

# Topdeck

## EAST AFRICAN EXPLORER 21 DAY



TRIP CODE:

ZOCKLN-8



## Topdecker, MEET AFRICA

What could be better than sand, sun and safari? If you're looking to combine a beach getaway with once-in-a-lifetime wildlife encounters, then this all-encompassing African adventure will suit you more than a pith hat suits a park ranger. Relax on tropical island Zanzibar and recline on Lake Malawi's beaches, before getting up close and personal to the famed 'Big Five' at the Serengeti National Park and Ngorongoro Crater. Good times, guaranteed.

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



Overland



Nights



Android/iPhone app  
download info



This is a principal  
package.

# Hi, AND THANKS FOR CHOOSING TO HOLIDAY WITH TOPDECK

## HI, AND THANKS FOR CHOOSING TO HOLIDAY WITH TOPDECK!

We really appreciate your decision to travel with us, and rest assured that the entire Topdeck team will be pulling out all the stops to make your trip an unforgettable one.

Now it's time to get excited and get ready for a fantastic holiday!

From all the crew at Topdeck Travel

## ABOUT YOUR TRIP NOTES

These Trip Notes contain everything you need to know before your trip departs, including where to meet, what to bring and what you can expect on your trip of a lifetime! Also, you can easily download and print this document off so you can check off the lists or bring it with you when you travel.

Please do bear in mind though, some points should be taken as a guide only - after all, everyone's different! For example, daily spending money and clothing lists can vary greatly from one person to the next so don't be alarmed if you don't expect to spend (or even wear) so much! However, we're sure you'll find the information in general to be very useful.

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**PLEASE NOTE:** We strongly urge you to refresh this document as close to the time of your departure as possible to ensure you have the most up-to-date accommodation list and information available.

### ON THE BUCKET LIST (INCLUDED)

- + Mosi Oa Tunya National Park (Victoria Falls)
- + Maasai village walk
- + Serengeti National Park & Ngorongoro Crater excursion
- + Exotic Zanzibar
- + South Luangwa National Park

### YOUR TRIP WILL START

#### PICK UP:

Victoria Falls  
Africa

### YOUR TRIP WILL FINISH

#### DROP OFF:

Nairobi  
Africa

### *Trip currencies*

- + Zambia - ZMW
- + Malawi - MWK
- + Tanzania - TZS
- + Kenya - KES

# Your Itinerary



**AWESOME TRIP  
LEADER**

## DAY 1 | LIVINGSTONE, ZAMBIA TO LUSAKA

This morning we make the most of our time in adventure-loving Livingstone and visit the thundering Victoria Falls themselves. At over a mile wide and some 100 metres deep in high water, the falls form the largest curtain of falling water in the world with spray visible from 20 kilometres away - hence the local name Mosi au Tunya ('smoke that thunders'). Later today, we make tracks for Zambia's urban metropolis, Lusaka. A commercial hub and centre for the government, Lusaka is home to dusty tree-lined streets, soviet looking buildings and bustling local markets that ooze African flair. Our campsite for the evening is set in a tranquil and relaxing spot on a farm, far from the hustle and bustle of the city.



### MEALS:

- + Breakfast
- + Lunch
- + Dinner

## DAY 2 | LUSAKA TO SOUTH LUANGWA NATIONAL PARK

We leave early and take the Great Eastern Road through lush countryside and small villages, crossing the Luangwa River to the South Luangwa National Park. This area of outstanding natural beauty is rightly known as one of the greatest wildlife sanctuaries in the world. The concentration of animals around the Luangwa River and its oxbow lagoons is among the most intense in Africa. On arrival we set up camp and enjoy the rest of the day at leisure to enjoy the many activities on offer, from walking safaris, night game drives and village walks.



### MEALS:

- + Breakfast
- + Lunch
- + Dinner

## DAY 3 | SOUTH LUANGWA NATIONAL PARK

What better way to start the day than with a morning game drive along the river's edge to see the abundance of animal and birdlife inhabiting the area? After the game drive, take advantage of The Warthogs Bar and swimming pool (which is the best place to cool off during the hot hours of the day) and the many activities on offer that you may have missed the day before.



