

The 50 best safari holidays



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Most travellers are keen to see the big five

To go on safari is to take part in one of life's last great adventures – and the word from the bush is that safaris are likely to get a lot more adventurous still in 2017, the industry's response to demand from those looking for an extra dash of adrenalin.

Most safari newcomers are keen to see the Big Five: elephant, rhino, buffalo, lion and leopard. But after an initial bush baptism, you might be tempted to stray off the regular tourist trail, sign up for a walking safari, go gorilla tracking, seek out a remote destination, or choose one of the less visited parks such as Kafue in Zambia.

Overall, tourism to Africa has bounced back after the shock of Ebola and the wider fears of terrorism. Namibia is doing so well that it's wise to book early, and South Africa should also remain popular because of the favourable currency exchange rate.

As for Kenya, the sleeping giant of African tourism, there are signs that the country is recovering from the terrorist threat of Al-Shabaab. The Indian Ocean coast is coming back into favour, at least south of Mombasa where luxury lodges such as Kinondo Kwetu and Saruni Ocean are doing well. The Maasai Mara and its epic wildebeest migration continue to be a priceless asset and Kenya could be the surprise destination of 2017. But that will depend on trouble-free elections when it goes to the polls in August.

The biggest concern for cash-strapped Britons is the Brexit effect. Suddenly, like everything else, safaris have become more expensive. In Tanzania, national park fees have gone up by 18 per cent since July, and Botswana remains a destination beyond the reach of those who would otherwise flock to the Okavango Delta.

"Out of Africa, something new" is a phrase coined in Ancient Greece that still holds true today, and you will find plenty of exciting new destinations and itineraries on the following pages.

Here, from the Tropic of Cancer to the Cape of Good Hope, are 50 of the best safaris – for every budget and every wildlife experience.

Mkombe's House, Serengeti

Built into the rocks of a towering granite kopje, Mkombe's House is the first and only true house in the Serengeti. With room for four adults and six children (no age limit), it comes with its own chef, a gorgeous swimming pool and views over the rolling savannahs of the Lamai Wedge, between the Maasai Mara and Mara River. Those in the know reckon this far north-west corner of the park is unsurpassed for scenery and wildlife, especially at migration time.

- A 10-day safari with four nights at Mkombe's House and three nights at Entamanu Camp on the Ngorongoro Crater rim for a family of six costs from £23,000 with Natural High Safaris (01747 830950; naturalhighsafaris.com).