

A Portrait of Kenya

Country(ies): Kenya

Tour type: City Break

Transport: 4x4 jeep & flights

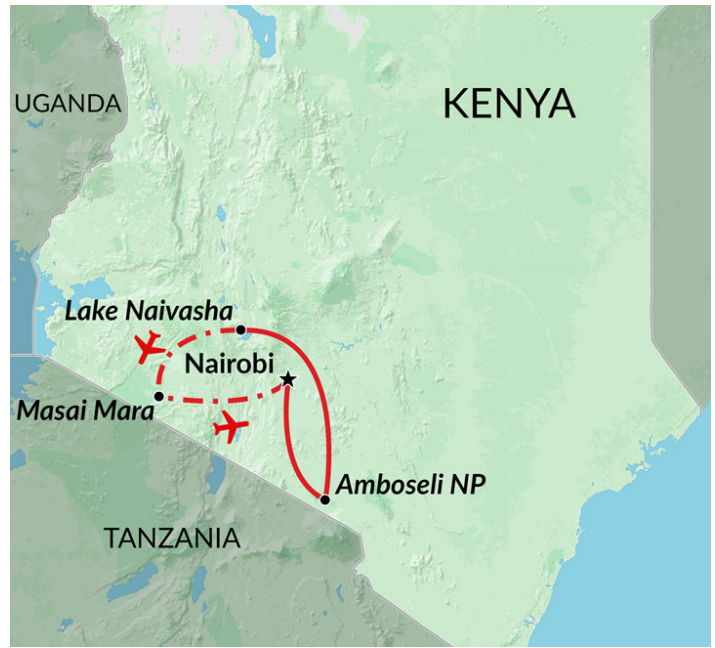
Group size: Min: 5 | Max: 10

Days: 8 days

Start Location: Nairobi, Kenya

End Location: Nairobi, Kenya

Meals: Breakfasts - 7, Lunches - 6, Dinners - 6



Highlights:

Africa's Big 5 (elephant, rhino, lion, leopard, buffalo) and other wildlife at Amboseli NP and the Masai Mara, amazing birdlife at Lake Naivasha, Masai village tour, tea plantation visit, photography workshops with Me Ra Koh

Itinerary

Day 0: Fly to Kenya

Due to the distance and possible time-zone changes, most flights to Kenya will involve an overnight en-route. You should plan to arrive in Nairobi International Airport (NBO) in Kenya anytime on Day 1. We are happy to book flights for you, or you are welcome to make your own arrangements.

OVERNIGHT: N/A

MEALS: None

EXTRAS:

Day 1: Arrive in Nairobi. Transfer to hotel

On arrival in Nairobi airport, we meet you and transfer you to the Ole Sereni 4-star hotel which is conveniently located on the edge of the city, relatively close to the airport. The hotel sits on the edge of Nairobi National Park, though you should not expect the same kind of wildlife viewing from here that you'll experience later in the tour. Yet, magic is still possible even this close to the airport. Welcome to Kenya! After arriving and checking in, the rest of the day is free to settle in, unwind from the long flight, and relax before we meet for our first group dinner!

OVERNIGHT: Nairobi hotel

MEALS: None

EXTRAS:

Day 2: Amboseli Safari

Right off the bat, Brian and Me Ra will begin teaching photographic skills that you'll practice all week. We leave Nairobi after breakfast and drive in comfortable 7-seater safari vehicles to Amboseli, crossing the Athi plains which are home to the Masai tribes. The journey takes up to 4 hours through rural Kenyan countryside on mainly good smooth roads. Have your camera ready to capture a different world so unlike our own.

On arrival at the lodge in Amboseli we have lunch and time for a photography briefing session with Me Ra and Brian before we head out on our first game safari. We'll head out in the afternoon when it has cooled a little, the light is better, and the animals are more active.

Please note: Every game expedition is planned around the cooler parts of the day, animal activity and ideal light. This means early morning starts, lazy lunchtimes, and relaxed evenings after an afternoon safari finishing at sunset. Get ready!

OVERNIGHT: Amboseli safari lodge

MEALS: Breakfast,Lunch,Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 3: Amboseli safari & Masai village

We have the first of our early safari starts this morning and during the drive we'll break for a picnic breakfast on Observation Hill. (Think "Out of Africa". And if you want to wear Meryl Streep's iconic hat, no one will judge. In fact, Me Ra may join you!). Amboseli is a small, intimate park with fascinating lush water holes and swamps contrasting against flat open plains and acacia woodlands. Elephant and plains game abound as well as the big cats such as Lion, Leopard and Cheetah. With luck, views of the snow-capped peak of Mt Kilimanjaro will be clear, creating a spectacular backdrop to the peacefully grazing animals.

After our safari, we'll return to the lodge for lunch and then spend the afternoon at a Masai village where there will be opportunities for vivid, cultural photography. The Maasai women will show our group inside their mud and wattle huts, explain how they live and display some of their handicrafts. The Morani (warriors) will demonstrate Maasai dances, a simulated Lion hunt and teach the group spear throwing. This is a must when you visit Kenya. To experience the beautiful people and their culture is part of the richness gained when photographing Kenya.

