



## Frequently Asked Questions

### **How do I get to your lodges?**

Most travellers who stay with us utilise the services of a licensed Tanzanian Tour Operator. Roads are rough and distances vast in Tanzania and unless you're very experienced in driving in Africa it's best that you take advantage of a tour operator who can make the booking and arrange transport to our lodges for you. Most importantly you'll be under the care of an experienced safari guide who will share their knowledge of the wildlife and environment and Tanzania. We do offer fly-in packages to Serengeti Simba Lodge wherein you can fly to an airstrip within Serengeti National Park and a lodge vehicle will collect you and take you on game drives.

### **What's included when I stay with you?**

When you book into one of our lodges you'll receive overnight accommodation and three meals (Dinner, Lunch and Breakfast). You can opt to have lunch at the lodge or take a lunch box. There is a bottle of water in the room for each person for teeth brushing, along with amenities such as soap, shampoo, body lotion etc. Complimentary coffee, tea and cookies are available from 3:30-6 pm daily. Other drinks, laundry and tips are to your own account.

### **What is an Eco-lodge?**

The International Eco-Tourism Society defines Eco-tourism as *"responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people."* We respect this practice by, among other things, utilising solar power at our lodges for electricity and hot water. You can do your part by taking shorter showers and using your towels for more than one day. You may find the lighting in the rooms to be low so we recommend you bring a headlamp or a book light if you like to read at night.

### **What are the toilets like?**

The toilets are exactly the same as you find in Europe or America; ceramic flush toilets.

### **What's the food like?**

We serve continental cuisine at our lodges. Our well-trained and experienced chefs source the freshest ingredients available locally and prepare good, simple food to western/European tastes. Meals are mostly buffet service with eggs cooked to order in the morning. We offer a sample of local Tanzanian food occasionally.



**Is there Internet access at the lodges?**

Yes. Although Internet service is not the same standard as in Europe or America, both lodges have a good satellite system in place, allowing for wireless access to your devices from the common areas (reception, lounge, bar and dining rooms). In the event you don't have your own hand held device you can ask at reception for access to a lodge computer to check your email. We do request that you don't download large files.

**Can I use my mobile/cell phone?**

Local cell coverage at both lodges is not excellent due to their remote locations but in most cases a signal is available. You'll need to sign up for mobile roaming before you leave your home country or buy a sim card on arrival in Tanzania (GMS phones only).

**Can I drink the water?**

We recommend that you drink and brush your teeth with the bottled water available for sale at the lodge.

**Do you accept credit cards?**

We accept Visa and MasterCard only for incidentals purchased at the lodge. However you should have enough cash on hand to pay for your purchases because the credit card systems sometimes go "down".

**What about tipping?**

While tipping is completely optional, the lodge staff always appreciates a gratuity. At Simba Portfolio lodges the workers themselves determined that tips should be shared equally across the board from gardeners to the manager. Therefore we ask that you don't tip individual staff members (unless for exceptional service above and beyond) but rather make use of the tip box at reception.

**Do you allow children at the lodges?**

Yes, we do accept children at our lodges. Because we're located in areas where there is wildlife present children ages 6 and older are welcome to accompany their parents. We require an adult (18 or over) to be in a room with children under 13. There is a special child rate for children ages 6-17 sharing with an adult.

**What's the weather like in northern Tanzania?**

Northern Tanzania is located about 2 degrees south of the equator but the elevation is relatively high (5,000+ft – 1,500+ m) resulting in a mild climate. Year round



temperatures in the areas our lodges are located range from lows of 50° F (10°C) to highs of 85° F (30°C). The coldest months are Jun-Aug and the warmest Dec-Feb.

The area experiences several months of rain followed by periods of dry weather. Typically the “short rains” begin in November and continue intermittently through December. The “long rains” take place in April and May. The highland area where Karatu Simba Lodge is located can have rain through January and the Ikoma area of Serengeti where Serengeti Simba Lodge normally receives rain as early as October. Typically the short dry season is Jan-Mar and the long dry season is Jun-Oct. It’s also possible for a random rainstorm to occur during the dry seasons. Serengeti can experience quite dramatic storms due to the vast open plains.

Normally rains falls in showers, sometimes very heavy, that last up to several hours and then move on. Showers can occur day or night. Daytime showers often follow an increase in temperature with the rain bringing relief from the heat. When there’s rain there’s mud and the dense clay soil present in many areas may result in vehicles getting stuck and during the dry seasons the dust becomes a factor (all part of the safari experience!)

### **Is travel in Tanzania safe?**

Travel in Tanzania is generally safe. It’s a good idea before you travel to check the government travel information website of your country of origin and the safety record of your tour operator. Our lodges are located in areas where wild animals are present; therefore please don’t stray from the main lodge area or paths. While we have 24-hour security onsite, we ask that you don’t walk unaccompanied on the lodge grounds between sunset and sunrise. The lodge guards will escort you to and from your room from the main building. Please keep your valuables in the room safe or with you at all times.

Historically there have been very few incidents affecting tourists in Tanzania. Tanzanians are proud of their country’s tradition of political stability. As with anywhere in the world you are encouraged to be aware of your surroundings and not wear flashy jewellery, watches or other items of high value, especially in cities. It’s also important to respect local customs and values by dressing modestly, especially in areas with a large Muslim population. Generally Tanzanians dress very modestly. Women don’t wear short shorts, revealing tank tops etc.



### **What about emergencies?**

Travellers should take out adequate travel insurance. We **highly recommend** that you sign up for emergency air evacuation coverage with AMREF (<http://www.flydoc.org/>) as a **supplement** to your own insurance. The reason for this is that in the event of unforeseen illness or an emergency, they will respond immediately with air evacuation while overseas insurance companies can take up to 24 hours or more to authorise evacuation. Such a delay can be disastrous, even affecting the possibility of survival. To rely solely on an overseas insurance company for air evacuation can be risky. AMREF has the most experience and the best record of successful and prompt air ambulance service out of Tanzania. You'll be flown to a good medical facility in Nairobi where your own coverage will commence. AMREF does not provide coverage for medical care, only for air evacuation. Be sure your tour operator and guide have your membership numbers.