

Kenya-Advisor.com's Guide To
Really Good Kenyan Safari Companies



Prepared for Kenya-Advisor.com
by Arjen Koopman

Word of Caution

This short list was compiled using my own experience, experiences from Kenya-Advisor.com's visitors (who are often dedicated travelers), and comments from travelers on some of the best travel forums. Companies are listed alphabetically. I have only included companies that got at least 80% very good comments and/or reviews in all the sources available to me. Kenya-Advisor.com has no affiliation with the companies mentioned whatsoever.

Please note that this (sadly) does not guarantee quality. Quality in Africa is just not as consistent as we would like it to be. I found that even the best Kenyan safari tour organizers fail sometimes. I could find hardly any quality company that did not get one or two bad reviews on online travel forums as well. That's also the reason why I did not include a list of companies *to avoid* as well. So you should read this list with this side note.

Although I took all efforts to ensure this list is as good as possible, this note should also make clear that Kenya-Advisor.com provides no guarantees. I suggest you check the information in this list against all the other sources available to you.

How to Use this List

Most safari tours leave from either Nairobi or Mombasa. As most popular beach resorts (like Diani, etc.) are near Mombasa, these are listed under Mombasa as well.

Most safari tour companies have a website. Instead of listing much ever-changing information here, I provided links to their websites so you can check out their offerings yourself.

Finally, after the address list is more information on how to make the best of your Kenya safari.

Nairobi companies

Asili Adventure Safaris

Super Contractors Bld
Sotik Road, Off Bunyala Rd
P.O. Box 42428
00100 Nairobi
Tel +254 (0)20 2041175
Fax +254 (0)20 85 63 257
Mob +254 (0)722 864021
Email info@asiliadventuresafaris.com
Web www.asiliadventuresafaris.com

Gametrackers Safaris

5th Floor, Nginyo Towers
Koinange / Moktar Daddah Street
P.O. Box 62042
00200 Nairobi

E-mail: info@gametrackerssafaris.com

Website: www.gametrackerssafaris.com

Over 25 years of experience. Also has a lot of budget safari options.

Malobas Authentic Safaris

PO Box 1445
00502 Karen (Nairobi)
Kenya

Tel +254 (0)722 873960

Email info@malobaskenya.com

Web www.malobaskenya.com

S'harity Safaris

PO Box 28523

Nairobi

Tel +254 (0)20 3877042

Mob +254 (0)733 253265

Email info@sharity-safaris.com

Web www.sharity-safaris.com

Run by a Dutch lady who gives a large part of her profits to various charities in Kenya.

Suntrek Safaris

Safari Centre, Waiyaki Way

PO Box 48146

Nairobi

Tel +254 (0)20 4442982

Fax +254 (0)20 4448351

Email suntrek@africaonline.co.ke

Web www.suntreksafaris.com

Also has good budget options.

Mombasa (and surrounding area) companies

Adventure Tours & Safaris

Barclays Bank Shopping Centre

PO Box 876

80400 Ukunda

Tel / Fax +254 (0)40 3203759

Email: info@kenya-wildlife-safaris.com

Web: www.kenya-wildlife-safaris.com

www.kenya-wildlife-sararis.de (German)

David Tours & Car Hire

P.O. Box 99849

Mombasa

Tel +254 (0)41 2223902

Fax +254-(0)41 2223951

Email info@davidtourskenya.com

Web www.davidtourskenya.com

Holiday Inspiration Tours & Safaris (HITS)

Diani Beach

Tel +254 (0)40 3203169

Mob +254 (0)722 2891751

Email info@safarihitskenya.com

Web www.safarihitskenya.com

Julius JT Safaris

Ukunda

Tel +254(0)40 3300299

Mob +254 (0)721 769771

Email info@julius-safaris.com

Web www.julius-safaris.com

This company has a whole following on various travel forums.

Kenyan Adventures & Beyond Safaris

Box. No. 867

Ukunda

Tel +254 (0)722 431876

Email doc@kenyanadventures.co.uk

Web www.kenyanadventures.co.uk

Run by the famous "Doc" (Wilfred Omae Nyakango). Also has a UK office.

Kenpal Tours & Travel

Fun Sports Centre

Bazaar Shopping Centre

P.O. Box 5355

Diani Beach

Tel/Fax +254 (0)40 3202909

Email kenpal@mail.com

Web www.kenpal.net

WT (Wembe Tours) Safaris

P.O BOX 5648

Diani beach

Tel +254 (0)40 320 3122

Email info@wtsafariskenia.com

Web www.wtsafariskenia.com

And For Background Information...

