



CHEESEMAN'S' ECOLOGY SAFARIS

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Mkomazi National Park Extension

Northern Tanzania's Hidden Gem

February 16 to 20, 2024



African Wild Dog
© Walt Anderson

EXTENSION OVERVIEW

Discover the exclusive Mkomazi National Park, a conservation success story and beautiful landscape that few visitors to Tanzania's Northern Safari Circuit even know about. Only 11 elephants survived in the area in the 1980s, but today a thousand or more wander through this landscape. This is a birding paradise, and you will have a chance to see wintering birds from Eurasia, as well as many beautiful resident species. The park has only two small camps, so you will have the rare privilege of wildlife viewing without hordes of competing tourists. This is wild Africa at its finest!

HIGHLIGHTS

- Explore a diverse landscape of mountains and valleys with acacia-commiphora woodlands punctuated by magnificent baobab trees.
- Observe large populations of elephant, eland, zebra, hartebeest, and buffalo, as well as healthy populations of predators like lion, leopard, and cheetah.

- Discover many arid-adapted species such as southern gerenuk, fringe-eared oryx, and lesser kudu.
- Watch for special birds, such as vulturine guineafowl, eastern yellow-billed hornbill, various sunbirds, and unusual starlings (e.g., Golden-breasted, Shelley's, and Fischer's).
- Visit repatriation programs for endangered African wild dogs and black rhinos.

TRIP OPTION: This is a post-trip extension to our Tanzania trip from February 2 to 17, 2024 (<https://cheesemans.com/trips/tanzania-feb2024>).

LEADERS: Augustine Mwangotya and local guides.

DAYS: Adds 4 days to the main trip to total 19 days, including estimated travel time.

GROUP SIZE: 12.

COST: \$4,170 double occupancy, not including airfare, singles extra. See the *Costs* section on page 5.

ACCOMMODATIONS: Permanent tent-cabins with interior bathrooms set on a hillside with dramatic views to the west.

Date	Description	Accommodation	Meals
Feb 16	Drive along the edge of the majestic Mount Kilimanjaro then south through the Pare Mountains to Mkomazi.	Mkomazi Wilderness Lodge, Mkomazi National Park	D
Feb 17	Explore Mkomazi National Park enjoying plentiful sightings of birds, herbivores, and carnivores.		B, L, D
Feb 18	Savor another full day in Mkomazi National Park; in addition to more wildlife viewing, visit breeding and repatriation programs for endangered black rhinos and African wild dogs.		B, L, D
Feb 19	Spend a final morning in Mkomazi soaking in the unspoiled beauty of a landscape few people see; drive back to near Kilimanjaro Airport to relax before you continue on our Mountain Gorilla extension or catch flights home.	Kia Lodge, Arusha (dayroom)	B, L
Feb 20	Arrive home.		

OPTIONS

- After the Mkomazi extension, continue your journey on our Mountain Gorillas extension (https://www.dropbox.com/s/exfo1q53adp38bg/Rwanda_updatedApr2023.pdf?dl=0). Trek the forests of the Virunga Mountains to encounter Rwanda's gentle giant, the mountain gorilla.

LEADERS

Augustine Mwangotya

Augustine, founder and owner of our local safari operator, studied at Tanzania's College of Wildlife Management and served with the Tanzania Wildlife Department, developing an invaluable set of connections and knowledge. He received his master's in Conservation Biology and Ecotourism from Prescott College in Arizona. Augustine's warmth and humor, intimate knowledge of animal behavior, friendships with indigenous people, and command of logistical details have given him a well-deserved reputation in the safari field.



David Mshana

David has been a popular safari guide for over 25 years. He has an uncanny ability to spot leopards and other wildlife even while driving with consummate skill. His flexibility, kindness, and charm complement his spotting talents, and he is adept at getting the vehicle into position for the best possible wildlife photos. David has earned certificates in Tour Guiding and Leadership, and he is passionate about continuing to learn and grow as a guide. When not guiding, he takes care of his farm and family on the slopes of Mt. Meru.

