

Masai Mara ride

KENYA

Ride with the original pioneers of **horseback riding safaris** across Masailand. Journey through the open plains of Kenya on well schooled horses to see abundant wildlife and habitats off the beaten track. Stay in **mobile camps**, pitched in the most secluded and beautiful areas and perhaps witness the incredible spectacle of the wildebeest migration. A horseback safari as it should be.

Horseback Safari	 11 days / 9 days riding	 From £8,710		Open to non-riders
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ITINERARY

Highlights


- Ride with Gordie Church, an incredibly knowledgeable guide with a great understanding of the Masai people.
- Large and comfortably furnished tents with twin or double beds and imported linen
- The true essence of a traditional safari with full immersion in the wilderness
- Camps are pitched in the most secluded and beautiful areas, offering ultimate privacy and luxury
- Interact with local Masai tribes as they tend their cattle
- The possibility of witnessing the greatest wildebeest and zebra migration in the world
- Fantastic game viewing in a true Big Five area
- Non-riders are very welcome and will be taken on game drives with experienced guides

Day 1 — 1: EUROPE TO NAIROBI

Overnight flight from Europe to Nairobi. If you choose a day flight, which arrives into Nairobi in the evening then you will need to overnight in a hotel in the city before transferring to the camp the following morning. The hotel night and flights are not included in our rates but we can help with this on request.

Alternatively, you can fly overnight, departing London at c. 21:00 and arriving into Nairobi early the following morning.


Day 2 — 2: NAIROBI TO NKILENYA - 5-10 kms

 Masai Mara mobile camp

Your driver will meet you at the International airport in Nairobi and transfer you to Wilson domestic airport to catch the Air Kenya scheduled flight departing at c.10.30 and arriving at the airstrip at c.11.15. You will then be taken on a game drive to the mobile tented camp in time for a late lunch. Settle into camp before enjoying a short ride to familiarise yourself with the horses.

Overnight in the Lemek Conservancy

Day 3 — 3: PLAINS OF LEMEK - 10-15 kms

 Masai Mara mobile camp


Wake up to for your first morning in the bush. You will spend this morning and part of the afternoon exploring the riverine forests and open plains of Lemek.

There is abundance of wildlife in this region, including giraffe, warthog, zebra, hartebeest, topi, wildebeest and with some luck you might even spot a cheetah or leopard.

Overnight in the Lemek Conservancy

Please note that the itinerary may change depending on the weather and other local conditions and may run in reverse order.

Day 4 — 4: MARA NORTH - 20-25 kms


 Masai Mara mobile camp

After a hearty breakfast, ride in a northerly direction, through a little gorge and out over the Ololituroto plain, scattered with the occasional balanities tree. Exceptional views in every direction on excellent going for the horses.

Stop for a picnic lunch in the Olomai forest, siesta and a glorious ride down to the Mara river, with many large pods of hippo and the odd monster crocodile.

Overnight in the Mara North Conservancy


Day 5 — 5: MARA RIVER - 10-15 kms

 Masai Mara mobile camp

A stunning area to explore by horse or vehicle. We may ford the river and ride under the iconic Siria escarpment. The concentration of game is breathtaking and with plenty of opportunity to jump fallen trees created by the resident elephant. Waterbuck, jackal and lion occur, as do many other wildlife species.

Overnight in the Mara North Conservancy.


Day 6 — 6: MARA TRIANGLE - 20- 25 kms

 Masai Mara mobile camp

After a 'full-monty' breakfast you will ride south across the Maternity Plain. Stunning view in every direction and excellent terrain for pacey horses. Cross the Mara River on horseback and reach the famous Mara Triangle. Picnic lunch will be enjoyed in a patch of thick forest often occupied by elephants. After lunch you will enjoy another short ride before ascending on foot to the top of the escarpment.

Overnight in the Mara Triangle.


Day 7 — 7: MARA TRIANGLE AND MASAI VILLAGE VISIT - 10-15 kms

 Masai Mara mobile camp

Today you will have options to ride and drive in the triangle with magical views looking down towards the Serengeti in the distance. This corner of the ecosystem is blessed with croton thickets, forest and endless tall grasslands, the perfect environment for rhino, elephant, buffalo and lions. In the late afternoon you may visit a small traditional homestead of the local Masai hosts.

Overnight in the Mara Triangle.

Day 8 — 8: OLARE OROK STREAM - 20-25 kms

 Masai Mara mobile camp


Today you will descend the escarpment on foot and head East to hop in the saddle and ride back over the Mara river. Ride through the large village of

Rianta and onwards, to a lovely picnic lunch under scattered acacia trees.

After a lond siesta over the Koiyaki Plain you will reach your new camp on the Olare Orok Stream. The stream is used by the Masai to water their cattle.

Overnight in the Mara North Conservancy.

Day 9 — 9: MARA RIDE - 15-20 kms

 Masai Mara mobile camp

Morning and afternoon ride, drive or walk discovering this magical corner of the Mara. This area can provide a sensational big-cat experience since large prides of lion make this area their home.

After supper you may head back to the wild with the vehicle and a spotlight to discover the nocturnal creatures.

