



CHELI & PEACOCK SAFARIS  
*East Africa*

1 OF 2

# KENYA INTRODUCTION

## GEOGRAPHY AND ECOSYSTEMS

Safari means “journey” in Swahili, the language of East Africa, and Kenya is the home of safari. Its varied ecosystems and landscapes mean that there are more diverse species in Kenya than any other country in Africa. It has been the natural home of celebrity safaris, big game hunters and royalty since the 19th century and remains the most spectacular safari destination with unparalleled wildlife viewing.

A complete safari includes at least three of the main eco-systems – the semi-arid, dramatic landscapes with rare species, the mountain forests and the lush savannahs of the Masai Mara. We recommend 3 nights in each area to be able to get the most out of your safari.

The country has at least 40 different ethnic African groups (including the Kikuyu, Luhya, Kalenjin tribes, Luo, Kamba, Kisii, Meru & Embu, Mijikenda, Swahili, Turkana and Masai) who speak a variety of mother tongues. Waves of migration over the centuries from the north and south of the continent have led to Kenya becoming one of the most diverse African countries culturally and linguistically.

Classic Safari is more than game drives and ticking-off the “Big Five”. It is an understanding of all elements of the wilderness around you from the big cats to the busy dung beetle. It means getting out of the car and walking on foot. Tracking with your Masai guide, swimming in forest rivers, and imbibing the sounds and smells of the African bush.

Cheli & Peacock is about the complete safari experience and we work with small boutique camps and lodges that will give you this level of sophistication. Safari is one of the great family holidays.

Kenya has a well-established system of guide training and certification. It is important that your safari is guided by competent and experienced guides as it is through their eyes that you will interpret the wilderness around you! Most of the properties that Cheli & Peacock work with, have in house guides, usually from the local area, that know their part of the wilderness and its inhabitants.

Kenya offers many superb private conservancies and unique boutique safari camps and lodges. Spectacular views, variety of activities, excellent cuisine, are an integral part of a Cheli & Peacock Safari. Some areas suit low-key tented camp and others large open airy rooms with stunning views.

Kenya has a very well organized system of Eco verification and it is important to choose a property that cares for its environment.

## CLIMATE, SEASONS & CULTURE

### CLIMATE

Kenya lies on the Equator, therefore our dry and wet seasons have relatively stable and pleasant temperatures, and allow year round safaris and game viewing. Many parts of the country are at an altitude of 2000m / 6000ft. These highlands, e.g. Laikipia, Mathews Range and the Masai Mara experience a cool and temperate climate. Lower regions at an altitude of 1200m / 3800ft, such as the semi-desert areas of Samburu/Shaba, Meru and the coastal strip, can reach a dry and comfortable 35° C during the day.

### SEASONS

- **January – March**

The hottest and driest time of year, and a popular time for those in the northern hemisphere to escape the cold. One of the best game viewing times of year.

- **April – June**

The “long” rains arrive with the south east monsoon winds. A wonderful time to be on safari – clear spectacular skies, fewer tourists, and the baby boom with many species giving birth in time for the lush vegetation. Birds are in their mating plumage and wild flowers are in abundant bloom.

- **July – September**

The coolest time of year. Many coast properties close from June to August inclusive. However this is the prime time to witness the wildebeest migration in the Masai Mara.

- **October – December**

Ideal time of year to come on safari, with the wildebeest migration usually extending into November. November can experience the “short” rains brought by the North East monsoon, usually short showers in the early mornings and evenings, with clear days.

Check for green and mid-season rates which can give a saving of up to 35% per room per night. High season rates are often governed by the peak holiday weeks of northern hemisphere travellers, rather than by best safari times.

Visiting during green & mid-season gives guests the opportunity to find and observe game with maximum privacy. This is also a good time of year for large groups, as there will be more choice of safari properties with availability and there is an increased chance that a group could have an entire lodge or camp to themselves.

### CULTURE

Kenya has a culture born of countless sources. From the prehistoric records of early man to the present day, Kenya has been a land of unending change, contrasts, and diversity; it is home to 52 tribes - some still staunchly traditional, others live a very modern lifestyle as the influences of the Western World increase. Many prime gameviewing areas are in pastoralist lands, and the colourful local tribes are our hosts. A safari with Cheli & Peacock gives you the opportunity to interact with these tribes at a personal level.