OVERNIGHT: Amboseli safari lodge

MEALS: Breakfast,Lunch,Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 4: Drive to Lake Naivasha via Limuru

After breakfast, we set off back towards Nairobi to the lush coffee and tea growing areas of Limuru, situated just outside the city. We'll have lunch at the Kiambethu tea estate followed by a guided tour of the farm and factory. Me Ra and Brian will prep you with a photo exercise to enhance the visit even more. You'll step into the mind of a travel photographer being sent to Kenya for a feature piece on the tea plantations. They'll give you specific techniques and camera settings to focus on with a photo assignment to later share with the group.

Later in the afternoon, we continue into the Rift valley, passing by the dormant volcano of Mount Longonot and on to Lake Naivasha. We'll spend the night at a lodge overlooking the lake. For the brave and bold, Brian will head up one of his popular astro, night photography sessions. Learn to shoot the stars! These night sessions are always a BIG highlight on the tour.

OVERNIGHT: Lake Naivasha safari lodge

MEALS: Breakfast,Lunch,Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 5: Lake Naivasha, morning boat ride, fly to Masai Mara, game drive

We take an early morning boat trip on the lake today followed by breakfast. Lake Naivasha is one of the prime bird watching areas in East Africa, and we'll concentrate our photography on Kenya's beautiful birds this morning. Fresh water birds such as Cormorants, Heron, Storks and Ibis are predominant with large birds of prey that are easy to spot wheeling in the open skies. Also present are many smaller water birds feeding along the shores. But it is the combination of the lake, its shore vegetation, and the surrounding Acacia woodland and grasslands which makes this area so rich and varied in bird life. There is also a good chance of spotting hippo, and to use specific photo techniques to capture the classic Hippo yawn at its best.

Next, we transfer to the nearby Loldia airstrip for a morning scheduled flight to the Masai Mara, Kenya's most famous and spectacular game reserve and where we'll call home for the next three nights. After transferring to the luxury camp, we have lunch and then take an afternoon game viewing drive in the Mara Naboisho conservancy bordering the Mara reserve. We'll spend the next three nights at the Mara Ol Seki luxury tented camp on a full board basis; the tariff includes all meals and drinks (soft drinks, beers, house wines and selected spirits only). If we have a full group, we'll have exclusive use of the entire camp which will be a wonderful experience. You may never want to leave when you see the gorgeous tents we'll be staying in.

OVERNIGHT: Masai Mara tented camp

MEALS: Breakfast,Lunch,Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 6: Mara conservancy, game drives & safaris

We have two full days of game viewing in the conservancy ahead of us now. Our luxury camp is located on a private conservancy which means that visitor numbers are strictly restricted, meaning much of the time we'll be the only vehicles around. This will make photography ideal with an exceptional, first class safari experience. We'll take morning and afternoon game drives with plenty of time inbetween for relaxing, exploring the grounds with your camera, photography review/edit sessions with Me Ra and Brian. Elephant and Buffalo abound in the riverine forests, while out on the grasslands Impala and Thompson's gazelle can be seen together with their attendant predators such as lion, cheetah, hyena and jackal. Lesser known species such as topi, hartebeest, waterbuck, eland and many small mammals create a kaleidoscopic picture of wildlife.

In the evening, we'll have plenty of time for a delicious meal (the lodges here are renowned for their cuisine and hospitality) and to have a drink while we talk over the day's activities and what exciting adventures await tomorrow. Brian will also lead another night photography session after dinner, teaching techniques for time lapse of the stars. Due to the lack of light pollution, the night sky is amazing here, and Kenya's location close to the equator means that if you stay up long enough you can see both northern and southern constellations in the same night sky!

OVERNIGHT: Masai Mara tented camp

MEALS: Breakfast,Lunch,Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 7: Mara conservancy, game drives & safaris

We have another full day of exciting safaris today. As well as the game viewing by vehicle, activities can include bush walks with Masai guide and ranger, bush breakfasts, picnic lunches, evening sundowners at spectacular view points and night game drives with spotlights to see the nocturnal animals. Depending on the movement of the animals, a full day in the nearby Mara reserve may also be included. There is so much magic to experience with your camera!

In addition, if any members of the group are keen, we can arrange a visit to the local Koiyaki driver/guide training school which provides a very interesting insight into how the Conservancies benefit the Masai people and integrate them into the management of their land.

This evening over a final group meal together, we'll reflect on your photography skills and how your knowledge has developed. And be on the lookout, there may be a few, final surprises from Me Ra and Brian!

OVERNIGHT: Masai Mara tented camp

MEALS: Breakfast,Lunch,Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 8: Fly back to Nairobi, free time, transfer to airport

We'll transfer to the local airstrip this morning for the short flight back to Nairobi. On arrival, we'll transfer back to the Ole Sereni hotel where the group can relax and have lunch. We'll then transfer you back to Nairobi airport (NBO) in time for your flight home. Meals and day rooms are not included, but extra nights in the hotel may be

booked if required.