Overnight in the Mara North Conservancy.

Day 10 — 10: FINAL DAY - 10-15 kms

Your last morning ride or drive following the banks of the river, with wonderful opportunities for long canters. After a hearty brunch you say your "goodbyes" to the horses and camp crew.

The afternoon flight to Nairobi departs at 2:45 p.m. Upon arrival at approximately 4:15 p.m., you will be transferred to JKIA for your international flight home. Make sure you book a flight late in the evening to allow for your connection.

Dinner en-route to the airport is optional and payable locally.

Please note a shorter safari of 6 nights is also available, please call us for further details.

Day 11 — 11: NAIROBI TO EUROPE

Arrive back in Europe in the early morning.

DATES & PRICES			
DEPARTURE	RETURN	PRICE WITHOUT FLIGHTS	STATUS
22/06/2024	02/07/2024	£8,710	Guaranteed departure
01/08/2024	11/08/2024	£8,710	Full
20/09/2024	30/09/2024	£8,710	Full
30/09/2024	10/10/2024	£8,710	Full
14/07/2025	24/07/2025	£9,274	Open
01/08/2025	11/08/2025	£9,274	Open
19/09/2025	29/09/2025	£9,274	Open
29/09/2025	09/10/2025	£9,274	Open

Price details

- International flights to Nairobi are not included.
- Rates are per person, based on two riders sharing a twin or double tent during the ride.
- All internal air and road transfers are included, as well as local conservation fees.
- Groups are composed of a minimum of 4 riders and a maximum of 12 international riders, plus guides. A rather large small group supplement might

apply for four guests or less (please contact us).

- There is no single supplement if you are willing to share a tent with another guest of the same sex. To guarantee your own room/tent there is a single supplement of \$2500/£2000/€2295 (2024/2025)
- The above dates are set departures but it is possible to schedule additional dates for private groups - please contact us for details.

- Shorter 6 nights rides are also possible - please enquire for details

- Max. weight limit of 90 kgs. Heavier riders might be accommodated with shorter rides, game drives and walks - please contact us.

Please Note

The itinerary may be modified at anytime for security reasons, meteorological or events beyond our control such as blocked roads, rivers in flood, drought, strikes and local holidays. Equus Journeys, our local partners and their local guides will always strive to find the best solution and will alter the itinerary as needed.

The names of the hotels and accommodation are given for information only and depending on availability, they may be modified without notice and replaced by another of a similar standard.

Price includes

LOGISTICS

- 4x4 viewing vehicles with Kenya professional safari guide in each vehicle
- Full safari crew
- 1 horse equipped with saddle and bridle per rider
- Support vehicles and trucks

INLAND TRANSPORT

- Internal flights and road transfers

ACCOMMODATION

- Full board accommodation in tents

ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT

- First aid kit
- Flying Doctors' membership

EXTRAS

- Game drives
- Conservation fees

Price doesn't include

TRANSPORT

- International flights

EXTRAS

- Tips to the local team

INSURANCE

- Cancellation and travel insurance are not included in the above listed price. Please note that insurance is mandatory. We recommend taking out an insurance policy as soon as your trip is booked to cover you in case of cancellation
- Visas and personal purchase

Optional

ACCOMMODATION

- Single tent supplement
 - Hotel nights in Nairobi
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Horses

The horses are a mixture of Somali-Arab crossbreeds and thoroughbreds and range between 14hh - 17hh. They are well schooled, responsive and even-tempered. There is a wide range of horses to suit each individual and every effort is made to match horse and rider. The horses are sure footed in their terrain and comfortable in their environment.

Guide & local team

Gordie Church guides these safaris and he is a third generation Kenyan. He grew up on safari with his father Tony Church who was one of the pioneers of the long distance riding safaris in the 1970's.

Gordie along with his wife Felicia and their experienced team offer one of the friendliest yet professional safaris in Africa.

Each riding safari is personally guided by Gordie, with Felicia on hand to assist with the horses.

Minimum riding ability

MINIMUM RIDING ABILITY

You should be a competent rider, secure in the saddle at all paces with the ability to post to the trot for stretches of 10 minutes at a time and be able to gallop out of trouble. There will be opportunities for some canters across the plains when the terrain dictates. Much of the riding is at a walk due to the terrain and so that you don't startle the wildlife, but this is classed as an experienced ride due to riding with dangerous game.

The guide will assess the capability of each participant and should he feel that any rider is not competent and therefore imposes a risk to themselves and others, he will ask them to continue the safari in a vehicle rather than on horseback.

Max. weight limit of 90 kgs. Heavier riders might be accommodated with shorter rides, game drives and walks - please contact us.

PACE

Much of the riding is at a walk due to the terrain, but there are opportunities for trot, canter and some exhilarating fast gallops when the surroundings allow.

TACKING ABILITY AND PARTICIPATION

The horses are tacked and untacked for you under the professional guidance of Felicia and her team of grooms.

TRIP CONDITIONS AND REQUESTED EXPERIENCE

You will ride between 4 and 8 hours each day, covering 20 to 40 kilometres, so a good level of fitness is required. Experience of a previous riding holiday would be an advantage, but not necessary - just a great sense of adventure.

