

Samuru and Lake Magadi – the Special 5, hides and flamingos (10 days, 9 nights)



This unique trip combines the gorgeous Samburu reserve in Central Kenya with the unique experience of photographing in daytime and nocturnal hides, and flamingo photography near Lake Magadi. Samburu is teeming with wildlife; and what is more, this region also houses the Special 5, elegant animal species that can only be found together in this area. With camps located along rivers, and one camp where we can also use the photography hide, we'll be continuously surrounded by wildlife. After our time in Samburu, we will take a private charter to the Olkirimatian Conservancy where we will be staying in Lentorre Lodge. Here our group can make exclusive use of the hide that is equipped for daytime as well as nocturnal photography. There are bird hides available as well. It is also possible from this location to make a helicopter flight over Lake Magadi; this comes highly recommended!

Ingrid Vekemans, your tour leader and professional nature photographer, has been travelling to Africa for more than 30 years and has lost her heart on the continent. She feels at home there and looks forward to sharing her knowledge and passion with the group.

This trip takes place in the high season for a reason. The high season is the long dry season in Kenya. Therefore, the wildlife will be more concentrated around areas where water is available and the vegetation is much less thick. For these two reasons we will be able to spot many more animals than in the low season and we can almost be assured of lots of visitors at the hide's waterhole in Lentorre.

The trip is aimed at people who love nature and wildlife, and who love photographing it (of course non-photographing partners are also welcome!). Unlike normal group tours, we will be looking especially for photographic opportunities and will take whatever time is required if the situation is interesting from a photographer's point of view. The group is small, which enables a personal approach and provides enough space in the vehicle and in the hide for the photographic equipment - we will be using 8-seater 4x4 vehicles for a maximum of four people per vehicle. Hence two vehicles will be our transport in Samburu and Ingrid will split her time evenly between them. During the helicopter flights in Lentorre Ingrid and the pilot will be giving instructions and tips through headphones.

Besides photographing together, and immediate advice and tips, there will also be dedicated feedback sessions, where a selection of photos from each participant can be discussed.

A typical day in Samburu starts early, so we can make optimal use of the first, soft morning light. This often results in the most memorable photographs. Also, this is the time of the day where most animal activity can be seen. Most days we will be taking a packed breakfast, which we can enjoy en route in a scenic area. In the late morning and early afternoon, when the temperature rises, you will be at the camp, relaxing and/or viewing photos, making a selection for the feedback session. Late afternoon we will set off again to take photos until the light disappears. (Please note that it is obviously not obligatory to participate in all game drives – often good photo opportunities exist within the camps themselves). There is time to freshen up before dinner after which you can linger to discuss the events of the day, or you may prefer the peace and quiet of your room or tent. After all, tomorrow will undoubtedly be another exciting day! In the second camp in Samburu, you can opt to spend the night and/or the early morning in the hide. In Lentorrie the schedule is very flexible: there is no limit on the use of the lodge's hides or to do whatever you want.

THIS SAFARI IS OPERATED BY



IMPORTANT FOR THIS TRIP

- This trip is more suitable for photographers who are already well acquainted with the exposure triangle, and is more difficult for beginners. And of course also for non-photographers who just want to enjoy nature!
- For the hide photography the ideal lenses are the 24-70mm f/2,8 and the 70-200mm f/2,8. Fast lenses are very recommendable for nocturnal photography. On safari in Samburu a minimum of 300mm on a crop camera and 400mm on a full frame camera are advisable.



Day 1

Today the participants arrive in Nairobi. They will be taken to their hotel for the night.

Day 2

After an early breakfast we will be picked at our hotel in Nairobi and we will drive to our first home in Samburu/Buffalo Springs, where we will arrive around lunchtime in our camp. This is situated on the bank of the Ewaso Nyiro river with its many visitors, right in the middle of the reserve. More removed from the standard Kenya safari circuit, this park with its meandering river exudes an atmosphere of tranquility and serenity. We have lunch in the camp, enjoy the beautiful view and in the late afternoon set off for our first safari in this area.

Day 3

Further exploration of this area, with morning and afternoon game drives. There is a possibility for an individual photo discussion after lunch, after which you can go for a rest, or a swim, or more photography in the camp.