OVERNIGHT: N/A

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS:

Included:

- All accommodation in 4-star hotel, wildlife lodges & luxury tented camp
- Transport from Nairobi-Amboseli-Naivasha in comfortable 7-seat safari vehicles
- Guaranteed window seats
- Domestic flight from Naivasha to the Masai Mara, and back to Nairobi
- All meals as indicated in the itinerary
- Drinks in Masai Mara camp
- Masai village and tea plantation visits
- Wildlife safaris with professional local guides as per the itinerary
- Photography workshops

Excluded:

- International flights (available on request)
- Visa fees (online e-visa service available)
- Travel insurance (compulsory, available on request)
- Meals not indicated in the itinerary
- Drinks, snacks and other personal expenses (e.g. laundry)
- Tips for guides & drivers
- Any other items not mentioned above

Notes

Photography

This tour is designed for ALL levels of photography. Me Ra and Brian have been teaching photography workshops, photographing and filming abroad for over eight years. Their first Italy workshop in May 2015 was a huge success and we've been back to Italy and Thailand for further workshops since then. Me Ra Koh is also one of the select Sony Artisans of Imagery, inspiring both beginners and pros. They have both photographed, filmed and produced content for Disney, Travel Channel, Target and more. Whether you are a newbie who simply loves taking photos and/or video or a pro wanting to be creatively refreshed, Me Ra and Brian will take you to new levels with your camera proficiency and creativity while exploring Kenya and its amazing wildlife. If your spouse, relative or friend is not a photographer but wants to experience Greece, they are more than welcome to join us (do bear in mind though that the pace and timing of the tour will be based around the photographers in the group. Due to the nature of this tour, concentrating on wildlife safaris, discounts for non-photographers are not available).

Several photography workshop break-out sessions will be included during the tour. Each day Me Ra and Brian will discuss the upcoming itinerary and how to approach the locations and wildlife with your camera. They'll walk you through photo examples, specific shooting techniques, creative composition, lighting, editing, and the best camera settings for specific subjects (eg. close ups of elephants with Mt. Kilimanjaro in the background, catching hippos or lions mid-yawn, capturing wildlife on the run, shooting in Masai villages, and the night's sky through time lapse, etc.). There will be ample time for personal feedback and hands-on help from both Me Ra and Brian. And you'll be given a daily photo exercise for you to enjoy (not compulsory, just a fun way to enhance your

journey). Most of all, you are going to have an AMAZING adventure that will take your breath away many times over eight truly special days.

There is also built in time for relaxing and exhaling, taking in the scenery, and always freedom to skip a photography workshop or group dinner. Me Ra and Brian are always available and there to enhance your experience, but we want you to feel free to take space at any time to soak up the magic of Kenya with your journal and camera alone.

Room basis: Prices are per person based on sharing a twin/double room.

Single travellers: Single travellers may share a twin (non-smoking) room with another single traveller of the same sex, or pay an extra single room supplement to guarantee themselves a single room throughout the tour. If you are a single traveller and happy to share a room, but it ends up that a same-sex room share is not available then you do not need to pay the supplement.

Group size: Group size - min 5, max 10.

Flights: Prices shown are 'land only'. We sell the tour this way because we know we will get people wanting to travel from various different parts of the USA, and other parts of the world too. We are very happy to arrange your flights for you, and will provide a range of options for different airlines and flight times from your preferred departure airport. Alternatively you may make your own arrangements. Either way, we will be there in Nairobi airport to greet you, and transfer you back to the airport for your departure flight.

Dates: If you are flying from the USA you will almost certainly need to depart one day early as most flights to Kenya will be overnight. Your return flight will normally land back in the USA on the same day you depart Kenya. If you are booking a land only package, you should plan to arrive anytime on Day 1 and depart on Day 8 (we'd recommend aiming for early arrivals and late departures to make the most of your time). Extra nights are available in Nairobi at either end of the tour.

Airport transfers: Your airport arrival and departure transfers are included in the price of the tour. We'll be arranging several transfers through the day, so there may be a short wait to meet other group members arriving at similar times.

Tour escort: This is a fully escorted tour. Me Ra Koh and Brian Tausend will host the trip and handle all other arrangements for the tour while you are there (eg. hotel check ins, included meals, entrance fees etc.). You will also be accompanied by local driver/guides for all the journeys between locations and by specialist wildlife guides for all your game safaris.

Visas: Are required for travel to Kenya for US / Canadian / European travellers. You can obtain these in advance through [Kenya's online e-visa service](#).

Travel Insurance: Is a mandatory requirement for travel on any of our tours. This must cover medical expenses/repatriation/personal liability, though we strongly recommend you also take out cover for cancellation, lost/stolen baggage, and travel delays. Personal medical insurance is not generally suitable. We can offer a comprehensive policy to go with this tour costing USD 123 per person (however you should check the value of your photographic equipment is covered by this policy or by other insurance you may hold). More information will be provided at booking.

