TOUR CODE

70A

ADVENTURESABROAD

KENYA & TANZANIA FAMILY SAFARI

12 days

Updated 29/04/2013

Day 1 *Arrive in Nairobi*

Today we arrive in Nairobi, the capital of Kenya.

Part of Maasai land when the British arrived, this modern capital grew with the development of the railway. Derived from a Maasai word meaning "Cold Water," Nairobi is a pleasant mix of colonial British with modern and traditional African influences.

Overnight in Nairobi. Meal plan: Dinner, if required.

Day 2 *Nairobi - Great Rift Valley - Lake Nakuru National Park*

After breakfast we travel to Lake Nakuru, a shallow soda lake in the Rift Valley.

The Rift Valley was created millions of years ago, under the strain of enormous volcanic eruptions which resulted in a giant split in the earth's surface from Syria to Mozambique. Lava flowed into the valley, forming escarpments on either side of the gigantic trough, which can be up to 80 km (50 miles) wide, big enough to be visible from outer space. At the lake, depending on the water levels, we may have the opportunity to see up to two million flamingos, in addition to the over 340 species of birds that have been recorded in the Rift Valley! Lake Nakuru is very shallow and can fluctuate up to five metres (12 feet) each day. When the water is low you can see a white band of crystallized soda along the shoreline. This is also one of the best places in Kenya to view the rare White Rhino as we explore the park on our afternoon game drive.

Overnight in Lake Nakuru National Park. Sarova Lion Hill Camp Lodge or similar. Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 3 *Lake Nakuru - Maasai Mara National Reserve*

Early this morning we depart from Lake Nakuru National Park and continue our journey through the Rift Valley, passing by Lake Naivasha and nearby Mount Longonot, a relatively young volcanic reminder of the Rift's violent past. We arrive at our lodge (via bad road) in the Maasai Mara National Reserve in time for lunch.

The Maasai Mara is a natural extension of the Serengeti eco-system and has an amazing concentration of wildlife. The largest population of lions in Kenya is found here, along with large herds of plains game. The Maasai Mara may also be the best place in Kenya to view cheetah. Later this afternoon we enjoy another game drive.

Overnight in the Maasai Mara. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 4 *Maasai Mara National Reserve*

The Maasai Mara National Reserve consists of rolling grassland and is located at the northern end of the Serengeti Plain. Considered the best of Kenya's parks, it is on the pathway of the yearly wildebeest migration, which comes north from Tanzania about the end of June and returns to Tanzania around the end of September. "The Mara" sustains all of the "Big Five" -- lion, elephant, leopard, rhinoceros and buffalo -- as well as an astonishing wealth of herding animals and other wildlife. You can see the stately Maasai men and youth along the road tending their cattle and goats.

In the Mara you will have an optional opportunity to ascend over the northern Serengeti at daybreak in a hot air balloon (optional expense). From over 300 m (984 feet) above, you will be able to view the vast land and the myriad animals that inhabit the Maasai Mara. During our stay in the Mara we enjoy a full day game drive in Africa's most famous game park.

Overnight in the Maasai Mara National Reserve. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 5 *Maasai Mara - Giraffe Manor - Nairobi*

After breakfast, we depart for Nairobi. En route, just outside the capital, we visit Giraffe Manor. In 1974 Jock Leslie-Melville, grandson of a Scottish earl, and his wife Betty, who also founded the African Fund for Endangered Wildlife (AFEW), bought the manor. They then moved five babies of the highly endangered Rothschild giraffe to their property where they have been successfully reared and they now have their own babies. Visitors can feed and photograph the giraffes and warthogs at the manor, and also wander through the adjoining primeval forest to view bushbuck, dik dik, and more than 180 species of bird.

Overnight in Nairobi. Nairobi Hilton or similar. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 6 *Nairobi - Amboseli National Park*

Today we travel south from Nairobi to the Amboseli National Park. Just across the border from Tanzania, this park is situated on the African plain at the foot of snow-capped Mount Kilimanjaro, the continent's tallest mountain at 5894 m (19,300 feet). Here the cone-shaped mountain seems to hover majestically over the shimmering African plains.

The Amboseli National Park is also famous for its large herds of elephants. Here they cover themselves in red dust, giving them an even more imposing appearance. On this afternoon's game drive we hope to view animals grazing on the open plain with Mt Kilimanjaro providing the classic backdrop (weather permitting).

Overnight in the Amboseli National Park. Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 7 *Amboseli, Kenya - Ngorongoro Highlands, Tanzania*

This morning we depart Amboseli, retracing yesterday's route a bit before crossing into Tanzania. Further on we pass through Arusha, the starting point for the northern safari routes of Tanzania and one of the country's most attractive towns. The surrounding area is primarily a highland forest park and a good place to see black and white colobus monkeys and bushbuck.