The reserve is characterized by rocky hills in rolling lowland plains where acacia trees give an extra African vibe. The Ewaso Nyiro river and the Buffalo Springs are the lifelines of this otherwise dry area, where animals come to quench their thirst and many predators await their chance to attack. Here we have good chances to spend time with lions, cheetahs, elephants and giraffes, but the area is particularly known for a few animal species that can hardly be found anywhere else in Africa. The Somali ostrich, the Somali giraffe, the thin-striped Grevy zebra, the gerenuk and the Beisa oryx all populate this stunning park. Apart

from these stars of Samburu, there are obviously also leopards, buffalos, bat-eared foxes, hippos, crocodiles and hundreds of bird species, like the vulturine guineafowl.



Day 4

We take all our luggage and a picknick breakfast for our morning game drive. From lunch time onwards we will stay on the opposite side of the river in a luxury tented camp. On the way there we have our usual game drive. This new tented camp has a photography hide at a gorgeous waterhole, where guests can spend the night if so desired. At night our group will have exclusive use of this hut. There is only room for 4 photographers in the photography hide, so Ingrid will make a rotation plan, to make sure everybody has the same chances to do their night photography. But before we start in the hide, of course we will go for another late afternoon safari and a joint dinner.



Day 5

At the break of dawn, we will leave with our picnic breakfast, to look for the animals that – like us – start their morning activities early. The middle of the day can be very hot, so late morning we will return to the camp, so that everybody has ample time to rest. After all, there is another late afternoon game drive planned, followed by a night in the photography hide for the second part of our group. For those who wish to just do the game drives and do not wish to make use of the photography hide: obviously, that's no problem whatsoever.



Day 6

In the course of the morning, we will be picked up by a private chartered plane that will take us to the Olkirimatian Conservancy. There, vehicles from Lentorre will be awaiting us and will drive us to Lentorre Lodge. Lentorre is located deep in the wilderness, but the luxury and beauty of the lodge in its overwhelming location, and the totally relaxed atmosphere, makes one feel at home immediately. The first afternoon all the possibilities of the lodge are explained and shown, after which we can relax or get started immediately! This is our private home for the next few days, so everything is possible!

Day 7, 8 and 9

Our days here can be spent doing whatever you might want to do. Only the optional helicopter flights must be booked in advance.

During the day there is the possibility to use the underground hide or the bird hides. There is a swimming pool available although every large tent also has a private plunge pool/jacuzzi. There's an open-air bar and a relaxing area from which you have full view of the waterhole and the wilderness. Just having a rest and relaxing in your own tent is of course always an option, while Ingrid remains available for photo discussions and tips – unless she's catching up on some necessary sleep as well of course. There is just so much to do here that you would like to be able to function all through every day and night!



The main hide is equipped with a fridge and drinks to get through the day and the night. Tea, coffee and biscuits can be brought for that small hungry feeling you may have especially through the night. (Of course you get three full meals a day at the lodge as well!) There is a library present and the special lighting in and outside the hide makes sure the animals are not deterred by it. There is room for 6 photographers and 1 photography guide. There are enough sockets available to charge the camera batteries. There are also 2 beds in this part for those that can't manage to keep their eyes open. They can tell the photographers that are still awake which animals they want to be waken up for. In the space behind the actual photography part there are another 4 beds and a toilet.



Since we are here near the end of the dry season, we have a lot of chance that the water sources in the area are completely drained so that we will possibly get to see lions, leopards, giraffes, impalas, civet cats, bat-eared foxes, elephants and buffalos apart from the usual nighttime visitors (the genet cat, the jackal, the rare striped hyena and the white-tailed mongoose). Even the caracal has been photographed here several times.



If the largest part of the group (minimum 4 participants) opts for the helicopter flights, we go straight up into the air for an unforgettable flight over Lake Magadi with its gorgeous colours and structures and the forever present flamingos. The helicopter has 4 seats. One for the pilot, of course, one for Ingrid (behind the pilot), and 2 seats on the left where the door will be taken out for completely free photography. Everybody wears headphones through which the experienced pilot gives instructions to the photographers about where to look, after which Ingrid will regularly repeat a few important technical tips that could be easily overlooked in all the excitement. There will be an evening flight and a morning flight. Not only will the light and the colours be different, but it gives every photographer the chance to check his or her photos between flights and to draw conclusions about what he or she might be able to improve. With 4 participants there will of course be 2x2 helicopter flights, with 5 or 6 participants 3x2 helicopter flights.



