

YOUR GUIDE TO THE GREAT MIGRATION

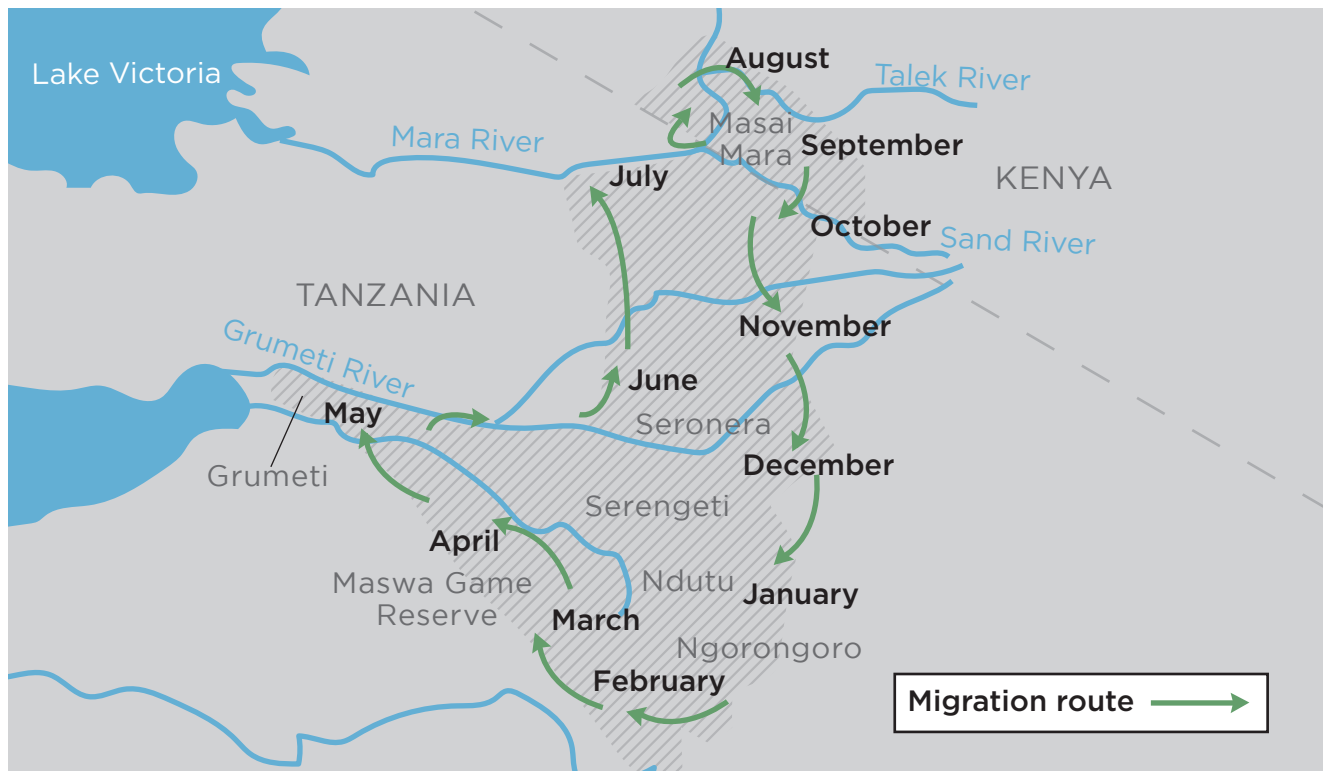
The 'Great Migration' is the world's most thrilling wildlife spectacle and a true highlight for any traveller to East Africa. Every year millions of zebra, wildebeest and other antelope follow a nine-month cycle of movement across the mighty plains of Tanzania in search of fresh grazing. Predators following the herds pick off the weak and young, with hungry crocodiles lurking in the waters waiting for the herds to cross the rivers. This is the stuff of National Geographic - be there and see it all happen!

The Journey

The migration herds travel in a clockwise direction as the trek begins in the southern part of Tanzania's Serengeti, traveling north into Kenya on a journey of over 800 kilometres. More than 1.5 million wildebeest, 400,000 zebra, 18,000 eland and 200,000 Thompson's gazelle assemble to form the world's largest overland mammal migration. Our map shows the approximate route of the annual migration.

Timing

As the migration is influenced by the pattern of rainfall, the exact timing of the trek changes from year to year. Where there is rain, there are fresh pastures to feed on! The initial phase begins during calving season, approximately January to March. Between late June and October the river crossings take place, but it is also good to know that there is wonderful wildlife viewing year-round.