Booking:

These workshop tours are very popular and fill up fast so we recommend booking early.

A non-refundable deposit of USD 750 (or equivalent) is required to secure your place (plus the full cost of any international flights you may book through us). The remaining balance will be due 8 weeks before departure. Payment plans are available if you would like to pay the balance in installments.

Payments may be made by credit card (Visa/Mastercard) or international bank transfer. Full details will be provided on booking.

Options

Our tours are designed to include all that you need to enjoy a really special time in the destination you're visiting. However, we do also offer some extra options to complement the tour and add some additional sightseeing or activities, or some extra time at either end of the tour.

All accommodation based options (e.g. Single supplements, extra nights, cruise upgrades) should be booked and paid for in advance so that we can make the appropriate arrangements. Other options may either be booked and paid for in advance or while you are on the tour, though we recommend booking in advance to ensure there are no issues with availability.

Many options are priced the same throughout the year, but some may incur single or high season supplements - full details are given on the tour reservation form or on request.

No Options

1. Accommodation

This tour uses a range of hotels and deluxe tented camps. Rooms/tents are either single, twin or double bedded and en-suite. Please check the Accommodation section for more information on the normal properties used on this tour. This list is given as a guide though and hotels, lodges and camps may change from time to time to others of a similar standard.

We will contact you with your arrival hotel details normally a couple of weeks before departure.

2. Entrance Fees

The tour price includes entrance fees to all the tourist sites mentioned in the itinerary. You will need to cover the cost of entrance to any other extra sites that you may wish to visit.

3. Time

The time in Kenya is GMT plus 3 hours. Daylight saving adjustments are not observed.

4. Money

The local currency in Kenya is the Kenyan Shilling (KES). Kenya Shillings can be ordered from most major currency suppliers prior to departure or hard currency can be easily exchanged in all major cities, the currency of preference being US Dollars however Sterling and Euros are also widely accepted.

Credit cards are accepted in Kenya but aren't widely used. ATM's are available in larger cities but aren't generally widely available outside of cities. Travellers' cheques can be exchanged at banks within Nairobi but aren't generally accepted in the rest of the country (these are being slowly phased out in many countries) so instead, travellers are advised to bring sufficient hard currency.

Bank opening hours are generally Monday – Friday 0830-1400, Saturdays 0900-1200.

5. Tipping

Tipping isn't part of Kenyan culture, however there's never any harm in rounding up a bill by a few shillings if you've been particularly pleased with the services you've received. In upmarket hotels, porters will generally expect a small tip and in many restaurants a service charge of around 10% is often added.

At the end of a tour it's common to tip your tour guide/safari guide if you feel that you've received good service from them and whilst there is no set amount for this, we're often asked for recommendations. On our Kenya tours an average tip would be around \$5-\$10 per person per day, however you shouldn't feel obliged to tip any specific amount.

6. Voltage

Sockets are three rectangular pronged and 220 volts (British BS-1363). Universal adaptors are available in most airport shops if you don't have one already. If you've travelled to the UK previously and have an adaptor for here or if you are travelling from the UK then the plugs in Kenya are the same. All hotel rooms have electrical sockets where you can re-charge cameras, phones etc. Hair dryers are normally available on request from the hotel reception if not in your room already.

If you have US appliances (110 volts) you will need a voltage converter as well as a plug adapter.

7. Booking & Payment

If you would like to book a place on this tour, please complete the online reservation form on our website (via the Dates & Prices tab on the tour page). You may make a deposit or full payment online, or just hold a reservation if you prefer (full payments are due 8 weeks before departure). We will then contact you with more details about how to complete your booking. Payments may be made by debit or credit card (subject to a card processing fee), or by making a bank transfer, or posting us a cheque/bank draft. Full details will be provided in your booking confirmation email. Please [contact us](#) if you would like any more information or have any questions before making a booking.

8. Financial Security

We are a UK registered company and are committed to providing our customers with financial protection to provide peace of mind and to allow you to book with confidence.

We have therefore partnered with Trust My Travel Ltd., which provides financial protection services to over 2000 partners around the world. Funds paid to us by our customers are protected via an Insurance policy held by Trust My Travel. Each traveller and the description of services sold is declared against Trust My Travel's insurance policy directly against our financial failure. In the event of our insolvency, you will be refunded for any unfulfilled products and/or repatriation to the UK (where applicable). Please see [our website](#) or [booking conditions](#) for more information.

9. Responsible Tourism

It is impossible not to have an impact on the local environment, cultures and eco-systems when you travel. However, it is very possible to try and ensure that these impacts are as limited, or positive as possible. We are committed to ensuring that we try to leave our host countries in a better state than we found them and encourage and assist our travellers to help us with this.

The following are a few simple tips that require very little effort on your part but which will help ensure that any effect you have on the locations you visit is positive rather than negative.