Things To Keep In Mind When Organizing Your Safari

If you'd like to do an African safari, Kenya is one of the best options. The national parks have been maintained well, there's an enormous variety in wildlife and landscapes, the country has a well developed tourist industry which has made even the remote parks easily accessible for tourists.

However, there are downsides. You'll often have to drive for hours and this is slow and on the often terrible Kenyan roads. And when you're finally in the park, you'll keep on driving because it's usually not allowed (and very unsafe) to leave your vehicle. You'll drive around – typically two times per day, after sunrise and before sunset – looking for animals to see. And when it's hot, the roads dusty and you see the 101st zebra but the darn lion won't show up... then safari fatigue can set in.

How to organize a safari?

First of all, if you really want to get the authentic bush experience, go for at least 5 days on a safari. You'll have a bigger chance to catch the big animals and the same goes for the chance to spend time with some local tribes people. The short tours can also take you to a quick stop in a tribal village, but such photo-and-souvenir stops can be pretty disappointing, as you'll often be treated as a cash cow.

It is possible to organize your own African safari in Kenya. Most of the national parks are only accessible in a vehicle. You can either use your own vehicle, rent one or simply go to one of the main entry gates of the national parks, pay the entry fee, and try to join up with a group there.

A four-wheel-drive is not strictly necessary in most parks (at least in the dry periods) because the unpaved roads (which you usually cannot leave) are accessible to all kinds of cars. Most companies indeed use Nissan minivans, with roofs that can be opened so you can take pictures without glass in front of you.

However, if you have to rent a vehicle and other equipment like a tent, then you can just as well go with an organized tour. The costs are roughly the same and being alone, you won't have backup when your car breaks down in the middle of nowhere.

In any case, it's best to book your African safari in Kenya separately from your flight, hotel, etc. This way you'll have the most options, and you don't necessarily have to leave your room while you are on your safari.

Types of safaris

There are essentially two types of safaris. The first (cheaper) type means sleeping in tents in open or fenced campsites within or just outside the parks. This is the real bush experience and can be pretty exciting. It's quite common for animals to enter the open camp sites at night, so there's only some canvas between you and the wild animals. Though I know of no case that a human was consumed by a lion or trampled by an elephant, you should be very careful if you have to leave your tent at night.

With the second more expensive type, you stay in comfortable to very luxurious tented camps or lodges. You'll have restaurants, hot showers, wildlife video's and real bed linen there, as well as plenty of staff taking care of all your needs. Many lodges have waterholes and other tricks to lure the wild animals around dawn and sunset to the lodge or camp, so you can spot them without having to go outside. The advantage of this type is that it's pretty nice to have a hot bath and meal waiting for you after driving for a whole day on dusty roads.

Besides the choice between camping and tented camp/lodge safaris, there's also a whole range of special interest safaris on offer.

More information about this: <http://www.kenya-advisor.com/kenya-wild-safari.html>.

Costs

Most safari companies will ask that you pay them in US dollars. With a camping safari, you should reckon with a minimum cost of \$70 - \$80 per person per day, including park entry fees, a car with driver and cook, 3 meals a day and the hire of equipment (though there's often an extra charge for hiring sleeping bags and for the booze in the evening). If you stay in tented camps or lodges, prizes are roughly between \$250 - \$350 per person per day. Above that, there's the real luxurious safaris where the clients fly in with a chartered jet, and then the prizes hit the sky.

Which park to choose?

Each park has it's pros and cons. One thing to keep in mind is, the more abundant the vegetation is, the harder it is to spot animals as they hide in the bush. So while some parks have a beautiful scenery with thick bush, other parks with less versatile plains offer much better possibilities for wildlife viewing (called game viewing or game drives in the jargon). Of course, there are also big differences between the animals present.

Secondly, some parks are much more crowded than others, because they're more popular or closer to Nairobi. Especially crowded are Masai Mara and Amboseli during the tourist high season (July-August and December-January).

A third thing to keep in mind, especially when you have more parks in your itinerary, is the distance between the parks. They are often so bad that you can't go any faster than 20-30 miles an hour, and still you're shaking like crazy. You don't want to spend your precious safari days driving on the often terrible Kenyan roads. Game drives are only done in the first hours after sunrise and the late afternoon – in the middle of the day many animals are asleep. This can limit your schedule.

More information: <http://www.kenya-advisor.com/kenya-national-parks.html>.

When to go?

See <http://www.kenya-advisor.com/best-season-for-an-african-safari.html>

What clothes and things to bring with you?

See: <http://www.kenya-advisor.com/what-to-bring-on-an-african-safari.html>