Day 10

Around 4:30 am we leave (straight from the hide or our beds) with a breakfast box for our drive towards Nairobi. On our way we stop at sunrise on the shore of Lake Magadi where we can spend a few hours photographing the flamingos from the ground instead of from the air.

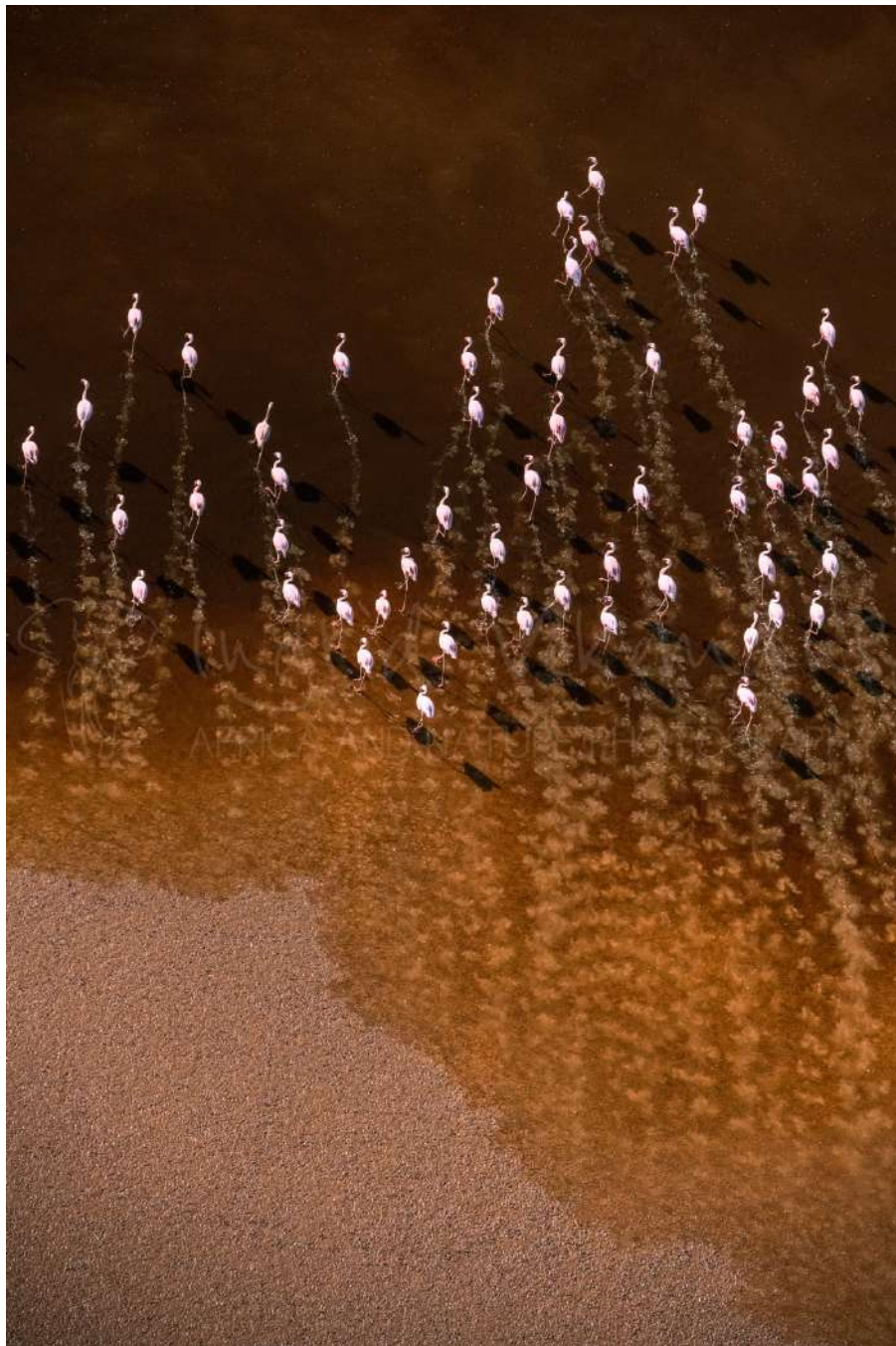


Unfortunately, our spectacular trip has come to an end. Tired but satisfied we head towards Nairobi where a day room is booked for everybody in a comfortable hotel next to the airport. The flight back to Belgium is usually around midnight, so you have time here to have a rest, get freshened up and take a last meal together. A hotel shuttle bus will then take you to the airport on time for check-in.