- Don't prejudge: Things in different countries will almost certainly be different. That doesn't make them worse or inferior, just different.
- Communicate: Don't expect locals to speak your language. Take the trouble to learn a few words or phrases of the local language. Don't worry about sounding silly. Most locals are patient and accommodating and appreciate you making the effort to communicate in their language.
- Conserve energy: Be careful not to waste valuable resources. Use local resources sparingly. Switch off lights, air-conditioning and fans when you leave the hotel room and don't waste water. Remove superfluous packaging. Many countries have far less efficient waste disposal systems than ours. Remove packaging from newly acquired items before leaving home.
- Don't litter: No matter how untidy or dirty the country you're travelling in may look to you, avoid littering, as there is no need to add to the environment's stress. Many of the countries we visit have a tough challenge dealing with rubbish and waste. Please consider taking home as much plastic waste as you can (e.g. water bottles).
- Choose environmentally friendly products: By using environmentally friendly (bio degradable) sun creams, shampoos and detergents you can help reduce pollution.
- Respect local customs and traditions: As you are a guest in these countries, you should also comply with the local customs. If you are friendly and well mannered, the locals will reciprocate and it will only enhance your experience. It's important to follow dress and behaviour guidelines especially when visiting religious or sacred sites (your tour leader will advise you how best to do this).
- If a client commits an illegal act the client may be excluded from the tour and Encounters Travel shall cease to have responsibility to/for them. No refund will be given for any unused services.

All porters are employed and equipped following guidelines set by the International Porter Protection Group (IPPG).

10. Follow Us Online

You can stay in touch with us online by following us on Facebook and Twitter. We post updates on relevant travel news in our destination countries, special offers and discounts and other interesting travel related news and information.

www.facebook.com/encounterstravel

<https://x.com/encounterstravel> (yes, without the 'e')

11. Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is compulsory on all of our tours and needs to cover personal accident & liability, medical expenses and repatriation, travel delay & abandonment. We also strongly recommend that you take out cover against cancellation and lost/stolen baggage. Personal medical insurance does not normally provide sufficient cover and is generally not suitable for travel on our tours. You will not be able to join your tour if you have not provided us with details of your insurance or if you arrive without cover in place (no refunds will be due in this event).

Considering travel insurance for your trip? [World Nomads Travel Insurance](#) offers coverage for more than 150 adventure activities as well as emergency medical, lost luggage, trip cancellation and more.

If your tour includes car hire, or if you plan to arrange a hot air balloon flight locally or do some scuba diving during your tour, you should check the small print in your policy to make sure these are covered (these are covered in our policy). Please also check the maximum altitude that you will be reaching and that full cover including emergency evacuation is provided up to this altitude.

If you are taking expensive camera gear or other electronic equipment with you then please check the coverage and the fine print of your policy to ensure that you have sufficient cover.

IMPORTANT: We must have your travel insurance details (policy number and type of insurance) before you depart or you may not be allowed to join the tour. If you haven't told us already, please let us know the details when you can. You should take a paper copy of your insurance policy with you as you may be asked to show this at the start of the tour.

Covid-19

Before purchasing any travel insurance, please check the coverage provided for situations related to Covid-19, and for the rules about government travel advice. Your normal policy may not be suitable.

12. Before you travel

It is important when considering and preparing to travel anywhere in the world that you have a good understanding of the country you are visiting, its laws and customs, and the possible risks and situations that may occur. This includes specific risks related to your itinerary (eg. does it involve water & can you swim, are you fit enough for the activities included), as well as more general risks such as terrorism and natural disasters.

General details and links to more information about health risks, visa requirements, money, and travel insurance are given in these tour notes. We recommend that you re-read all these before your departure as well as the small print of your travel insurance policy so you know exactly what is covered and what is not.

You should take copies of your important travel documents with you and ideally also store them online securely as a backup. Make sure that you have given us your emergency contact details and told that person where and when you are travelling. Ensure you take enough money with you and that you have access to emergency funds.

Finally, you should read through and stay updated with the current [official government travel advice](#) for your destination. We are registered partners with the UK Foreign Office's ['Travel Aware' campaign](#) which provides further useful and invaluable information.

13. Reduce Plastic Waste with Water-to-Go Filter bottles

Traveling responsibly means minimizing plastic waste, but staying hydrated on the go is essential. At Encounters Travel we are committed to reducing single-use plastics, which is why we've partnered with Water-to-Go. Their portable filtration system removes over 99.9% of contaminants from any non-saltwater source, turning even questionable water sources into safe drinking water.

Given that tap water is un-safe to drink in many of the countries in which we operate, we recommend purchasing a Water-to-Go bottle prior to departure. This will help you avoid the use of single use plastic bottles and keep you hydrated on the go.

Save big! Get a huge 25% off your Water-to-Go bottle and other Water-to-Go products (such as filters, lids, and carriers). Use code **ENCOUNTERS25** at checkout (valid in the UK, USA and Canada).