Emanuel Lema

Lema grew up at the base of Mt. Kilimanjaro where his observations of guides taking visitors up the mountain inspired him to pursue a career in ecotourism. He exudes charisma and positive energy, and he shares his encyclopedic knowledge of birds and mammals with grace and humility. His birding skills, including recognition of vocalizations, are top-notch. He has over 17 years of experience guiding wildlife, natural history, and birding tours throughout Tanzania and is delighted to again be working for Cheesemans'.



DETAILED ITINERARY

Feb 16 ~ Drive to Mkomazi

After lunch in Arusha, enjoy the changing scenery as you proceed east to Moshi at the foot of majestic Mt. Kilimanjaro, then southeast to the Pare Mountains and the entrance to Mkomazi National Park on the border with Kenya. You will enjoy vervet monkeys and colorful birds at the park entrance, then observe birds and mammals in the lush landscape. Settle in at Mkomazi Wilderness Lodge to savor the sunset and enjoy some bush luxury and a friendly staff.

Feb 17 ~ Explore Mkomazi National Park

Near your camp is Dindera Dam, which creates an oasis that attracts thirsty wildlife, especially in the dry season. You may see elephants, giraffes, eland, zebra, kongoni, and other herbivores, as well as some of the carnivores looking for a meal. The lake also hosts storks, waterfowl, shorebirds, and much more. A bush breakfast near the lake will provide exciting wildlife-observation opportunities and delicious sustenance. You will discover endemic bird species here that you would not have found elsewhere in your Tanzania travels.

Feb 18 ~ More exploration of Mkomazi National Park

Today will involve a leisurely game drive through the park to visit a center where captive breeding programs and releases have had remarkable success in restoration efforts for endangered black rhinos and African wild dogs. This is a special opportunity to see conservation in action, and the site is a great place to see hyraxes, yellow baboons, colorful lizards, and flashy birds. The park also hosts the elegant fringe-eared oryx, the spiral-horned lesser kudu, the shy red duiker, and the bizarre long-necked gerenuk, whose Swahili name, swala twiga, means "giraffe-antelope." In the evening, you will share highlights of your adventures and toast your incomparable driver-guides.



Black Rhino
© Walt Anderson

Feb 19 ~ Morning in the park and drive back to Kilimanjaro area

Your final morning will have another memorable game drive looking for any of the special animals you may have missed. Previous guests have rated this park visit as one of the most memorable of their safari experiences, and considering that you go to Ngorongoro Crater and the Serengeti, both World Heritage Sites, that is high praise indeed. You'll drive back through Moshi to the Kia Lodge for relaxation, optional birding on your own, and preparation for departure at nearby Kilimanjaro International Airport.

Feb 20 ~ Continue on our Mountain Gorillas extension

(https://www.dropbox.com/s/exfo1q53adp38bg/Rwanda_updatedApr2023.pdf?dl=0) or arrive home

COSTS (ALL COSTS ARE IN US DOLLARS)

Cost

Type	Cost per Person
Trip Cost, double occupancy	\$4,170
Single Supplement	\$615

Costs are per person, double occupancy, not including airfare, singles extra. See *Included* and *Not Included* sections for more details.

If you are a single traveler, we will try to find a roommate for you, but if we cannot pair you with a roommate, we may charge you a single supplement. Single rooms cost extra and are subject to availability.

Payment Schedule

Payment is due with your main trip's final payment; see its trip itinerary for details at <https://cheesemans.com/trips/tanzania-feb2024>.

Cancellations

Cancellations are non-transferrable. No refunds are given after the Final Payment due date.