### MEALS:

- + Breakfast
- + Lunch
- + Dinner



### OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- + Village tour
- + Walking safari
- + Game drive

## DAY 4 | SOUTH LUANGWA NATIONAL PARK TO KANDE BEACH MALAWI

Leaving Zambia behind, we cross the border to Malawi stopping at the capital, Lilongwe, before taking the eastern road to Lake Malawi. Formally known as 'Lake Nyasa', Lake Malawi covers almost a fifth of the country's area and provides the livelihood for many of the Malawi people. Fishermen, fish traders, canoe and net makers all ply their trade on its shores, so expect to see fishermen in their bwato (dugout canoe made from hollowed out tree trunk) fishing on the lake at the break of day. We arrive at camp on the lake's shore in the afternoon and have the rest of the day to swim and explore the beach and surrounding area.



### MEALS:

- + Breakfast
- + Lunch
- + Dinner



### OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- + Horse riding
- + Village walk

## DAY 5 | KANDE BEACH

While here, try some of the watersports typically available, take part in some optional horse riding or just relax by the lakeside and go for a dip in its warm waters anytime the need arises. It's also worth taking the time to get to know some of the locals, often regarded as amongst the friendliest in Africa, to gain an insight into their way of life. Please note: Although we do our best to adhere to the campsites described in this itinerary, the crew may need to make some alterations to the itinerary published here.



### MEALS:

- + Breakfast
- + Lunch
- + Dinner



### OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- + Horse riding
- + Village walk

## DAY 6 | KANDE BEACH TO CHITIMBA BEACH

We take a scenic drive through rubber plantations to Mzuzu, the capital of the northern region and the third largest town in Malawi, where we stop for a short while to grab supplies and check out the markets before arriving at Chitimba Beach for the next two nights.



### MEALS:

- + Breakfast
- + Lunch
- + Dinner

## DAY 7 | CHITIMBA BEACH

Enjoy time on the beach or shop at a large curios market, where you can test your bargaining skills and buy some of Malawi's famous ornate carved chairs. Alternatively, take an optional hike to Manchewe Falls or embark on the Chihanga walk with a local guide. These trails are beautifully serene, but can take up to ten hours so be sure to rest up beforehand!



### MEALS:

- + Breakfast
- + Lunch
- + Dinner



### OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- + Livingstone day hike

## DAY 8 | CHITIMBA BEACH TO IRINGA, TANZANIA

Leaving Chitimba Beach, we travel the short distance north to cross the border into Tanzania. We steadily climb through Tanzania's Southern Highlands all the way to Kisolanza Farm House. This farm is at an altitude of 1,600 metres, ensuring a pleasantly fresh climate in one of the most scenic areas of Tanzania. Home to the Ghau family for over 70 years, Kisolanza remains a working farm, which provides organic meat (beef, lamb and chicken) and vegetables to the surrounding markets as well as further afield in Dar es Salaam. The farmhouse is famous for its hot showers, chocolate brownies and hot chocolate that can be bought from a quaint, candlelit bar. Note: time to indulge!



### MEALS:

- + Breakfast
- + Lunch
- + Dinner

## DAY 9 | IRINGA TO MIKUMI NATIONAL PARK AREA

Today we make our way east to Mikumi National Park. This evening we'll sip sundowners at the local bar before gathering around the open fire and stargazing at our camp, which is just a stone's throw away from the park.



### MEALS:

- + Breakfast
- + Lunch
- + Dinner

## DAY 10 | MIKUMI NATIONAL PARK TO DAR ES SALAAM

With luck, we may spot forest elephants or giraffes feeding near the side of the road on our way to Dar es Salaam. 'Dar' is Tanzania's hub of commerce and industry, and is a hot, humid and bustling seaport city of high rises, colourful markets and Arabesque architecture. We set up camp at our site on the beach just outside of the city centre, usually having time to browse the local markets (best known for ebony wood carvings) and prepare for our own trip to Zanzibar.