How Water-to-Go Technology works:

- Their reusable, BPA free water bottles contain their own unique 3-in-1 filtration technology effectively providing clean safe drinking water from any non-salt water source around the world.
- Three different (1 traditional and 2 nano) technologies are combined in one filter cartridge to remove up to 99.9999% of microbiological contaminants in water.

The three technologies used in a Water-to-Go filter are:

- Mechanical filtration – A tiny pore size, so small contaminants can't fit through.
- Electrical – A positive charge reduces the pore size even further and attracts contaminants like a magnet, trapping them inside the filter.
- Activated Carbon – Unlike most carbon based filters, instead of using adhesives to glue the carbon particles together, (which vastly reduces the carbon's efficiency) it is contained within the membrane, helping to reduce contaminants whilst eliminating bad tastes and odours. Try filtering water from your tap at home and taste the difference!

Water-to-Go filter bottles deliver safe, healthy water worldwide

- Water-to-Go filters remove bacteria, viruses, waterborne disease, protozoa, heavy metals such as lead as well as harmful chemicals.
- Their filters remove Chlorine and Fluoride from tap water.
- The filter will eliminate harmful contaminants from the water but allow beneficial minerals such as sodium and magnesium to pass through leaving you with the healthiest water possible.
- Water-to-Go filters have been independently tested against internationally recognised standards by industry specialists including The London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (UK), BCS Laboratories (USA), Bangalore Test House (India) and IMI (China).

Use Water-to-Go products and you'll be healthier, wealthier and helping to make the world a better place!

- Depending on filter size, each Water-to-Go filter is able to replace 260 or 400 single-use plastic water bottles!
 - They ensure you have access to safe water anywhere in the world without ever having to buy environmentally damaging bottled water.
 - Their water bottles deliver safe, clean drinking water at just 5p per litre.
 - The filter membrane is biodegradable and the shrouds are recyclable.
 - The water bottles are used and approved by everyone from backpackers to commuters, gym users to expecting mums. Perfect for everyday, outdoor and travel.
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14. Private & Tailor-made Tours

While our group departures offer a fantastic way to explore with like-minded travellers, we understand that some guests prefer a more exclusive experience. Most of our group tours can be booked on a private basis, allowing you to enjoy the same expert-led routes with your own dedicated party. The primary advantage of choosing a private arrangement is the flexibility it provides; we can easily customise the itinerary to include your preferred style of accommodation or adjust the pace to suit your needs. Private tours can be run on the same start days as our group tours, or on other dates. However, some activities within our trips are restricted to particular days of the week - we will advise you on anything like this that we need to work around. Pricing will be based on the number of travellers in your party, and any customisations you may like to make.

For those seeking something truly unique, our specialist sales team is available to collaborate with you on a completely tailor-made tour, designed from the ground up to match your specific interests, accommodation level and requirements.

To request a quotation for a private or tailor-made tour, please [contact us](#).

15. Health and Vaccinations

You should ensure you are fully insured for medical emergencies including emergency evacuation and repatriation.

Recommended vaccinations and other health protection measures vary according to the country you are visiting and where you are travelling from. We recommend you contact your GP/medical practitioner or a travel clinic for current information on vaccinations needed for your destination. You should ensure that you are up to date with vaccines and boosters recommended for your normal life at home, including for example, vaccines required for occupational risk of exposure, lifestyle risks and underlying medical conditions. In addition, additional courses or boosters normally recommended for the countries in this region are:

[South Africa](#): Additional vaccinations: Hepatitis A. [Malaria map](#). Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from or having transitted through an infected area.

[Namibia](#): Additional vaccinations: Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid. [Malaria map](#). Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from an infected area.

[Botswana](#): Additional vaccinations: Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid. [Malaria map](#). Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from or having transitted or travelled through an infected area.

[Zimbabwe](#): Additional vaccinations: Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid. [Malaria map](#). Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from or having transitted through an infected area.

[Zambia](#): Additional vaccinations: Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid. [Malaria map](#). Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from or having transitted through an infected area.

[Malawi](#): Additional vaccinations: Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid. [Malaria map](#). Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from or having transitted through an infected area.

[Tanzania](#): Additional vaccinations: Diphtheria, Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid. [Malaria map](#). Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from or having transitted through an infected area.

[Kenya](#): Additional vaccinations: Diphtheria, Hepatitis A, Poliomyelitis, Tetanus, Typhoid. [Malaria map](#). Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from an infected area.

[Uganda](#): Additional vaccinations: Diphtheria, Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid, Yellow Fever. [Malaria map](#). Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from an infected area.

[Sudan](#): Additional vaccinations: Diphtheria, Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid, Yellow Fever. [Malaria map](#). Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from or having transitted through an infected area. A certificate may also be required for those departing Sudan.

[Morocco](#): Additional vaccinations: Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid. Malaria not normally present. Yellow Fever certificate not required.

[Tunisia](#): Additional vaccinations: Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid. Malaria not normally present. Yellow Fever certificate not required.

The above information can change at short notice. For up to date health information & vaccination requirements we recommend that you contact your medical practitioner or a travel clinic.