TIMELINE OF THE GREAT MIGRATION

Here we take you through a month by month guide of this wonderful circle of life.



January to March

The herds are calving in the Ngorongoro and Ndutu areas, which means great visibility of wildlife in one place and the best time of year to see plenty of young animals, which is also of great interest to the thousands of predators looking for their next meal.

April to May

This is the wet season with the rains in the bush tending to be afternoon storms rather than continuous showers. Game viewing including leopard, lion and elephant sightings are excellent as is the photography. Herds break away into groups, making their way to the central Serengeti, moving towards the western corridor into the Lobo area.

June to August

In June, to get to the grassy plains of Kenya the animals must pass through the crocodile infested waters of

several rivers, notably the Grumeti in Tanzania. July and August see the herds crossing over the Sand and Mara Rivers and into Kenya. A good portion of wildlife still remains in the Serengeti year-round and crossing back and forth is not uncommon.

September to October

This is the dry season and big herds are up in the Masai Mara, it is green and pleasant and the wildebeest will be happily grazing. There is resident wildlife in the Serengeti eco-system making for fantastic game viewing.

November to December

Much of the grass of the Masai Mara has been devoured and the animal's instinct tells them to move southwards to the Serengeti, where the rains are once again beginning, so they return south through the Seronera to the Serengeti, completing the cycle.

HOW TO EXPERIENCE THE MIGRATION

The migration experience is not just limited to 4WD safaris. See our suggestions below for inspiration on how to enhance your migration experience:

4WD SAFARIS - For an immersive safari experience, go on safari by 4WD, your driver navigating diverse landscapes between safari camps and lodges. Enjoy thrilling game drives at each location with expert guides. You may be surprised at the wildlife you also spot en route!

FLY AROUND SAFARI - An incredible experience for travellers who wish to save time by flying between camps while accessing more remote destinations. The aircraft fly low across the plains giving passengers amazing opportunities to spot an abundance of wildlife from above. Game viewing from a whole new perspective!

WHERE TO STAY

MOBILE CAMPS VS PERMANENT CAMPS & LODGES

You can choose from what we call mobile camps, or permanent camps/ lodges, or a combination of the two. Mobile tented camps aim to follow the migration, so are set up in new locations as the migration progresses, allowing you the best possible chance to witness all the wildebeest action. As such, all tents are canvas so they can be taken down and moved, but you still enjoy hot bucket showers and beautiful furnishings. Permanent camps and lodges stay put, so are more akin to luxury hotels in the wild, with all the extras like air-conditioning, private plunge pools and sometimes spa facilities, and most have magical views. Here are a few of our personal favourites.



SERENGETI UNDER CANVAS (MOBILE)

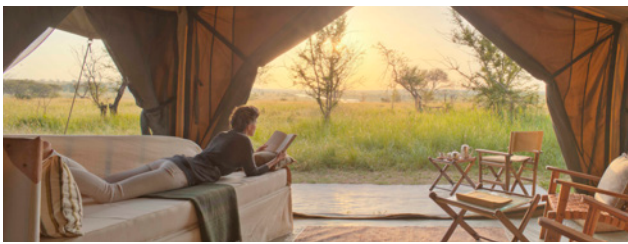
Serengeti National Park, Tanzania

This is the ultimate in luxury camping, complete with a private butler service, chandeliers, silverware, crystal, ensuite flush w.c. and comfortable beds with fluffy duvets.

BATELEUR CAMP (PERMANENT)

Masai Mara, Kenya

Perfect for viewing river crossings when migration is in the Masai Mara, namely from the end of June to October. Generally this is a good option all year round.



OLAKIRA CAMP (MOBILE)

