



COTTAR'S
SAFARIS
EST. 1919

Safari Frequently Asked Questions



How do I choose which company to go on safari with?

With so many safari companies to choose from, it is important to choose one with genuine expertise, comprehensive insurance, a strong reputation for delivering excellent safari experiences (look at awards and industry recognition), and one which upholds credible sustainability values.

Cottar's Safaris is a multi-award-winning, fifth-generation family-run business with over 100 years of safari experience, an acclaimed guiding team, and a wide range of exceptional safari experiences. We are not a corporate company, but a family with a deep-rooted commitment to sustainability, conservation, and community impact.

Not only do we offer stays at our multi-award-winning properties (Cottar's 1920s Camp and Cottar's Bush Villa) in the Maasai Mara, but we can also craft tailor-made safaris. We only recommend properties that we have personally vetted, all of which uphold the highest standards of sustainability, conservation, and community engagement. We also collaborate with trusted tour operators, ground handlers, and safari accommodations across Africa so that we can create exceptional safaris for every guest.

Where is Cottar's Safaris located?

Cottar's Safaris - comprising **Cottar's 1920s Camp** and **Cottar's Bush Villa** - is located in the Maasai Mara within the exclusive Olderkesi Conservancy, a 7,608-acre private wilderness in Kenya that borders the famous Maasai Mara National Reserve, the Serengeti, and Loliondo reserves.

The Olderkesi Conservancy is the only private-use conservancy in the Maasai Mara, offering guests unrivalled access to one of Africa's most wildlife-rich regions and ensuring a truly exclusive safari experience, with no congestion at wildlife sightings.

How does Cottar's Safaris compare with other properties in the Maasai Mara?

There is an abundance of camps, lodges and villas in the Maasai Mara, but none like Cottar's Safaris. Cottar's Safaris have the following advantages:

1. Cottar's Safaris has recognised in numerous awards (from **Conde Nast Traveller Readers' Choice Awards**) to the **Safari Awards** including Best Guides in Africa, Most Romantic, Most Ecologically Responsible Property in Africa and Best Villa in Africa.
2. Cottar's Safaris is the only Global Ecosphere Retreat Property in the Maasai Mara, reflecting our strong sustainability credentials.
3. Most other camps and lodges in the Mara only offer a few **activities**, Cottar's Safaris has over 20 different activities, providing breadth and depth of experiences.
4. Parts of the Maasai Mara suffer from over-crowding, Cottar's Safaris has the only exclusive private conservancy in the Maasai Mara.

Can I book Cottar's Safaris directly?

Booking Cottar's Safaris directly has never been easier. We have a direct reservations office and a travel concierge service staffed by safari experts which can book not only stays at our two properties in the Maasai Mara (Cottar's 1920's Camp and Cottar's Bush Villa) but also entire safari trips across Africa. We can be contacted via multiple channels below and also have a **live availability calendar**. Alternatively, you can book through a reputable safari company in your region.

How do I contact Cottar's Safaris?

You can contact Cottar's Safaris through the following contact details:

Email: reservations@cottarsafaris.com

Book to speak to our travel concierge

Website: cottars.com

Whatsapp: +254 73 377 3377

Office address: Cottar's Safaris,
Ground Floor Suite 2A - Spring Court,
Watermark Business Park, Karen, Nairobi, Kenya

How many days should I plan to stay at Cottar's Safaris?

We recommend staying at Cottar's Safaris (either at Cottar's 1920s Camp or Cottar's Bush Villa) for a minimum of three nights to fully immerse yourself in the safari experience. Many of our guests choose to stay longer and combine their time with other properties in East and Southern Africa.

How do I get to Cottar's Safaris?

Nairobi (Jomo Kenyatta International Airport) and then transfer to Kenya's domestic airport (Wilson airport) where you will take a smaller aircraft either through a scheduled flight or a private charter flight directly to Cottar's Safaris private airstrip in the Maasai Mara. Some airlines may land at another airstrip called Keekerok which is a two hour adventurous safari drive away from our property. Our preferred airline for domestic flights is Governors Aviation as they guarantee to land with 2 passengers at Cottar's Safaris airstrip.