Malaria: Vaccinations are not available against Malaria, which is a disease transmitted by mosquitoes that can be very serious and sometimes fatal. You should avoid mosquito bites by covering up bare skin with clothing such as long sleeves and long trousers and applying insect repellents to exposed skin. When necessary, sleep under a mosquito net. Mosquitoes are most active during and after sunset. You should consult with your GP/medical practitioner/travel clinic about the most appropriate malaria prophylactic medication to take for the regions you are visiting.

Yellow Fever: This disease is spread by infected mosquitoes that bite during the day. A Yellow Fever Certificate of vaccination is often required as a condition of entry depending on which country you are arriving from, or that you have travelled or transited through recently (including connecting flights with stopovers of over 12 hours). You can view this US CDC information about where the virus is present and follow the links to further information detailing which countries need you to have a Yellow Fever vaccination as part of their entry requirements. Please ensure you have this certificate organised in advance and with you and to hand during the trip.

Please inform us of any pre-existing conditions such as diabetes or asthma and any prescription medicine you may be taking. We also need to know about any food allergies or physical disabilities that you may have. If you are travelling on an Overland tour or your trip includes wildlife safaris then please bear in mind that you may be travelling on bumpy roads and/or rough ground for several hours at a time. This can be very uncomfortable or painful if you have a bad back, and make such conditions worse. Please contact us if you have any concerns.

Health Declaration: As many of our Africa tours travel through very remote regions, where medical facilities are limited, we are asking all of our travellers 65 years and over who are joining one of our Africa Overland Adventures to complete the attached medical questionnaire. The information provided to Encounters Travel and our local operational partners will be held to the strictest confidence and will be used only to the extent to provide necessary emergency medical care and/or evaluate physical health and fitness for travel.

We will request this from you approximately 30 days before your trip starts, so that your GP can sign your form based on your current health conditions. Please don't submit this several months in advance, as it is important for us to know you are fit for travel just before the trip departs.

16. Passports and Visas

Passports should be valid for at least six months after your departure from the country. Please do not bring an almost full or almost expired passport. Visa arrangements are the responsibility of the traveller, and requirements are subject to change by the local authorities. Encounters Travel will not be held responsible if travellers are denied entry because they are not in possession of the relevant visas. We therefore recommend you re-check requirements with the relevant embassy/consulate around 4 weeks before travel.

You should also be in possession of a valid onward or return flight ticket, or proof of other means of transport enabling you to leave the country that your tour passes through or finishes in. In addition you should carry proof of sufficient funds to cover you during your time in the country (eg. credit card).

Should your tour be re-entering a country, please ensure that you have a multiple entry visa that allows this. Some countries have a visa on arrival service which can be more convenient and cheaper. However, for peace of mind and to speed up the border crossing process, Encounters Travel advises that you to get your visas prior to your trip if possible.

17. International Flights and Airport Transfers

International Flights: We want to give you as much flexibility as possible when it comes to booking your holiday with us. So, to take account of people living in different places and with varying travel plans, except on some Escorted Tours and package promotions, we don't include your international flights in the main tour price. We are however very happy to suggest flights to go with the tour. Please contact us with your preferred dates and departure airport and we'll give you a selection of airlines, times and fares to choose from.

The vast majority of our tours are designed such that you can arrive and depart at any time on the first and last days of the set tour itinerary, with your arrival and departure airport transfers included in the tour price. However, on our **Overland tours**, you should not arrange your onward international flights or other travel for the day the tour is due to end (unless the final day does not involve any travelling and finishes after breakfast). Similarly, many of our Overland tours depart their first port of call on the first morning, and you will therefore need to plan for any flights to arrive at least one day beforehand.

Airport Transfers:

Arrival and departure airport transfers are included on most of our Small Group, Shoestring (excluding the 5 & 6-day Garden Route tours where Airport Transfers are not included, however a pickup from a Central Cape Town location is included on day 1 of the tour) and Tailor-made tours but available as extra options on all our African Overland tours, as long as you have accommodation booked with us on that day. If you add extra accommodation before and/or after the tour that you do not book with us, then you will also need to arrange your own airport transfers.

On our **Sebatana Package**, airport transfers for arrival and departure are included, however these transfers operate on a schedule, so a short wait may be required after landing before the transfer departs to the accommodation. To coincide with the transfer departures, your arrival flight should land in Johannesburg before 11am on day 1 and depart after 6pm on day 8. If your flights arrive/depart outside of these times, we would recommend adding an additional night to your trip.

Departure Taxes: Various countries may require that you pay an Airport Departure Tax when departing on an international flight. Please note that all departure taxes must be paid in hard cash currency and US Dollars are normally the best currency to use for this. Departure taxes can vary from US\$10 - US\$60 depending on the departure point.

Flight inclusive packages: We do also sometimes advertise flight inclusive packages from selected airports. Where these are shown on our website, prices are correct at the time of quoting, but are subject to continued availability of the fare used. Prices will be reconfirmed at the time of booking, and we will also provide the flight times and airline details before tickets are issued.

