

Midlife Madness on SAFARI



21 wild days - June 2017



A SPECTACULAR WILDLIFE ADVENTURE IN KENYA & TANZANIA Feathers & Armour-Plate

FOLLOWING THREE BRILLIANT AFRICAN SAFARIS IN recent years – all of them sold out! – we've put together another stunning 21-day itinerary. Wanna come with us – and eyeball Africa's untamed inhabitants up-close? Well, here to tempt you terribly and urge you say "YES!" are more of John's travel-diary memoirs:



I KEPT THINKING, "PINCH ME – I'M DREAMING!" as our open-top Land Cruiser took us down 2000 feet, through zig-zaggy bends, dusty potholes and early-morning mist to the crater floor. "Hold onto your hat!" someone yelled. I'd been looking forward to this moment for ages, and here we were, in. The remarkable Ngorongoro Crater, a World Heritage Site, has been called the eighth wonder of the world – the biggest intact volcanic caldera on the planet and the largest zoo on earth. It encases one of the most picturesque settings we'd seen on our safari, and an animal population so used to humans that you can almost "reach out and touch ..."

We'd spent the night high up on the rim. And now, as the haze cleared, we found ourselves on the floor, surrounded by vast grasslands, dry salt-pans and swamps.

Back up the track a bit we'd been stopped at one point by a young bull elephant who was in no hurry to move – he just stood in the middle of the road, sucking dust up his trunk and blowing it all over himself. Then, down on the flat, we spotted a lonely black-maned lion who appeared to have an urgent appointment off in the distance.

It was hard to know where to point my camera that glorious morning as hyenas, warthogs, buffalos, baboons, gazelles, zebras and the ever-present wildebeests just kept coming! And you should have seen the BIRDS: an ostrich having a bad-hair day ... a flock of pink flamingo with their heads in the sand ... a saddle-billed stork with its stripy red-and-yellow beak ... a ground hornbill sporting a scarlet, turkey-like neck ... a gorgeous crowned crane, looking like she'd stepped out of a salon ... and an ugly marabout stork with a weird pink airbag hanging beneath its chin.

But then we spotted the rhino, head-down in the scrubby grass!



WITH THEIR BATTERING-RAM BODIES, KNOBBLY knees, thick armour-plate skin, tiny swivelling ears, and twin nose-horns, these two-to-three-tonne monsters look utterly prehistoric – and when they glare at you with their beady eyes, they look quite scary.

So, are they dangerous? Well, yes. They can charge you at 45kph, and poke large holes in you where you least need them. And while their eyesight may be lousy, they can hear you loud-and-clear – and smell you long before you can smell them – which is why we kept our distance.

But this big fella wasn't bothered. He seemed happy to let us ooh-&-ahh and click our cameras forever ...

Midlife Madness Cruises & Tours

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