

Mara and Lake Magadi – Big cats, hides and flamingos (10 days, 9 nights)



This unique trip combines the world-famous nature reserve in Kenya with the unique experience of photographing in day and nocturnal hides and flamingo photography near Lake Magadi. In this season we will specifically be searching for the cats and their exciting lives in the Masai Mara. With camps overlooking rivers, we are always surrounded by animals. There's also still a fair chance of witnessing the great wildebeest migration in the Mara at this time. Five days later 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 is a bird hide 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 almost 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 the Mara 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 the Masai Mara 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 on 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 Lantorre the schedule is very flexible. Except for the helicopter flights 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 for photographers who are already well acquainted with the exposure triangle. And off course also for non-photographers that 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 the Masai Mara a minimum of 300mm on a crop camera and 400mm on a full frame camera are advisable.



Day 1

Our tour starts in Nairobi. The participants will be picked up at their Nairobi hotel in the morning for our drive to the Masai Mara. We are expected for lunch at the first camp we will stay at. We can take a bit of time to relax before heading off in the late afternoon for our first game drive.



Normally we should see elephants, buffalos, lions, zebras, impalas and other antelopes. There is also a big chance of seeing cheetahs and hyenas. Furthermore, we will be looking for the elusive leopard as well as some smaller predators like the jackal, the bat-eared fox, the serval and the

caracal. After our first game drive we will return to our lodge, ready for our dinner and a refreshing night's sleep.

Day 2

Further exploration of the northern part of the Masai Mara. There will be photo discussions after lunch.



Day 3

We will leave with our packed breakfast and all our luggage, and we will move to our next camp, that is overlooking the Mara River. After lunch we can check in and have a photo feedback session, after which we will get ready to explore this part of the Masai Mara.



Day 4-5

Further exploration of the central Mara region with morning and afternoon game drives. Also, on these days there is the possibility of photo discussions after lunch, and to enjoy everything that passes through or around our camp.



Day 6

In the course of the morning, we will be picked up in the Masai Mara 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. Because Lentorre is located deep in the wilderness, the roads here are quite tough. But the luxury and overwhelming location and beauty of the lodge – where we will arrive on time for lunch – will relax us 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 is 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 two 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, elephants and buffalos apart from the usual nighttime visitors (the genet cat, the bat-eared fox, 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 can 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.



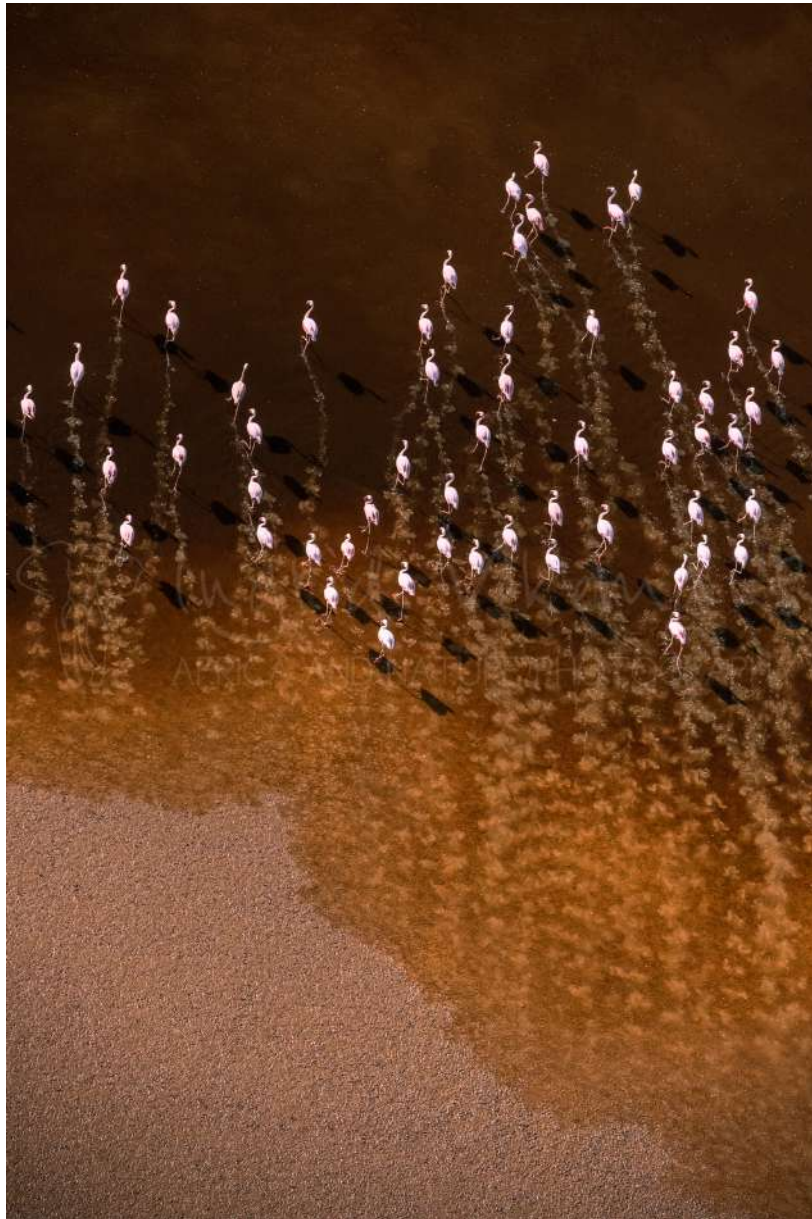
Day 10

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.

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 10690€ per person and is based on sharing a double or twin room. The supplement for a single room will be 475€. 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, off-road permits, and fuel increases.

Safari period: 2 until 11 September 2025

The price is inclusive of accommodation in comfortable to luxury lodges and tented camps (9 nights), all meals, drinks (except spirits) in Lentorre, laundry service in Lentorre, game drives (two per day in the Masai Mara 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 the Masai Mara to Lentorre 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, extra hotel night before departure of the safari, Kenya visa, passport costs, travel insurance, drinks (except in lentorre), spirits, tips, personal expenses, optional helicopter flights

Price of the helicopter flights (1 hour in the morning and 1 hour in the evening): 3245 per person (with 3 participants), 2435€ per person (with 4 participants), 2655€ per person (with 5 participants), 2215€ (with 6 participants) – to be clear, these prices are per person for 2 flights and not per flight.

Number of participants: 6 participants (minimum and maximum)

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 30 September 2024.

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: In order 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. It can be surprisingly cold, so

make sure to pack enough warm clothing! 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 a visa** for Kenya. Kenya has introduced an e-visa. This new visa can no longer be obtained on arrival at the local airport. It must be requested online a few weeks before departure via www.ecitizen.co.ke. Ask the Kenyan embassy in your country for more information. 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...

