

Guide to Planning an African Safari

Excerpted from an article by Douglas Rogers and Nikki Goldstein

Whether you're a first-time visitor or seasoned veteran, T+L helps you plan the perfect African safari...

Community & Conservation: Kenya

Highlights: The Masai Mara National Reserve, home to the Great Migration; the private game reserves of the **Laikipia** region; the vibrant capital, **Nairobi**.

Traditionally the most romantic of safari destinations, Kenya lost much of its luster over the past three decades because of congestion in its parks and rampant political corruption. But there's a fresh energy in the countryside, evident in a new breed of lodges—and lodge owners—that emphasize community and preservation. Proceeds from the eight-cottage Olarro, on the Mara's eastern perimeter, go to build local schools, clinics, and wells. The seven-tent Mara Plains Camp operates game-viewing trips in a conservancy run in partnership with the Masai. Segera Retreat, meanwhile, is set to open eight solar-powered villas on a reclaimed Laikipia cattle ranch in July. Family-owned properties are also playing up the personalities of their owners. In Laikipia, Lemarti's Camp is owned by Nairobi fashion designer Anna Trzebinski and her Samburu husband. Near Amboseli National Park, Ol Donyo Lodge is the revamped lodge of legendary conservationist Richard Bonham.

Among the Top Operators:

Micato Safaris 7 days from \$11,200.

When to Go: Jan.–March, July–Oct.

Micato Safaris

Since 1966, the Pinto family of Kenya and New York has been welcoming guests to Africa with an extraordinary level of service and in-country expertise. Guide Alan Petersen has led David Beckham and Robert De Niro. **T+L Trip pick** Discover Africa's Heritage. Visit UNESCO-protected areas such as Kenya's Lake Nakuru and Zanzibar's Stone Town.

