

# WHAT'S YOUR AFRICAN DREAM?

Do you imagine looking out your hotel window at snow-capped Mount Kilimanjaro, or standing in misty closeness to Victoria Falls, considered by some to be the world's most dramatic waterfalls? Is it the big five—lions, elephants, rhinos, leopards and Cape buffalo—that you want to see up-close as you ride through the savannah in your open-topped Land Rover?

Do you long to hear the thunder of a million wildebeests migrating across the Serengeti plains? Perhaps you've always wanted to fly over the sweeping landscapes of East Africa à la Isak Dinesen in *Out of Africa* (played by Meryl Streep in the movie). To ramble along through the South African bush atop an elephant? Or to stand mere yards from a 450-pound male gorilla in the Rwandan highlands?

Being on an African safari "is almost like being in Eden. All of the animals are playing together, prancing about the savannah," says Jessica Brida, communications director for Micato Safaris and a five-time traveler to Africa. "There are no manmade structures to be seen anywhere, and it feels like you are on this earth the way it might have been thousands of years ago."

You won't be wanting for exquisite accommodations in this Eden. Even in the national parks, there are lavish lodges, and where there are no lodges, you'll sleep in furnished "tents" in the East African countryside—the same kind in which wealthy adventurers of yesteryear ensconced themselves while on African safari. You'll return from a late afternoon expedition to relax in sumptuous camp surroundings before gathering for cocktails at sunset, and then you'll sit down to a banquet of foods fresh from the African farmlands. If you choose, you can even sleep on a luxurious bed in the open air, under majestic skies filled with stars so numerous that the universe seems to expand before your eyes.

## SAFARI, LUXURY STYLE

AAA travel partner Micato Safaris makes African dreams such as these come true on a regular basis. Micato has been family-owned and -operated since the luxury safari company was founded in 1966 by Felix and Jane Pinto. They've been winning accolades ever since, including being named World's Best Safari Outfitter by *Travel + Leisure* an unprecedented nine times. The Pintos are so committed to treating their guests like family that they welcome safariers to their home in Nairobi for a meal. Guests who choose to travel to southern Africa will be invited to dine at the home of Pinto family friends in Cape Town.

Micato Safaris offers many travel collections from which to choose. The Micato Classic Safari Collection in East Africa features



Victoria Falls

COURTESY OF MICATO SAFARIS



Masai tribeswomen

COURTESY OF BOB FIELDSTAD FOR MICATO SAFARIS



Sabora bush dinner

COURTESY OF MICATO SAFARIS

seven different trip options, and its Southern African Classic Safari Collection adds in another three tempting itineraries. Then there are the optional add-ons, such as four days on the beaches of Zanzibar or a sojourn in Cape Town and its wine lands. And if those aren't enough, Micato allows travelers to craft their own personalized itinerary through its bespoke tour program.

"We have dedicated specialists who spend a lot of time with potential travelers explaining the options. ... Our goal is to create the safari of your dreams," Brida says. "So if you're interested in adventure, we can find a very adventurous itinerary for you. If you're more interested in learning about the people and the tribes and the culture, we will find a safari that meets those interests."

## SPECTACULAR TANZANIA

A trip to Africa was on the bucket list for well-traveled AAA members Ellen and Bill Jamerson of Virginia, who went on safari with their three adult grandchildren in Tanzania in July 2013. Micato Safaris, Ellen Jamerson says, did an excellent job accommodating the needs of "three young adults and two almost-octogenarians. ... There were just the five of us [plus a guide and a driver] and no other vehicles. We were just on our own schedule to do what we wanted to, which was certainly advantageous [for] my husband and I, both at our age and

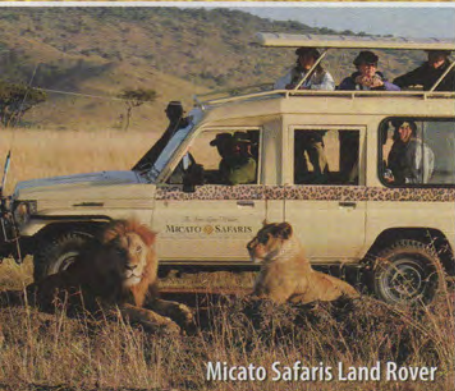
traveling that far," Jamerson adds. While they were traveling, the elder Jamersons celebrated their 57th wedding anniversary with a candlelit dinner at the Serengeti Migration Camp. The staff even serenaded them.

The Jamersons chose Micato's Tanzania Spectacular itinerary, which includes 10 days on safari at four different locales. (To break up the long flights, they stopped in Amsterdam for a night on the way to Africa and in Paris for three nights on the way back.) After arriving in the coffee lands of Arusha, Tanzania, and resting for the night, the Jamersons continued on to the game lands of Tarangire, the Ngorongoro Crater and the famed Serengeti.

In Ngorongoro, they saw baboon, monkeys, jackal, hyena, lions, waterbuck, bushbucks, gazelles (and other antelopes), elephants, zebras and giraffe. Elephants "were wandering all over the place," near the Treetops Lodge in Tarangire National Park, Jamerson says, and while eating dinner one night and looking out over a watering hole, the group saw a lion stalking a waterbuck (which got away). Jamerson spotted 40 different types of birds in Tarangire and Ngorongoro, a real delight for the avid birder, who was impressed by the many-hued birds, including the lilac-breasted roller, a common but spectacular bird arrayed in lavender, yellow, green and varying shades of brilliant blue.

An African safari proved to be a dream come true for the Jamersons. What's your African dream?

—Theresa Gawlas Medoff



## MICATO GIVES BACK

An African excursion with Micato Safaris isn't just about indulging your African dream; it's also about making the dreams of African children come true. That's because Micato has made a one-for-one commitment: for every African safari sold, the company pays all school fees for a child in need through primary and secondary school.

Additionally, through the help of Micato travelers, corporations, staff and more, the company's nonprofit arm, Micato-AmericaShare, supports disadvantaged people in the slums of Nairobi. It pays for boarding school education for orphaned children; a community center for the people of Mukuru; the construction of a school for children with special needs; and more.

Safariers who'd like to get involved directly can select an optional safari extension and spend a few hours at Micato-AmericaShare's Harambee Center in Nairobi, meeting the people who benefit from the charity and perhaps lending a helping hand with the work.

COURTESY OF MICATO SAFARIS

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