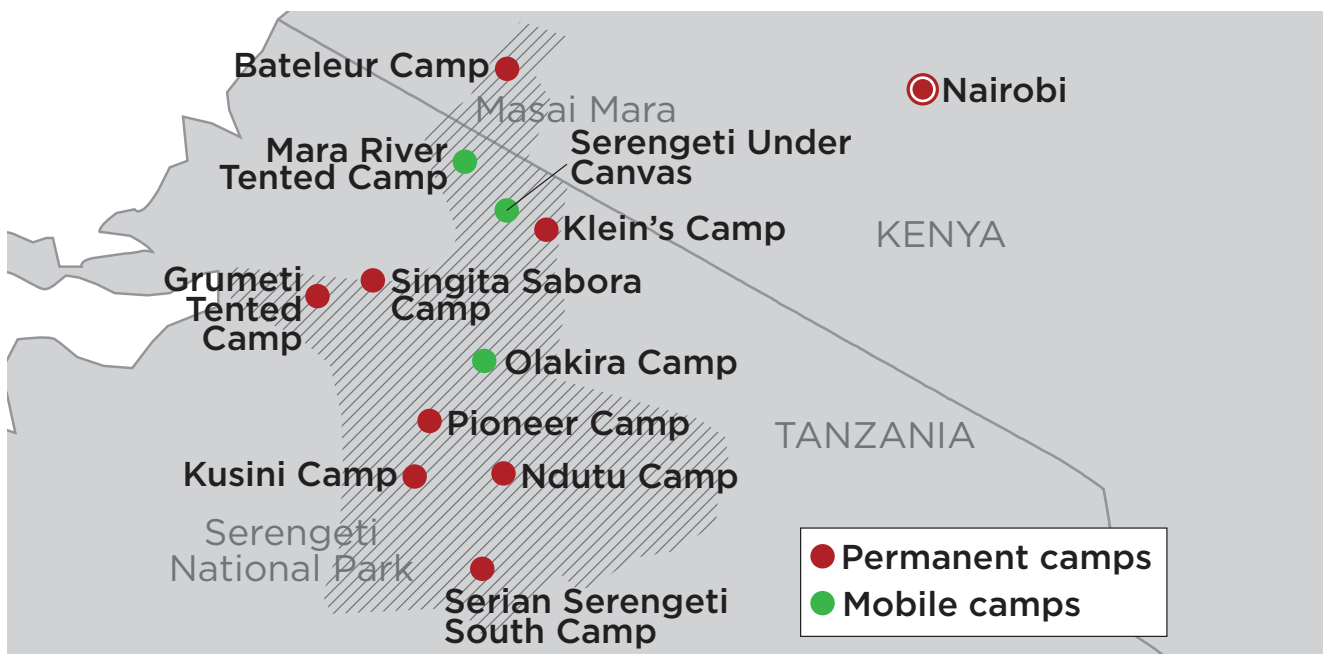
Serengeti National Park, Tanzania

See the mass summer calving on the south's grassy plain and the massive herds of wildebeest migrating to two spectacular locations in the north and south of the Serengeti National Park.

SINGITA SABORA CAMP (PERMANENT)

Tanzania

Sabora Tented Camp features nine en-suite tents beautifully furnished with a treasure trove of antiques and artefacts, and is modelled on a 1920s-style explorer's camp.



TAILOR-MADE JOURNEYS

We can tailor-make your Great Migration experience to suit you, your budget, and the time you have available. Here are a few popular itineraries to give you some inspiration:



THE GREAT MIGRATION 9 DAYS

Fall under the spell of the enchanting landscapes of Kenya and Tanzania with this tailor-made journey including the Masai Mara and the Serengeti with an adventurous night spent out in “The Nest”. Overnight in your very own treehouse as you sleep under the stars and watch the world go by. Stay in some of Kenya’s best private conservancies to enjoy exclusive safari activities and explore the Serengeti whilst staying at some of the renowned Alex Walker Serian camps. The word ‘serian’ comes from the Maasai language, meaning “serene, calm, tranquil”.

FLY AROUND EAST AFRICA 8 DAYS

This once-in-a-lifetime journey is for those who want to experience the best of Kenya and Tanzania in luxury and style. Visit the wilderness hotspots of the Masai Mara, Serengeti National Park and Ngorongoro Crater. You will enjoy the stunning contrasts of these destinations and encounter a myriad of wildlife on twice-daily game drives. Stay at our hand-picked exclusive safari camps, flying between to maximise your time on safari. You’ll be treated to exceptional cuisine and impeccable service, you may never want to leave!



INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT THE MIGRATION

- Between January and March, half a million wildebeest are born each year in the Serengeti. In February, the month with the highest calving rate, around 8,000 wildebeest are born each day.
- Wildebeest calves run two minutes after being born!
- Zebra and wildebeest graze in harmony together as they each eat different parts of the same type of grass.
- Wildebeest possess ‘swarm intelligence’ – they know to explore and overcome an obstacle as one.
- The Serengeti National Park eco-system is the oldest on the planet, boasting a diversity of plants and animals you will not find anywhere else on the globe.

CONTACT YOUR TRAVEL PROFESSIONAL