EQUESTRIAN EQUIPMENT

Horses are ridden English style using snaffle bridles and very comfortable French cavalry and English general -purpose saddles. Double-sided saddlebags are provided.

We recommend our riders to wear a helmet to the correct standard and you should bring your own to ensure a proper fit.

TRAVEL INFO

COMFORT

Camps are pitched in the most secluded and beautiful areas, offering ultimate privacy and total luxury. You will stay in spacious twin or double bedded tents, comfortably furnished with duvets and a hot water bottle to keep you warm on the cold nights. Each tent has a hot bucket shower to wash away the dust and a long drop toilet. At meal times you will find the mess tent transformed with a fully laden dinner table and the bar caters for all preferences with some great cocktail choices.

MEALS

Professional chefs provide delicious meals prepared over open fires and served by waiters. The furnished dining tent is where camp meals are served and include a variety of fresh fruit, vegetables, meats, fish and fowl. The food is locally sourced with hearty breakfasts, al fresco lunches and impressive candlelit dinners and freshly baked bread each day. There is even a safari freezer so you can have ice in your drinks! The 'bush bar' is

stocked with imported wines and spirits local beers, soft drinks and there will be cocktails!

Special dietary requirements can be catered for with advance notice and every effort is made to accommodate special requests.

CLIMATE

The climate in Kenya is fine all year round with little seasonal variation. During the day it will get hot while at night temperatures can drop quite sharply and it can feel cold. The long rains fall in April and May and the short rains in November.

TIPS

Tipping in Kenya is customary so please have some small denomination notes for the porters at the airport etc. We suggest about US\$ 225 per guest which is given to your main guide and then shared out amongst the staff. You may also wish to tip the professional safari guide who will be assisting Gordie with the game drives. Please note that all US\$ notes must be printed after 2002. Older notes are not accepted in Kenya.

PACKING LIST

NB: Please be aware that Kenya has a strict law against single use plastic bags, which have been banned since 2017. Please do not use them for any of your packing and do not bring them into the country.

Our Recommendations

- Please don't take a hard sided suitcase. Your luggage should be soft sided, particularly for light air transfers. There is usually a luggage limit of 15kgs including hand luggage.
- Wherever possible you should wear neutral colours, such as beige, brown or natural bush colours for riding as bright colours, such as red, yellow or white can startle the wildlife and they will see you long before you've seen them.
- Evenings are nice and relaxed, and long sleeves and light trousers are recommended to avoid mosquitoes!
- We recommend travelling in your riding boots and carrying your hat and some riding clothes in your hand luggage - then if your luggage goes astray you are still able to ride!
- Carry a copy of your passport and insurance details with you.

Head

- Equus Journeys strongly recommend that you wear a riding helmet and that you take your own to ensure a correct fit.
- Sunhat for when not riding
- Sunglasses - with a cord attached so they don't fly off when riding
- Buff or bandana

Upper body

- Long sleeved shirts provide protection from the sun and thorns
- T-shirts
- Fleece, jumper or jacket - the evenings can be cold
- Waterproof jacket - the rains can be difficult to foresee and it's better to be prepared.
- Casual clothes for the evening

Legs

- Lightweight, comfortable riding trousers or jodhpurs - we recommend riding in them at home before taking them on holiday to ensure they don't rub
- Shorts for lazy lunchtimes
- Casual clothes for the evening

Hands and Feet

- Comfortable riding boots. We recommend short boots with half chaps but you may wish to take long chaps to protect against thorns. We don't recommend taking your favourite long leather boots in case they get damaged
- Sandals, flip-flops or trainers for moving around the lodge and camp
- Gloves - your hands are particularly exposed to the sun whilst riding

Nightwear

Medical kit

- Sunscreen and lip balm - must be high factor
- Insect repellent, preferably containing DEET
- Any medication you regularly take

- Blister plasters in case of any rubs
- Antiseptic cream, plasters, aspirin, anti-histamine, insect-bite salve etc...
- Spare prescription glasses/contact lenses
- Anti malarial tablets and Yellow Fever Certificate if required (check with your doctor)

Other useful items

- Binoculars for viewing game
- Camera and high capacity memory card. Spare battery.
- Bumbag for carrying your camera and small items whilst riding
- Headtorch or torch for moving around camp at night

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

1. **Travel light.** It's a little known fact, but the lighter you pack, the better for the environment as heavy bags will produce higher emissions (when flying a plane or driving a car!).
2. **Reduce plastic waste.** Take your favorite reusable bottle with you. Avoid single-use bags, cups, or straws.
3. **Preserve nature.** Always take your rubbish with you during the ride and recycle them. Leave all the flowers or plants as you found them, and never get too close when observing wildlife. Make sure to use eco-friendly products such as body wash or laundry detergent (if camping) to protect both your skin and the environment.
4. **Choose your experiences carefully.** Respect animal life by not participating in any activities that abuse wild animals (shows, elephant rides, etc.).
5. **Support local populations.** Buy local handicrafts, be respectful of customs, and learn about the culture of local communities.
6. **Share!** Raise awareness among your family and friends about sustainable tourism.

For more information please [see this page](#) .