

Organization bags (to protect equipment from dust) Note plastic bags are banned in Kenya so use a cloth alternative!

Beanbag (to provide stability for your camera, bring empty and lodge will fill with rice or beans)

A laptop or portable hard drive to back up images.

Power strip for charging multiple items

Power bank for phones

Cables/cords/chargers for all your electronics...check and double check you have all you need!

Please check out my blog about [Essential Camera Packing List for African Safari](#)

### **TRAVEL INSURANCE**

We encourage participants to purchase travelers insurance through an agency like [TravelGuard](#) or [World Nomads](#) that will refund your deposit and payments should you have to cancel your trip.

### **PHOTOGRAPHY SHOOTING TIPS**

Please check out my blog for some useful tips on wildlife photography. We will be covering a lot of these tips while out on game drive so if you would like to get a preview, please give a read.

[How to Spice Up Your Wildlife Photography, Part 1](#)

[How to Spice Up Your Wildlife Photography, Part 2](#)

### **Terms and Conditions**

### **SENTINEL MARA CAMP**





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