



Lodge room

plays host to the great migration every summer when millions of animals, chief among them wildebeeste, migrate north across Tanzania's Serengeti plain into Kenya's Masai Mara. There is still game aplenty after the animals have returned to the Serengeti by early autumn. A visit to Masai Mara is usually combined with a visit to either Amboseli Game Reserve or Samburu Game Reserve.

Amboseli is situated in what was a dry lake bed until the El Nino/La Nina phenomena of the 1990s.



Deflating balloon after a flight over Masai Mara

The wildlife inhabiting this reserve seeks sustenance near several small streams which run through it. The primary attraction of Amboseli is its proximity to 19,340-foot (6,447-meter) Mt. Kilimanjaro which lies just across the border in Tanzania. With luck, visitors are able to photograph game animals with the mountain as a backdrop. The long rainy season stretches from mid-March until mid-June while



Masai women

the short rains occur from mid-November until early December. The sun normally reappears right after each short downpour.

Samburu, on the other hand, is somewhat drier than Masai Mara although it too is rich in game. In fact, Samburu boasts some species of animals seldom seen outside Kenya's North. These include the gerenuk (a long-necked gazelle which feeds while standing up on its hind legs), the reticulated giraffe and Grevy's zebra with its thin stripes. The primary attraction of Samburu for many, however, is leopard. In Samburu several of the lodges bait leopard in the evening; so, with luck, visitors can watch the night-time predator come to feast on scraps of meat under floodlights.

A Kenya safari also includes a visit to one of the lake resorts in the Great Rift Valley since it is too far to drive comfortably between



Outdoor buffet at camp in Masai Mara

any two of the three game reserves in a single day. Lake Nakuru, for instance, is famous for its flamingos and pelicans. A rhino sanctuary has also been established there. Nowadays this may be the only opportunity for tourists to view rhino in Kenya.

OTHER OPTIONS IN KENYA:

So called because they are in essence hotels on stilts, the three tree hotels - The

afternoon, and then before and after dinner until well into the night feast their eyes on the sights and sounds of the various species as they come to drink from the water hole in front of the lodge. Viewing is done from one's bedroom, open balconies, glassed rooms or from an underground blind. It is necessary to bring along warm clothing for a stay at a tree hotel as well as high speed film in order to photograph at night under



Treetops

Ark, Mountain Lodge and Treetops - all offer the opportunity to view mountain, forest and night-time animals as opposed to the plains game seen in the large open parks. The tree hotels are all situated in forests in the vicinity of Mt. Kenya north of Nairobi, and the game viewing routine is the same at them all. Visitors arrive for lunch, perhaps rest briefly in the

the floodlights. If one hasn't seen all of the species by bedtime, he can notify the game spotter who will buzz one's room if that leopard does turn up at 3 a.m.! To minimize noise, children less than about seven years of age are not allowed at the tree hotels.

Nairobi, with a population of about two million, offers some excellent shopping. Tourists will find distinctive