Do I need a visa?

Kenya requires for many nationalities an e-visa ahead of arrival. The e-visa (often referred to as an Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA)) can be obtained www.evisa.go.ke, however the process is rather cumbersome. See [HERE](#) a guide to process your visa application if staying with Cottar's Safaris.

When is the best time to visit the Maasai Mara?

Cottar's Safaris is a year-round destination, offering exceptional wildlife and safari experiences in every season.

The Maasai Mara has a mild and pleasant climate year-round, thanks to its elevation of 1,500–1,900 meters (4,900–6,200 feet) above sea level. Temperatures in the Maasai Mara average 21 degrees Celcius, with the lowest evening temperature going down to 11 degrees Celcius in July and the hottest day temperature going up to 28 degrees Celcius in February.

Each season offers its own unique highlights:

Private Season (April to May, and November to mid-December). This is a wonderfully quiet time to visit, with fewer people and significantly lower rates. Wildlife sightings remain excellent, offering the chance to see newborn animals, and big cats are particularly easy to spot in the private season as they stand out against the lush green grasslands.

High Season (mid-January to March, and the first half of June). Following on from the rains, the high season reflects savannah grasslands growing and readying for the great migration. It is a wonderful time to do walking, night game drives and bird watching. February and March are the hottest months in the year, and June has some of the best temperate weather. Wildlife sightings remain excellent, with the Big 5 still present.

Peak Season (mid-June through to October). This is the most popular time to visit, coinciding with the Great Migration - a world-renowned natural phenomenon where over a million wildebeest, zebra, and other animals move through the landscape. It is the best time to witness dramatic river crossing and predator-prey interactions.

VIEW THE COTTAR'S SAFARIS WEATHER GUIDE FOR THE MAASAI MARA



Are vaccinations required for travel to Kenya?

Yellow fever and malaria precautions are often recommended and Yellow fever is required when travel is from a country where Yellow Fever is present. Please consult your travel doctor at least one month prior to travel and follow your medical doctor's guidance.

What animals will I see in the Maasai Mara?

You will see an abundance of animals! The Maasai Mara is called the 7th Wonder of the Natural World. The Maasai Mara has a huge array of commonly seen wildlife including, lions, elephants, leopards, cheetahs, buffalo, giraffes, zebras, hippos, crocodiles. Less commonly seen include rhino and wild dog. The Maasai Mara is known for its 'Big 5' wildlife (elephant, lion, leopard, buffalo and rhino) and is also known for the Great Migration is the annual, awe-inspiring movement of over 1.5 million wildebeest, zebras, and gazelles crossing from Tanzania's Serengeti into Kenya's Maasai Mara in search of fresh grazing, facing dramatic river crossings and predators along the way.



What's the daily schedule?

At Cottar's Safaris, we do not have a fixed daily schedule. We serve our guests interests, draw from many of our 20 plus **award-winning impact activities** and curate experiences and a schedule unique to each guest. From wildlife drives to sun downers, from spa time to e-bikes, from talks on the plight of raptors to our Maasai Warrior School there is an abundance of exciting experiences during your stay with us.

Is going on safari safe?

Going on safari is for the very most part a safe experience. We have expert guides, health and safety trained staff, a medical doctor on call and an abundance of positive, joyful, safe experiences. There are wild animals on safari and as such, we do provide a safety briefing on arrival as well as in our in-room booklet and we ask guests to follow our safety directions.



What's the difference between a lodge, Cottar's 1920s Camp and Cottar's Bush Villa?

We don't have a lodge. The difference of a lodge is that it tends to be geared toward mass tourism which is not what we are not about. We believe that our intimate luxury glamping tented camp offers a much closer stay with nature, combined with luxury and modern comforts. Cottar's 1920s Camp has luxury double tents, family tents which accommodate four guests in two ensuite bedrooms adjoined by a central living area and a huge outdoor deck. The Camp also has two honeymoon tents. Cottar's Bush Villa was voted Best Private Villa in Africa and the World Travel Awards and is an exclusive-use villa that can accommodate up to 10 guests. The villa comes with its own private staff, guiding team and a 25 meter swimming pool.