### MEALS:

- + Breakfast
- + Lunch
- + Dinner

## DAY 11 | DAR ES SALAAM TO ZANZIBAR

Today we ferry across to the magical 'Spice Island' of Zanzibar to spend three blissful nights. Discover the island's idyllic, palm-fringed beaches, winding cobbled alleys and lush tropical forests, as well as its intriguing history as a major trading centre for spices. For centuries, Zanzibar would trade with the people of the Arabian Peninsula and ply the ocean in simple dhow sailboats, relying on the annual trade winds for passage. The Arab influence is evident in the architecture and diverse street stall offerings of the capital, Stone Town, so keep your eyes peeled when wandering the city's historic pathways. The next four days are on your own watch, so spend your time exploring at your own pace. Please note: As we leave the truck on the mainland, basic safari lodge/hotel accommodation and breakfast on Zanzibar is included. However, lunches and dinners are your own to arrange. We usually divide our nights here between accommodation in Stone Town and accommodation on one of the northern beaches, but there are no set activities - the time is entirely yours to do as you please.



### MEALS:

- + Breakfast



### OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- + Spice tour
- + Visit a former slave market site
- + Visit the Arabic Fort
- + Visit the Palace Museum

## DAY 12 | ZANZIBAR

Awake to another day in this dreamlike haven. If it's white sand, a sparkling ocean and hot sun you're after, head to the northern beaches and enjoy the Indian Ocean at its best. Try your hand at snorkelling and diving, indulge in some sumptuous seafood, or simply relax beneath a coconut palm with a cocktail and a good book.



### MEALS:

+ Breakfast



### OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- + Spice tour
- + Scuba diving
- + Visit Mnemba Island
- + Dhow snorkeling safari
- + Massage

## DAY 13 | ZANZIBAR

Variety is the spice of life, and on Zanzibar island, spices are abundant. Embark on a day tour to the nearby spice plantations and have your senses dazzled by the tastes and scents that infiltrate the air.



### MEALS:

+ Breakfast



### OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- + Spice tour
- + Scuba diving
- + Visit Mnemba Island
- + Dhow snorkeling safari
- + Massage

## DAY 14 | ZANZIBAR

Don your comfiest walking attire and set out to explore Stone Town on foot. Get lost in the labyrinth of laneways at the bazaars and marvel at the array of ancient maritime trinkets, vibrant fabrics and ornate wooden carvings. Be sure to pay a visit to the city's mosques, palaces, courtyards and alleyways for a living history lesson of this fascinating island.



### MEALS:

+ Breakfast



### OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- + Spice tour
- + Scuba diving
- + Visit Mnemba Island
- + Dhow snorkelling safari
- + Massage

## DAY 15 | ZANZIBAR TO DAR ES SALAAM

Time to bid farewell to this picture-perfect paradise. Sneak in some last-minute shopping or relish one last dip, before catching the ferry back to Dar on the African mainland. Tonight, our campsite on the coast awaits.



### MEALS:

+ Breakfast  
+ Dinner

## DAY 16 | DAR ES SALAAM TO MARANGU

Departing early from Dar es Salaam, we head north past the Usambara and Pare Mountains in the Eastern Arc Mountain Range to Marangu, nestled at the base of the famed Kilimanjaro. The camp takes its name from the surrounding area ('Marangu' means 'full of water' in the local Chagga language, and the lush green surroundings demonstrate the truth of this). If the weather is clear we will gain a view of the magnificent snow-capped Mount Kilimanjaro, Africa's highest mountain.



### MEALS:

- + Breakfast
- + Lunch
- + Dinner

## DAY 17 | MARANGU TO ARUSHA

Passing through the town of Moshi, we eventually reach Arusha, a bustling melting pot of markets, vehicles and some two million people, all nestled in the shadow of the brooding Mt Meru. With time to explore town, we head out to our camp just outside the city at the edge of the Masai plains. This afternoon, we take a walk to one of the local Maasai villages - inspecting a local school and clinic, a small but hugely interesting Maasai museum, and the snake enclosure at the Meserani Snake Park (if you dare!). It's from here that we will prepare for our included two night/three day excursion to the Serengeti National Park and the Ngorongoro Crater.



