

MASWA WALKING *Expedition*

Expedition Overview

This unique expedition offers an opportunity to experience the Serengeti ecosystem on foot using a dedicated mobile walking trails camp. Set in the vast wilderness of Tanzania's Maswa Game Reserve, which adjoins both the Serengeti National Park and Ngorongoro Conservation Area, you will enjoy absolutely exclusive access to the Africa that Hemingway found and fell in love with.

Maswa and Mwiba Game Reserves encompass an area of 280 000 hectares (2800sqkm) and are together managed by the Friedkin Conservation Fund, (FCF), together with the Tanzanian Wildlife Division. Legendary Expeditions are the tourism arm of FCF who operate the permanent and seasonal camps in the reserves.

This private concession area allows us unfettered access and the freedom to walk, camp and explore the raw wilderness in true Anderson Expeditions style.

We'll be focussing on the Northern Maswa reserve, where the terrain is generally flat Acacia woodland, interspersed with gigantic granite boulders piled on top of one another to form islands of rock outcrops, locally known as "Kopjies". The Mbono drainage system provides water well into the dry season with several perennial springs attracting huge herds of buffalo, elephant and antelope as well as their accompanying predators. Numerous lions are regularly encountered, whilst wild dogs den within the reserve and can be reliably viewed. Birders are rewarded with endemics such as Karamoja Apalis, Grey-breasted Spurfowl and Grey-crested Helmetshrike.

Aside from the wildlife highlights we'll be meeting and spending time with the Hadzabe - a group of East Africa's last remaining hunter-gatherer people. The Hadzabe inhabit the greater Lake Eyasi region into which Maswa falls. They largely still live a primitive and nomadic way of life, sustaining themselves by hunting with bow and poisoned arrows and gleaning whatever nourishment is seasonally available. We'll join them within Maswa or Mwiba game reserve as they go about their daily hunting and foraging. This is a far cry from the contrived "visit to the local village".

For most of the trip we'll have a traditional "Fly-camp" available to us – a light and very mobile set-up consisting of individual canvas covered fly-screen tents, bucket showers and eco-toilets and a well equipped kitchen and mobile bar. A dedicated Legendary Expeditions team service the camp, and dismantle and re-erect it at our selected sites. Anderson Expeditions has selected six camp sites, each within half a day's walking distance of another. These sites are varied but all alike in that they provide for unspoilt wilderness and large trees throwing cool shade. Typically we select two or three camp sites in a single expedition according to wildlife movements and seasonal rainfall or water availability.

An open game-viewing vehicle will be available to us in the event of wanting to do any vehicle based game viewing as well as to access the camp and to transfer to Mwiba for our final night. All walks will be accompanied by an armed Legendary Expeditions walking guide as well as a Wildlife Division Scout. The expedition caters to a maximum of six guests.



Itinerary Overview

Day 1 - Start of Maswa Expedition

- Arrive at Kilimanjaro International Airport to be met by your Anderson Expeditions guide
- Road transfer to Legendary Lodge, Arusha. Approx 90 minutes
- Welcome and orientation
- Overnight at Legendary Lodge

Day 2 - Legendary Lodge to Arusha Airport

- Road transfer Legendary Lodge to Arusha Airport. Approx 15 minutes
- Light aircraft flight from Arusha airport to Southern Serengeti airstrip
- Game drive transfer through the Serengeti to Mbono river
- Afternoon walk along the Mbono River
- Overnight Fly Camp

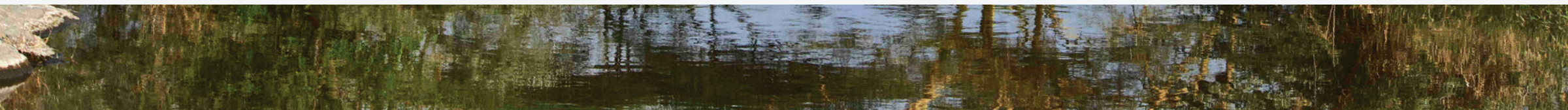
Days 3-6 - Exploring the Maswa Mbono and Maswa Kimali

- Walking and game viewing, exploring the Maswa Mbono and Maswa Kimali on foot
- Routes and camp sites kept flexible
- Overnight Fly-camp

Day 7 - Overnight Mwiba Lodge

- Depart from Fly-camp for a morning walk
- Road transfer to Mwiba Lodge
- Afternoon walk/game drive from Mwiba or at leisure
- Overnight Mwiba Lodge

Day 8: Depart

- Morning walk/game drive
 - Light aircraft flight Mwiba airstrip to Kilimanjaro Int Airport
 - Depart on international flight
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Day 1 - Start of Maswa Expedition

On arrival at Kilimanjaro International Airport you will be met by your Anderson Expeditions guide and transferred by road to Legendary Lodge in Arusha. Located at the foothills of Mount Meru Legendary Lodge is set in lush, tropical gardens. Each luxury cottage offers superb views of either Mount Meru or the gardens.

Meals are served on the expansive veranda of the colonial styled main lodge and this is where you will be welcomed and briefed by your Expedition Guide as to the details of the following days.



