



Rift Valley Safari Trek



Activity: Trek **Grade:**  **(Tough)** **Duration: 11 days**

This challenging trek has it all: volcanic craters set amidst wild, remote African scenery, combined with amazing wildlife and the fascinating culture of the Masai!

We trek through the Crater Highland and Rift Valley landscapes of Tanzania, witnessing the traditional Masai way of life as the tribesmen tend their cattle in this spectacular region, most of which is a conservation area. The scenery is magnificent, with rolling green grasslands and acacia forests dominated by volcanic cones and the great Rift Valley escarpment.

A safari in Lake Manyara National Park, home to wildlife including lion, zebra, giraffe and elephant, celebrates our achievement.

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1: Depart London

Day 2: Arrive Tanzania

Arrive Kilimanjaro International Airport and transfer to our accommodation in Mto-Wa-Mbu (approx 2 hours). Once checked in, we'll spend the rest of the day relaxing and sorting our kit for tomorrow's start before meeting up for dinner and an evening trip briefing. Night lodge.

Drive approx. 3 hours

Day 3: Mto-Wa-Mbu – Olmoti Crater – Empakaai Crater

We head off into the Reserve on bumpy tracks. We make a short stop to appreciate the views over the spectacular Ngorongoro Crater, then drive on to Nainokanoka and the Olmoti Crater, where we start our walk. It takes about half an hour to climb up to the crater rim, where fabulous views await us – and give us a wonderful introduction to the region. At just over 3000m we'll notice the slightly rarefied air on the crater rim – it makes a perfect warm-up walk. We walk down into the crater, where Masai graze their cattle, and then walk back to Nainokanoka for lunch. Returning to our vehicles, we head northeast to Empakaai Crater; look out for gazelles, zebras and impala on the way. We ascend to the crater, where the views again are superb, and drop down to the crater lake to explore. The water in the crater is very alkaline and, with a depth of up to 85m, is unusually deep for a soda lake. We walk around the lake edge to see the flamingos, buffaloes and other wildlife that make this crater their home. We camp tonight at the crater. Night camp.

Drive 4-5 hours; trek approx. 4 hours



DETAILED ITINERARY (cont.)

Day 4: Empakaai Crater – Acacia Forest Camp, Naiyobi

After a hearty breakfast we set off on our first full day of trekking. Yesterday's crater walks will have warmed us up nicely and we should be feeling fit and ready to go! We walk through grassland on dusty tracks, admiring the vast open landscapes around us. We're likely to see more wildlife and Masai farmers as we walk. Towards the end of the day we walk through a photogenic stretch of acacia forest, where we camp near the small Masai village of Naiyobi. Night camp.

Trek approx. 7 hours

Day 5: Naiyobi – Alalarai

We head off after breakfast, enjoying the scenes of village life as we walk past Naiyobi. The area is dotted with Masai bomas (pronounced 'bombers'), and we'll see herdsman grazing their cattle. This is a very remote area, and it's a real privilege to see the Masai way of life as we pass through their small communities. Our walk takes us west up the Rift Valley, where we trek along the ridge on tracks used only by Masai herders. We come to another village, or boma, and start climbing uphill to the top of the ridge, where we'll camp. From the top we have magnificent views of Oldoinya Lengai, the only active sodium carbonate volcano in the world! 'Oldoinya Lengai' means 'Mountain of God' in the Masai language. It last erupted in 2007, and we see lava rock and other signs of its activity as we trek. Night camp.

Trek approx. 6-8 hours

Day 6: Alalarai – Engaresero

We should get great sunrise views over Oldoinya Lengai from camp this morning, before continuing our trek through the grassy highlands. The terrain is hilly, and we continually walk up and down the rolling, grass-covered ridges – there are fantastic views. As well as cattle, the plains are grazed by zebra, wildebeest and gazelles. We follow upland tracks towards the Mosenik Hills, enjoying great sweeping views of the valley below us. Before lunch, we catch our first glimpse of Lake Natron in the distance. We descend steeply down off the Rift Escarpment to the valley floor and Lerai bomas, and then enjoy an afternoon of fairly flat terrain as we head towards Lake Natron. Night camp.

Trek approx. 7-8 hours



CHALLENGE GRADING

Our trips are graded from Challenging (Grade 1) to Extreme (Grade 5).

This trek is graded **Tough (3)**. Main challenges lie in the intense heat and rough, remote terrain, while there is a chance of being affected by altitude.

Many factors influence the Challenge Grading, such as terrain, distances, climate, altitude, living conditions, etc. The grade reflects the overall trip; some sections will feel more challenging than others. Unusual weather conditions also have a significant impact, and not all people are tested by the same aspects.

Our grading levels are intended as a guide, but span a broad spectrum; trips within the same grade will still vary in the level of challenge provided.



DETAILED ITINERARY (cont.)

Day 7: Lake Natron & Waterfalls

This morning we walk down to Lake Natron, one of the most alkaline lakes in the world. The lake is home to millions of tiny crustaceans, and one of the few breeding sites for flamingos. They are fascinating to see. We head back to camp, and spend the afternoon walking around Natron village and its nearby waterfalls. Night camp.

Trek approx. 4-5hrs

Day 8: Engaresero – Engaruka – Mto-Wa-Mbu

We pack up camp and head out on the 2-3hr transfer to Engaruka, during which time there is a good chance of spotting some of Africa's grazing animals. Engaruka Ruins are a very important Masai site and during the month of July many Masai people come here to celebrate their heritage. After a guided tour of the site, we'll drive the final section of road to reach Mto-Wa-Mbu. Night camp.

Drive approx. 4-5 hrs (total)

Day 9: Lake Manyara Safari – Moshi

Another early start for optimum wildlife viewing! We take a game drive through Lake Manyara National Park, home to a huge variety of animals and birds but most famous for its tree-dwelling lions. If you're lucky you may spot them so keep an eye out for any moving branches! After leaving the park we will transfer to Moshi and the comfort of our hotel. The rest of the day is free to shop and explore before our big celebration. Night hotel.

(Dinner not included)

Day 10: Free time Moshi; Flight departs

Time today for a more leisurely start! You are free to explore Moshi, where there are some good markets, and relax with your fellow achievers. You can also opt to visit a Community Project we support on a long-term basis – a children's home near Moshi. We meet again mid-afternoon in time to transfer to the airport for our international flight home.

(Lunch not included)

Day 11: Arrive UK

Discover Adventure reserves the right to change the route or itinerary for safety reasons should local conditions dictate.

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Ngorongoro Safari or Zanzibar Extension Available – Each adds 3 Extra Days

Extend your stay with a game park safari at the renowned Ngorongoro Crater, or on the beautiful beaches of Zanzibar. See website for further information.

