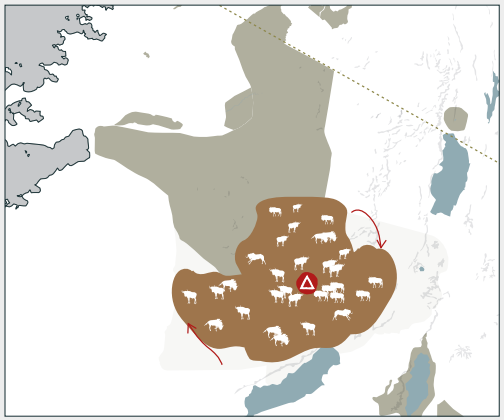


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FACTSHEET

Guide to the migration

Serengeti



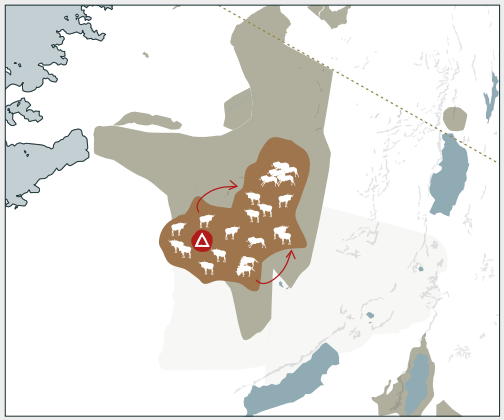
DECEMBER – APRIL

SOUTHERN SERENGETI

The southern plains of the Serengeti ecosystem are where the wildebeest would like to call home and it's where life begins for half a million wildebeest during the calving which usually takes place in February/March. The herds linger on this nutrient-rich grass, stretching from the southern extreme of the Serengeti National Park (SNP) and into the Ndutu area of the Ngorongoro Conservation Area (NCAA). As the plains start to dry out and food resources are depleted, the herds venture gradually west and north as their epic journey begins.

RECOMMENDED CAMPS

- Serengeti Safari Camp – Ndutu area (NCAA) – Ndutu Airstrip



MAY & NOVEMBER

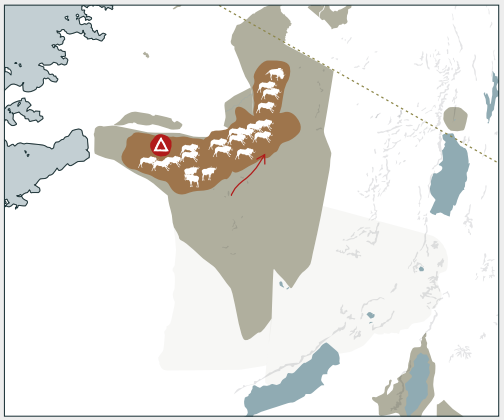
CENTRAL SERENGETI

So starts a period of transition as the herds start to move north heading ultimately for the Mara River. May usually sees the herds move into the Moru kopjes and central Seronera Valley areas of the Serengeti National Park, butdepending on the rains, we may also see herds further south still, or approaching the western corridor.

As the short rains fall, renewing more fertile grazing further south, so the herds begin to move south. November is another very unpredictable month when herds can be as far south as Ndutu or remain in the north for much of the month. The herds will often split and take several different routes to the south and central Serengeti/Moru kopjes can be an excellent base to reach sizeable herds. Combining locations over this period is often a smart way to keep up with nature.

RECOMMENDED CAMPS:

- Serengeti Safari Camp – Grumeti area – Grumeti Airstrip
- Serengeti Safari Camp – Northern Serengeti (SNP) – Kogatende Airstrip
- Serengeti Safari Camp – Ndutu area (NCAA) – Ndutu Airstrip



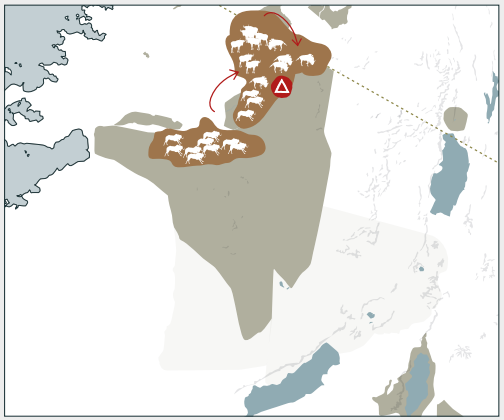
JUNE

WESTERN SERENGETI

The transitional period continues, with June frequently being a superb time tosee the migration in the western corridor, and here the herds face their first major obstacle in the form of the Grumeti River with its mighty crocodiles. Weather patterns at this time of year have a huge impact on migration movements and the herds can split up to follow different migration routes, double back on themselves to Seronera and Moru, spread out and generally provide a challenge for our guides. In very dry years, the approach to Northern Serengeti can be accelerated with the first wildebeest arriving in Northern Serengeti as early as late June. At this time of year we strongly recommend a combination of camps to secure the best migration viewing.