Day 2 - Legendary Lodge to Arusha Airport

A morning flight from Arusha takes you directly into the southern Serengeti where you will be met by an open game viewing vehicle to be transferred to the Mbono river and your fly camp there.

This is currently the only camp in the Maswa Mbono sector of the reserve and no other tourists and vehicles access the area.

After settling in to camp and enjoying a lunch whilst watching wildlife drink from the river you will set out from camp on foot for your first exploratory walk along the Mbono River. The river is an absolute magnet for wildlife in the dry season. Throngs of animals move from the increasingly waterless plains of the neighbouring Serengeti to Maswa Mbono where the remaining pools in the ephemeral river and several outlying springs sustain life.

Herds of buffalo, elephant, wildebeest, Defassa waterbuck and zebra are regular features and lion are generally seen daily if the prey species are present.

Spend the evening at the fire in front of camp and dinner in the open sided main tent area.



Days 3-6: Exploring the Maswa Mbono and Maswa Kimali

You will leave camp on foot and arrive around midday at the second fly-camp site. This will be the rhythm for the next 4 days. Early morning starts and walking until about midday to finish at a new camp site (or you may stay in an area for longer). Lunches are enjoyed in camp and generally a post lunch rest period is essential. Hammocks and throw rugs under some deep shade are a most welcome retreat.

Afternoons generally consist of a shorter exploratory walk, often to visit a highlight such as climbing atop one of the huge granite bouldered kopjies for a sundowner, or to bird along the riverine thickets.

Although light and mobile, the fly-camps are equipped with all the luxuries one can expect in any high-end camp. Comfortable seating areas, iced drinks served from a well-stocked bar and three course sit-down meals with excellent wine options.

Walking distances and speed can be varied and although we aim to cover a lot of territory, nobody is expected to push themselves beyond their capability.

As with the entire Serengeti ecosystem, movement of wildlife is seasonal, rain dependant and often unpredictable. Generally speaking the drier years are the most productive in Maswa as long as the water sources remain. At its best one would be hard pressed to find anywhere in Africa where one can have better wildlife encounters on foot than in Maswa.

The terrain covered includes tall riverine woodland along drainage lines, open acacia and commiphora woodlands, rock outcrops with forested crevices and wide open short grass plains.

On at least one of these days we will be planning to meet up with the Hadza people. You will be able to join them as they hunt and sample some of the food they harvest from the bush, especially sweet honey from either the honey bee or stingless bees.





Day 7 - Overnight Mwiba Lodge

After a final morning walk in Maswa Game Reserve you depart by vehicle for Mwiba Lodge in the adjoining Mwiba Game Reserve. Mwiba is also managed by FCF and Legendary Expeditions and therefore offers the same level of exclusivity as a private concession area. This is classic East Africa, less the tourist crowds and game drive vehicles jostling for position at sightings.

Mwiba Lodge is Legendary's flagship property. This stylish semi-canvas lodge, nestled amongst huge boulders and shady coral trees is an ideal haven after our days in the wilderness of Maswa. Indulge in a spa treatment or slip into the rock swimming pool overlooking the river, a welcome luxury after the walking trails.

Enjoy a sundowner in a sensational rock top location followed by a night drive to notch up some nocturnal species that we may not have had the opportunity to see in Maswa Mbono.

Day 8 - Depart Maswa

If time allows you will have a final activity in the morning in the form of a walk from Mwiba Lodge or a game drive to explore the unique habitat of Mwiba Ranch.

You depart on a scheduled/charter flight from Mwiba's private airstrip to arrive in Kilimanjaro (via Arusha), in time for your international departure flight from Kilimanjaro International Airport.





Your Expedition Guide – Mark McKenzie



Born in Zululand South Africa, Mark embarked on a professional guiding career in 1999 and shortly thereafter joined Phinda Private Game Reserve in Kwazulu-Natal. After undergoing a 6 week training and selection course Mark spent 2 years as a ranger at Phinda, which instilled in him the values, ethics and reverence for wildlife he carries with him today.

From Phinda he transferred with CCAfrica (&Beyond) to Kwandwe in the Eastern Cape and was made Head Ranger, leading the guiding team on the reserve. There he also took on management responsibilities and qualified within CCAfrica's structures as a grade 2 walking guide and assessor whilst mentoring the new ranger recruits.

During extensive travels through Africa (Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda and Congo) with his brother, Mark was introduced to the Grumeti Reserves in the western Serengeti. He returned in 2005 and took a position as Senior Guide at Grumeti – which was later to become the Singita managed property – spending 4 years there whilst getting to know the Serengeti ecosystem intimately.

As a result of this time spent in Grumeti, the Serengeti still holds a special place in his heart and is where, Mark believes, all the elements of the quintessential African safari experience still exist in abundance.

Since then Mark's passion for remote and unspoilt wilderness areas has taken him into much of Southern and East Africa, guiding privately, and for leading safari companies. He spent 4 years based in Zambia and Malawi, where he established safari and lodge operations for Robin Pope Safaris, before returning to South Africa with his young family in 2012.

Mark is now based in Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa with his wife and two daughters and divides his time between guiding safaris and running his business.



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Photo credits:

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Mark McKenzie

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