Included

- Carbon offsets for the duration of this trip.
- All leaders, park entry fees, and permits for all activities unless described as optional.
- Fees for visiting endangered African wild dog and black rhino repatriation programs.
- Accommodations for the nights of February 16 through February 18 and a dayroom on February 19.
- Meals from dinner on February 16 through lunch on February 19.
- Mineral water during game drives.
- Coffee and tea during meals.
- Transfers via complimentary hotel airport shuttle from Kia Lodge to the Kilimanjaro International Airport, regardless of departure day.
- Trip Planning Materials – information about flights, packing, entry and departure requirements, airport transfers, gratuities, etc.
- Short-term AMREF Flying Doctor medical emergency evacuation insurance. This does not include hospital or treatment costs. For more information see www.cheesemans.com/travel-insurance.

Not Included

- Carbon offsets for your flights to/from this trip.
- All airfare, airport and departure taxes, and excess baggage fees. Round-trip airfare is approximately \$870 to \$1,800 between the US and Kilimanjaro, Tanzania.
- Passport and visa fees.
- COVID tests.
- Gratuities – tipping is always discretionary. However, we suggest budgeting about \$25 to \$30 per participant per day for 3 days with our leaders (about \$75 to \$90 total per participant).
- Trip cancellation insurance. For more information see www.cheesemans.com/travel-insurance.
- Items of a personal nature such as laundry, telephone calls, medical costs or hospitalization, room service, alcoholic and other beverages, items not on the regular menu, etc. If you have special dietary needs, please indicate them on your Reservation Form.

SIGN UP

Please contact us first to check availability, reserve your space, and obtain a Reservation Form. To confirm your reservation, we require a deposit and signed form from each participant.

Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris

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OTHER DETAILS

Climate

Temperatures generally range from around 65°F at night to 92°F during the day (18 to 33°C), but the temperature depends on the elevation. Although most days will be warm to hot, it can be cool and breezy in the Land Cruisers early in the morning and in the late afternoon. This is the dry season between the “short rains” of November/December and the “long rains” of mid-March through mid-June, but rain is still possible.

Fitness Level

Most days consist of early mornings, game drives on bumpy roads, and long hours in nature that require good energy levels. Walking is limited, mostly around the camp and at the wild dog center. The drive to and from Mkomazi is about three hours, though you will have a rest break. Please contact us if you have any health concerns that may make this trip challenging.

Flights

Airfare is not included in trip costs. Detailed logistical information is included in the Trip Materials we will send you. Please let us know if you are arriving earlier or staying later as we are happy to assist you with any extra overnights that you might want to arrange.

Flights you (or a travel agent) book: Arrive at Kilimanjaro International Airport (JRO) near Arusha, Tanzania, by 11:59pm on February 3. Depart from Kilimanjaro International Airport (JRO) after 9:30pm on February 19.

If you are continuing on our Mountain Gorillas extension

(https://www.dropbox.com/s/exfo1q53adp38bg/Rwanda_updatedApr2023.pdf?dl=0), see the *Flights* section in its itinerary for departure information.

Terms and Conditions

Read our current Terms and Conditions at <https://cheesemans.com/terms-and-conditions>.

Conservation

Our company ethos has always regarded conservation as inseparable from responsible tourism. We struggle with the dilemma that traveling worldwide expends climate-changing carbon. However, we wholeheartedly believe that traveling with us will cultivate your passion for conserving our beautiful world while stimulating each destination’s local economy. We encourage you to explore the various ways in which Cheesemans’ operates within this context:

- **Ecotourism and Conservation for Tanzania** (<https://cheesemans.com/ecotourism-and-conservation-in-tanzania>).
- **Cheesemans’ Trips are Carbon Neutral:** As of June 1, 2022, our trips are carbon neutral (<https://cheesemans.com/carbon-neutral>).
- **Offsetting your Travel to/from our Trip:** We ask you to pledge to offset the carbon emissions for your travel to and from our trips. You can purchase offsets with most airlines (Delta includes them automatically), use our handy carbon calculator (<https://cheesemans.com/carbon-calculator>) and donate to Sustainable Travel International, or contribute to your favorite offsetting organization.