We continue to the Maasai Plains via the town of Mto wa Mbu ("Mosquito Junction") near Lake Manyara, another Rift Valley lake renowned for its unique rainforest micro climate. Our destination is E Unoto Lodge, luxury safari accommodation in a Maasai-inspired environment. E Unoto Retreat resembles an authentic Tanzanian Maasai village and has been designed to blend with the natural surroundings. The lodge was also constructed incorporating traditional

Maasai methods and with environmental awareness. The handcrafted and imported furnishings and fittings compliment the lodge's theme and provide guests with an exotic Tanzanian flavour.

On arrival, after lunch, guests can visit a nearby Maasai boma, or village, meet the locals and learn about the Maasai culture and way of life. The Maasai are a nomadic people of the plains who are in constant search for adequate grazing ground for their large herds of cattle and other livestock. When two Maasai meet, the first greeting they exchange is Keserian ingra? Keserian ingishu? (How are your wife and children? How are your cattle?). To have one without the other is to be poor. To have both is to be rich! Other activities include cycling or hiking to an attractive nearby waterfall. The lodge also has a great pool.

Overnight at E Unoto Lodge. Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 8 *Ngorongoro Highlands - Olduvai Gorge - Serengeti National Park*

This morning we depart E Unoto and transit the Ngorongoro Conservation en route to the Serengeti. We make a stop at Olduvai Gorge, site of the Leakey excavations in the 1960s and 1970s that established this region as the prehistoric habitat of some of the earliest species of hominids, with some finds dating back 1.8 million years. Pundits in the life sciences have argued that the Olduvai contribution to the story of human origins remains unsurpassed by any other prehistoric site in the world. A small museum on site outlines the unique geological and human history of the area.

We continue across the seemingly endless plains. Indeed the name "Serengeti" derives from a Maasai word meaning "Land-without-end." This is a land of superlatives, both in the vast landscape that surrounds you and the incredible biodiversity it supports. It is here that you have a chance to witness one of the most compelling natural dramas on earth--the annual migration, a sight unparalleled anywhere in the natural world. Our afternoon game drive provides an excellent introduction to this fantastic landscape and the biodiversity it supports.

Overnight in the Serengeti National Park. Serengeti Sopa Lodge or similar. Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 9 *Serengeti National Park*

Today we have a full day of game viewing on the Serengeti. We will visit the "kopjes," a series of low, incongruous hills dotting the open landscape that often provide a vantage point for hungry predators contemplating the endless stream of hoofed animals parading past them. During this time, up to 1.5 million wildebeest and a half a million zebra embark on a single-minded and perilous quest for water and grazing land. Following this spectacle, of course, are the meat-eating opportunists, hoping to capitalize on the physical toll this journey exacts on the desperate grazers.

Overnight in the Serengeti National Park. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 10 *Serengeti - Ngorongoro Conservation Area*

After an early breakfast we retrace our route to the Ngorongoro Crater, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. We take in the hypnotic view from the crater rim before descending to the crater floor to experience one of the world's most amazing places. If the Garden of Eden did indeed exist, then this is it!

The crater is the world's largest unbroken volcanic caldera, 610m deep with a floor of 260 sq km. The steep sides of the crater mean that it has become a natural enclosure for a very wide variety of wildlife, including most of the species found in East Africa. Aside from herds of zebra, gazelle and wildebeest, the crater is home to the "big five": rhinoceros, lion, leopard, elephant and buffalo. The crater plays host to almost every individual species of wildlife in East Africa,

and there are an estimated 25,000 animals within the crater. Lake Magadi in the centre of the crater is, like many in the Rift Valley, a soda lake supporting flocks of flamingo.

After our game drive we ascend the crater to our lodge, spectacularly located on the rim.

Overnight in the Ngorongoro Conservation Area. Sopa Lodge or similar. Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 11 *Ngorongoro - Gibb's Farm - Arusha*

Today we travel back to Arusha via Gibb's Farm and a leisurely lunch. Founded during German colonial times and still privately owned, Gibb's Farm is now a small hotel perched on the outer slopes of the Ngorongoro Highlands, surrounded by coffee plantations with long views over lush and beautiful agricultural country.

We arrive in Arusha in time to enjoy the lush grounds of our hotel before dinner.

Overnight near Arusha. Mountain Village Serena or similar. Meal plan: Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Day 12 *Departure*

Departure from Arusha.

SAFIRI SALAMA! Meal plan: Breakfast.