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ATTENTION: a change to the above travel schedule is always possible if the circumstances dictate.



PRACTICALITIES

TUI

The safari is organised by TUI tours, part of TUI BELGIUM. The TUI group is the largest tourism group in the world.

You can apply for your reservation with the TUI Belgium headquarters. To this end you can use the 'PRICE INQUIRY' button on the website www.ingridvekemans.com.

The invoice and booking terms and conditions will be sent to you by TUI. TUI's general and special conditions are applicable in so far as they do not deviate from the below mentioned terms. You can find all information on <https://www.tui.be/nl/reisvoorwaarden>.

The **price** of the trip is 10790€ per person and is based on sharing a double or twin room. The supplement for a single room will be 790€. An advance of 500€ per person will be requested at the time of reservation of the trip, and as soon as departure is guaranteed, a second advance of 1500€ per person will be asked. All prices mentioned on this website are subject to change in case of increase of local taxes or park income fees, and fuel increases.

Safari period: 11 until 20 September 2027

The price is inclusive of accommodation in comfortable to luxury lodges and tented camps (9 nights), all meals, selected drinks in the second camp in Samburu, drinks in Lentore, laundry service in Lentore, game drives (two per day in Samburu unless on travel days) in two long 4x4 vehicles, drinking water in the vehicles, Flying Doctors service, experienced drivers/guides, park entry fees, all transfers, a private charter flight from Samburu to Lentore with a 45 kg per person total luggage allowance, a day room in Nairobi on day 10, guiding and advice about the animals and how to photograph them, photo analyses and an experienced and passionate tour leader!

The price excludes the international flight and related taxes, Kenya eTA, passport costs, travel insurance, drinks (except in Lentore and in the second camp in Samburu), tips, personal expenses, optional helicopter flights

Price of the helicopter flights (1 hour in the morning and 1 hour in the evening): 2640€ per person (with 4 participants), 2890€ per person (with 5 participants), 2410€ per person (with 6 participants) – to be clear, these prices are per person for 2 flights and not per flight.

Number of participants: min.5, max.6

Minimum age for participants: 16

As soon as the minimum number of participants is reached, you will be contacted by TUI. TUI will then make you flight proposals for the **international flights**. You can then choose whether to book your flight through TUI or to take care of your international flights yourself. The international flights can be booked at the earliest from 1 October 2026.

Insurance: It is strongly recommended for every participant to have cancellation and travel insurance.

Force majeure: The photo safaris are normally accompanied by Ingrid Vekemans. Only if Ingrid Vekemans would be prevented through force majeure an alternative - equivalent replacement will be sought in view of a good execution of the travel contract.

Luggage restrictions: To be sure to have enough freedom to move around the vehicle on travel days, maximum one soft travel bag (dimensions maximum h 40cm x d 40cm x l 80cm) per person is allowed as well as the camera bag. Only if every participant sticks to this restriction, the trip will be comfortable for all. The maximum allowed weight of your luggage will depend on the airline with which you book your flight.

Requirements for the participants:

To get the most out of the photographic opportunities, it is advised that you know the basics of photography (regarding ISO/shutter speed/aperture and light metering), such as you might learn in a basic digital photography or a wildlife photography workshop. For recommended gear: see the top of page

3. The safari part of the trip is physically not very demanding because we will always be photographing out of a vehicle. The game drives, however, will start very early in the morning and can last a long time depending on what we see. The days in Lantorre will be more demanding because of the many opportunities available there during the day as well as during nighttime. Participants must make sure to get enough rest. They can choose these moments themselves. Temperatures can increase during the day until about 30°C. Participants have to be in good health.

Participants have to take care of any necessary **vaccinations and medications**. For more information, check <https://www.wanda.be/en/>. The information on this website needs to be evaluated by the participant in consultation with a qualified physician. Participants have to make sure they have a **valid international passport (valid at least another 6 months after the date of return) and an eTA** for Kenya. This has to be applied for a few weeks before departure, but participants will be briefed about this on time. Indication of cost: 35 USD per person. For the last update: see <https://diplomatie.belgium.be/en>.

Finally, respect for nature and the animals is a must!

Participants have to be aware that Africa sometimes requires patience and understanding. Roads can be bumpy, and things may not work as efficiently as at home. The pace of life is slower, which should ultimately benefit us all...