Will I have Wi-Fi?





Wi-Fi is readily available and free to use.

What kind of food is served?

Food at Cottar's Safaris is chef-prepared blending local and international flavors, with dietary requirements catered for. Meals are of a gourmet standard.

Does Cottar's Safaris have social media platforms that I can follow?

Cottar's Safaris has the below social media platform links:

-  Instagram: @cottars.safaris [instagram.com/cottars.safaris](https://www.instagram.com/cottars.safaris)
-  Facebook: @cottars [facebook.com/cottars](https://www.facebook.com/cottars)
-  TikTok: @cottarssafaris www.tiktok.com/@cottarssafaris
-  YouTube: @CottarsKenya [youtube.com/@CottarsKenya](https://www.youtube.com/@CottarsKenya)

Do I need to tip?

Tipping is customary and greatly appreciated. We provide guidelines at camp.

Is laundry available?

Yes, complimentary daily laundry service is provided.

How should I prepare and what should I pack?

Below is a very short list of suggestions of what to pack. It should be noted that many of the domestic flights in Kenya only allow 15 kgs of luggage (total), so efficient packing is necessary. For a more detailed list of what to pack please see [HERE](#).

- Neutral-colored clothing
- Hat, sunscreen, sunglasses
- Light jacket or fleece for cool mornings/evenings
- Binoculars, camera, extra batteries
- Personal medications and insect repellent

Does Cottar's Safaris support Conservation & Community

Cottar's Safaris does extensive work supporting vital conservation efforts and local community and socioeconomic initiatives. We are committed to sustainability, wildlife protection, and cultural preservation and are one of twelve Long Run Global Ecosphere Retreats in the World. We work with the community on a community owned conservancy that has over 7,000 community members making us one of the few truly equitable tourism operators in Kenya.

What are Cottar's Safaris Sustainability Credentials?

Cottar's Safaris are one of 12 nature based tourism businesses in the world to achieve [The Long Run's Global Ecosphere Retreat®](#) sustainability standard. The GER is recognised by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) and aligned to global frameworks including the Sustainable Development Goals and 2030 Biodiversity Framework. Cottar's Safaris have met 91 criteria across the 4Cs (Conservation, Community, Culture, and Commerce). We have been externally audited and submit annual verifiable data for compliance, transparency and accountability purposes.

Cottar's Safaris are also Gold Eco-rated by [Ecotourism of Kenya](#) which is the highest level of certification in Kenya. The Gold Eco rating is awarded to facilities that demonstrate outstanding best practices i.e. they have achieved superior and replicable levels of excellence in responsible resource use, environmental conservation and socio-economic investment.

We manage our camp in an ecologically responsible way including solar energy, an organic garden, recycling, zero single plastics policy, the use of rain water harvesting, and asking our guests to help us with reforestation and adopt best practices for the environment, socio, and cultural aspects of our business

We are also the only community owned conservancy that has achieved the [Preferred by Nature Ecosystem Restoration Standard in Africa](#). The Ecosystem Restoration Standard is a global benchmark for assessing restoration performance.

Does Cottar's Safaris have any specials?

Cottar's Safaris offer some fabulous specials ([HERE](#)) from children staying for free, to 50% off honeymoon, to stay for 4 nights pay for 3 specials.. Specials are subject to terms and conditions.

Are Safaris Expensive?

Safaris tend to be a relatively expensive holiday choice, however you are often paying for more than just a room. In our case, the cost of a safari covers thousands of acres of wild land and wildlife, full board accommodation and drinks, the majority of activities, private guides and dedicated vehicles and a personally curated and private experience. Safaris, when staying at Cottar's Safaris, start from just over \$1,000 per person, per night.