### MEALS:

- + Breakfast
- + Lunch
- + Dinner

## DAY 18 | ARUSHA TO SERENGETI NATIONAL PARK & NGORONGORO CRATER

This morning calls for a vehicle change-up. We hit the road in a more game park-friendly option and drive west across the Great Rift Valley, entering the Ngorongoro Crater Conservation Area. Just try not to drop your jaw as we pass into the park and cruise around the crater rim and down onto the Serengeti plains. Lush and green after the rains and a burnt hue in dry weather, this spectacular landscape is home to an enormous variety of grazing animals, predators and birdlife. Flatter and larger than the Maasai Mara, the Serengeti is simply huge. In fact, the name derives from the Maasai word Siringitu ('the place where the land moves on forever'). We drive to our designated (but unfenced) campsite for the evening for an unforgettable back-to-nature experience.



### MEALS:

- + Breakfast
- + Lunch
- + Dinner

## DAY 19 | SERENGETI NATIONAL PARK & NGORONGORO CRATER

Spend the morning game driving out of the plains, and then ascend the outer wall of the Ngorongoro Crater (after a well-deserved lunch, of course). Pack your warmest jacket, as tonight we camp on the rim of the crater where wildlife also gallivant. At 326 square kilometres in area, the Ngorongoro Crater is Africa's largest intact caldera and a World Heritage Site. If you think the view from the rim at 2,400 metres above sea level is spectacular, the site from the crater floor some 600 metres below will be equally mind-blowing.



### MEALS:

- + Breakfast
- + Lunch
- + Dinner



## DAY 20 | SERENGETI NATIONAL PARK & NGORONGORO CRATER

On the final day of the excursion we descend down the steep dirt road of the Ngorongoro Crater for a morning of game driving. Keep your eye out for all the major mammals - except the towering giraffes, which struggle to manage the steep slopes leading down onto the crater floor. After our game drive, we ascend to our campsite on the rim for a final view over the Ngorongoro Crater, and then pack up our camp and enjoy lunch before retracing our steps to our campsite in Arusha.



### MEALS:

- + Breakfast
- + Lunch
- + Dinner

## DAY 21 | SERENGETI NATIONAL PARK & NGORONGORO CRATER TO NAIROBI, KENYA

After a final night at camp, we make our way across the Maasai Steppe to the Kenyan frontier. Completing formalities at Namanga border post, we drive the last stretch of road to Nairobi, Kenya's capital, where our amazing tour of Africa sadly ends. Until next time!



### MEALS:

- + Breakfast
- + Lunch

## Meals

Your included meals are detailed in the 'More Inclusions' section of this document. While on the road, you will be provided with three meals a day unless otherwise stated. African overland trips are participation based, which means you will be expected to do your bit for the team by helping with purchasing, cooking and cleaning-up duties. In some places, we will be able to go out for a meal. If you have any dietary requirements we will make every effort to cater to your specific needs, as long as you advise your travel agent or Topdeck Trip Consultant when you book. Please be aware that it may not be possible to cater for every single dietary requirement, but we will always try our best to arrange it.

## Topdeck Travel App

Our travel app is **AVAILABLE TO DOWNLOAD BEFORE YOU TRAVEL**. With a range of cool features including a Currency Converter, Budget Planner, Check-In tool and Social Timeline (so your next #TravelEnvy post is never too far away) you can plan your trip like a pro.

Think of it like your very own Topdeck Trip Leader, always on call with the latest info, weather, maps and city guides to give you the trip of a lifetime, all in the palm of your hand.

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## Passenger safety

One of the best parts of travelling is experiencing the nightlife and entertainment each city has to offer. However, amidst the fun and excitement, it's important to be aware of your surroundings and personal safety as well. Before you hit the road with us, be sure to familiarise yourself with the following safety information.



When you're on a night out, remember to avoid walking alone, particularly through deserted areas like beaches and back streets. Always stick together, take a registered taxi where possible, and keep a note of your accommodation details so you can find your way back to your fellow Topdeckers if you become separated. It's also a good idea to get your Topdeck trip mates' mobile numbers in case you need to get hold of them while out and about.

In some countries, alcoholic measures can be considerably larger than what you may be used to. Try to keep track of what you're drinking, and if you see one of your trip mates looking a little worse for wear, take them back to your accommodation. Never leave your drink unattended.

It's also important to be aware that what you might consider harmless flirting may be interpreted differently in some countries. Be yourself and have fun, but stay savvy – you don't want to find yourself in an uncomfortable situation.

## OTHER INFORMATION



**THAT'S IT!**