

STRATEGIES

TRAVEL SMARTER

EXCLUSIVE SAFARIS

Some of our favorite operators have put together signature trips for T+L readers (prices reflect per person rates). Use the code **TLExclusive** to book any trip on this page.

Safaris Made Easy

Whether you're a first-time visitor to Africa or an old safari hand, T+L helps you locate the trip—and value—that's right for you. Here's your handbook to the wild.

BY DOUGLAS ROGERS
WITH REPORTING BY NIKKI GOLDSTEIN

Illustrated by Kyungduk Kim

UGANDA

A primate-centric adventure—including canoes by tree-climbing lions—with a stay at Bwindi Lodge in the Virunga Mountains.

Volcanoes Safaris
volcanoesafaris.com
7 nights from \$3,820

KENYA

A Samburu cultural experience and camping with wild game's booked days spent game-spotting in Laikipia and the Northern Frontier District.

Journeys by Design
journeysbydesign.com
6 nights from \$6,295

ZAMBIA

A camp-to-camp river voyage through Lower Zambezi National Park by canoe (for up-close encounters with hippos, buffalo, and elephants) culminating at Victoria Falls.

Explore Inc.
exploreinc.com
7 nights from \$3,075

ATLANTIC OCEAN

Republic of the Congo

Rwanda

Kenya

INDIAN OCEAN

TANZANIA

A walking safari in the Selous Game Reserve, with views of the wildebeest migration and a night spent camping (and stargazing) in riverside tents.

Nomad Tanzania
nomad-tanzania.com
7 nights from \$5,950

NAMIBIA

Travel by land and air, ballooning over the Sossusvlei dunes and spotting black rhinos, desert elephants, and cheetahs in Damaraland and Etosha National Park.

Geographic Expeditions
geographic.com
10 nights from \$3,145

Tanzania

Zambia

Malawi

Mozambique

BOTSWANA

Kids can spot meerkats, befriend Bushmen, and search for fossils at family-friendly Camp Kalahari.

Uncharted Africa Safari Co.
unchartedafrika.com
4 nights from \$810 for children, \$1,632 for adults

Namibia

Zimbabwe

Botswana

South Africa

SOUTH AFRICA

Take a vineyard and art tour of the Winelands, explore the Cradle of Humankind fossils, and end with a safari through Sabi Sand Private Game Reserve.

Cape Insights
capeinsights.com
9 nights from \$5,295



A Namibian steenbok, or small antelope.

DESERT DIVERSITY Namibia

HIGHLIGHTS **Namib-Naukluft National Park**, Africa's largest reserve; **Etosha National Park**, renowned for plains game; the northwest's **Damaraland** for fossilized trees and desert elephants; haunting **Skeleton Coast National Park**.

Namibia's otherworldly desert landscapes and dramatic coastal plains hit the traveler's radar in the mid 2000's and have since grown in popularity. The challenge has always been how to navigate the great distances between attractions and camps. Lately more travelers are opting for high-end, privately guided safaris—involving helicopters and light planes—to visit the most far-flung corners, such as Wilderness Safaris' eight-villa **Serra Cafema** camp near the Angola border. At the same time, operators are now offering more affordable group tours. Geographic Expeditions has eight-person safaris that travel from Windhoek to Damaraland for just over \$3,000 a person. Wild About Africa also features a nine-day group itinerary, with a tour of the Fish River Canyon, for only \$1,179 per person.

WHEN TO GO

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec

TOP OPERATORS

- **Cox & Kings** coxandkingsusa.com; 7 days from \$5,435.
- **Expert Africa** expertafrica.com; 7 days from \$2,811.
- **Geographic Expeditions** geoex.com; 7 days from \$7,700.
- **Skeleton Coast Safaris** skeletoncoastsafaris.com; 6 days from \$8,885.
- **Wild About Africa** wildaboutafrica.com; 8 days from \$1,053.

Rates are per person, based on double occupancy.

SAFARI EXPERT



Garth Hovell

From Zimbabwe
Company **Abercrombie & Kent** (abercrombieandkent.com)

Traveling on Foot "Imagine standing in South Luangwa in the giant footstaps of an elephant or touching the bark of a tree where only minutes earlier a leopard had scratched it. Or spotting the tracks of a lion in the sand as it stalks its prey. On a walking safari, your senses are heightened by all that surrounds you."

AFFORDABLE ADVENTURE

Zambia

HIGHLIGHTS The river-crossed **South Luangwa National Park**; game-rich **Lower Zambezi National Park** on the north bank of the **Zambezi River**; majestic **Victoria Falls**, bordering Zimbabwe.

Long in the shadow of neighboring Zimbabwe, Zambia has now established itself as the ultimate adventure destination, famous for its walking safaris and canoe trips—and complemented by a slate of stylish (yet affordable) bush lodges and river camps. South Luangwa, where outfitters Norman Carr and Robin Pope pioneered walking safaris, is the jewel of the country's parks system and offers increasingly upscale accommodations to go with its unrivaled wildlife. The seven refurbished camps of the **Bushcamp Company** (bushcampcompany.com), in the south of the park, are chic and intimate, and can be visited on an exclusive camp-to-camp walk. In the Lower Zambezi Valley, the eight colonial-style suites of **Baines' River Camp** (bainesrivercamp.com) bring a new level of luxury to Zambia. More in keeping with the country's old-school authenticity are the river-view tents of the family-owned **Chiawa Camp** (chiawa.com) and its rustic sister property downriver, **Old Mondoro** (oldmondoro.com), accessed by boat. Activities include game drives, river safaris, and fishing excursions.

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TOP OPERATORS

- **Abercrombie & Kent** abercrombiekent.com; 7 days from \$5,040.
- **Explore Inc.** exploreafrica.net; 8 days from \$2,850.
- **Norman Carr Safaris** normancarsafaris.com; 7 days from \$2,100.
- **Robin Pope** robinpopesafaris.net; 8 days from \$2,631.
- **Wild Planet Adventures** wildplanetadventures.com; 7 days from \$3,998.



Canoeing through Zambia's Lower Zambezi National Park.

FROM TOP: CHRISTIAN HUMRICH/GETTY IMAGES; COURTESY OF ABERCROMBIE & KENT