Flight inclusive prices are based on the cheapest Economy ticket class available which is generally non-refundable and non-changeable unless the flight is cancelled for reasons such as Covid-19, in which case the airlines are more flexible. More flexible ticket options, as well as Premium Economy and Business Class tickets are available on request for an additional supplement. Any changes made to flight inclusive bookings will be subject to the airline rules on your ticket.

Flight CO2 Emissions:

Traveling by air is an amazing way to explore the world, but flights also contribute to carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions that impact the environment. By considering the airline's CO2 emissions when you choose your flight, you can help minimize your travel footprint.

When selecting your international flights and airline, we do therefore recommend that you try and also take into account the flight CO2 emissions. Some airlines and flight search websites (eg. Google Flights, Skyscanner) do publish this information, so you can compare between your flight options and make an informed decision. Thankfully, many airlines are working towards sustainability efforts, and choosing a greener option allows you to contribute to positive change while still enjoying your incredible adventure.

18. What to take

LUGGAGE ALLOWANCES: Most international airlines restrict you to between 20kg and 23kg per person of luggage to go in the hold of the plane. Domestic flights often have smaller allowances around 15kg. As airline rules vary we recommend that you take no more than 20kg of luggage if your tour just includes international flights, and no more than 15kg if there are any domestic flights included in your itinerary. Please ask us for details if you are unsure about luggage allowances on your tour. Any excess baggage fees will be your responsibility to cover. Most airlines allow between 5kg and 10kg for hand luggage so we suggest that you take no more than 5kg unless you have confirmed that your airline(s) will allow more than this.

OVERLAND AND SAFARI TOURS: Please keep in mind that these are adventure tours in an adventure vehicle (truck or 4x4) and luggage should not include any solid Samsonite style suitcases. On our accommodated overland tours most of our trucks have lockers for the luggage (locker sizes: 37,5 cm high, 32 cm wide, 80 cm deep). Only a soft bag will fit in these lockers. A suitcase is far more difficult to store and make secure in our vehicle and this is part of the reason we ask for a backpack or tote bag to be used as your luggage. The other reason is that you need to walk from the truck to the accommodation and often over sand or uneven terrain. Your luggage on our Overland tours is limited to ONE backpack and ONE daypack weighing no more than 20kg. As a general rule, if you cannot lift your own luggage - you've got too much stuff! Most people make the mistake of bringing too many clothes. A quick reminder - **suitcases are not suitable on our overland tours** – especially huge Samsonite-style cases! **Small** wheeled cases are OK for safari tours.

SUGGESTED PACKING LIST: Kit for all weather conditions including: • 2/3 shorts/skirts • 1 jacket/anorak • Tracksuit/pullover • 2 pairs of long pants/jeans • 2 pairs of walking shoes/boots/trainers • 1 pair of sandals • 3 or 4 T-shirts/short sleeve shirts or sundresses • 2/3 Long Sleeve Shirts • Smart casual change of clothes • Swimwear • Underwear & socks • Sun Hat – preferably that covers the back of your neck. • Raincoat • Kikoi/sarong

Your clothing should be easy to wash and dry and should preferably not need ironing. Avoid synthetics, which can be very uncomfortable in hot weather. Many people underestimate how cold Africa can be – remember that jersey/jacket! There are also nights that are warm but you must still wear clothes that cover arms and legs from mosquitoes. Take a set of casual but smart clothes for the occasional evening out in a restaurant or club. If you wear glasses (or contacts) it is also advisable to bring a spare pair.

While on wildlife safaris it is important to wear dull coloured clothing - olive, mushroom, brown, khaki, stone are ideal.

You should avoid white (stands out too much), black or blue (attracts tsetse flies), and camouflage (illegal in many countries for civilians)

Additional Items: • Towel & facecloth • Baby wipes/ Wet Wipes • Personal toiletries • Sleeping bag • Torch & enough spare batteries • Camera & spare batteries and memory cards • Water bottle. (A 2-litre Coke bottle works well...) • Penknife • Insect and Mosquito repellent • Suntan lotion, sun block & after sun lotion • Sunglasses • Watch • Biodegradable laundry detergent • Passport (plus a copy of your passport & visas) • Extra passport photos • Vaccination certificate • Money • Travel plug • Neck pillow • Small sewing kit • Plastic bags • Clothes line and pegs • Small scrubbing brush • a small padlock for your luggage locker in the truck • Small basic First Aid kit (painkillers, band aids, after-sun lotion, eye drops, anti-diarrhoea tablets etc.)

DAY PACKS: Please check the itinerary for your specific tour if you will need a little daypack. For example on our Cape Town to Vic Falls overland tour you will need a smaller bag, big enough to bring basic equipment (toiletries and clothes) for 2 nights. The daypack is for your Okavango Delta Excursion, where you cannot bring your entire luggage.

Note: Please [download an up-to-date copy](#) of these tour notes shortly before you travel as itineraries and information does change from time to time.