RECOMMENDED CAMPS:

- Serengeti Safari Camp – Northern Serengeti (SNP) – Kogatende Airstrip
- Serengeti Safari Camp – Grumeti area (SNP) – Grumeti Airstrip
- Lamai, Serengeti & Mkombe's House – Northern Serengeti (SNP) – Kogatende Airstrip



JULY – OCTOBER

NORTHERN SERENGETI

The arrival of the migration to Northern Serengeti depends purely on weather conditions each year. When there is plenty of food and water the herds will take their time and spend longer in Western and Central Serengeti areas, arriving in the north as late as early August. If conditions are dry, the first wildebeest will forge north towards the Mara river, a permanent water source, and a reliable supply of green grazing, and arrive as early as late June or early July. The Mara River crossings that take place over this period are the stuff of wildlife documentaries and make for dramatic viewing. They can happen at any point during this time of year, as herds criss-cross back and forth chasing the clouds; but they are elusive, rapid and unforgettable experiences. An experienced, patient guide is essential to give the best chance of catching a crossing.

RECOMMENDED CAMPS:

- Serengeti Safari Camp – Northern Serengeti (SNP) – Kogatende Airstrip
- Lamai, Serengeti & Mkombe's House – Northern Serengeti (SNP) – Kogatende Airstrip







WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE WILDEBEEST AREN'T AROUND?

Many areas of the Serengeti are home to rich resident wildlife including giraffe, zebra, impala, topi, hartebeest and predators such as lion, cheetah, hyena, leopard and sometimes wild dog. There is a plethora of fascinating small mammals like mongooses and bat eared foxes as well as a huge number of beautiful birds. The scenery is varied; wooded thickets suddenly open up to great rolling plains studded with lone trees or rocky outcrops, or dizzying plains stretching to the horizon. All of this is here regardless of where the wildebeest are and it's worth coming expecting to enjoy everything that the Serengeti has to offer.

AN AVERAGE DAY IN THE SERENGETI

There is no average day! Your guide will be constantly talking to other guides to find out where the herds are and will decide with you each evening what the following day's plan will be. Sometimes the herds will be literally around the camp or within half an hour's drive away; at other times you may pack a picnic breakfast and/or lunch in order travel further afield. These days out are always an adventure with lots of other wildlife seen along the way.

HOW TO PLAN YOUR TRIP TO THE SERENGETI

A safari to the Serengeti is often part of a larger Tanzanian itinerary that may include other wildlife areas or an extension to the coast. We recommend a minimum of 4 nights in the Serengeti to make the most of it. Remember that the animals move according to short term weather patterns (within a broader general circuit), and the distances they cover can be vast and rapid. It therefore pays to allow yourself a little extra time, or to combine two camps in two different areas in order to have the best possible chance of seeing everything (this is especially important between April and June and during November which is a time when herds are particularly prone to unexpected behaviour). Consider including a private guide and vehicle in your itinerary as this will give you maximum flexibility to plan your days as you please and to focus on the things that interest you. This is particularly true for river crossings which require all guests in the vehicle to be patient and committed to the challenge!

LODGE OR MOBILE CAMP?

As you will have already gathered, the migration is a moving feast (literally!), covering hundreds of kilometers. There are a few permanent lodges or camps in each of the main areas through which it travels, while the alternative is to stay in a mobile tented camp that moves seasonally to be in the right location.

Permanent camps and lodges tend to be able to offer an elevated level of amenity, while mobile camps emphasise location as a priority. However, it's safe to assume that in a mobile camp you will enjoy great food, good service, a comfortable bed and a hot shower (normally the safari-style bucket shower). Most camps also now have flush toilets, sometimes fully plumbed in and sometimes the short-flush "eco" variety.

For many people, the novelty and adventure of sleeping under canvas is part of the safari experience and they'll opt for a tent every time! You may want to think about combining a mobile camp (such as Serengeti Safari Camp) in one location with a lodge (such as Lamai, Serengeti) to both increase your chances of seeing the migration and enjoy the benefits of both styles of camp.

These days, mobile camps are a more cumbersome than they were in the past, catering to the demand for more creature comforts, and their movement is further restricted by availability of camp-sites which often have to be booked up to a year in advance. Our mobile camps take around 4 days to move to a new location, and while we use our decades of experience to pick the best possible sites ahead of time, sometimes the weather will change and the herds will move. If this happens, and it means that they are further than you can reasonably get to in a day, we'll do our best to move camp-sites, or move guests between our camps (usually not in the middle of their stay). While 99% of the time we get it spot on, sometimes we are at the mercy of the vagaries of nature. That said, we continue to operate seasonal mobile camps in the Serengeti because we still feel that it is the best way to view this transient spectacle, and a more vivid safari experience to boot.









