

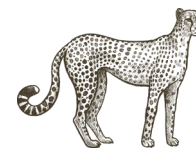
FAUNA



Safari Guide

“There is something about safari life that makes you forget all your sorrows and feel as if you had drunk half a bottle of champagne – bubbling over with heartfelt gratitude for being alive.”

– *Karen Blixon, author of Out of Africa*



FAUNA

Fauna Travel plans transcendent vacations to the world's best outdoor destinations.

Safari Guide



Cover Photo:

Game drive at Time + Tide Chinzombo
in South Luangwa National Park, Zambia

Fauna Travel is an independent affiliate of Departure Lounge,
a Virtuoso host agency in Austin, Texas USA.

FaunaTravel.com

We plan trips into nature that create a sense of awe with our clients.

Hi, my name is Scott Dubois, and I'm the founder of Fauna Travel. We book trips for people seeking a 4- or 5-star experience in dramatic, natural areas and use our decade of experience in luxury travel editorial to create itineraries that will genuinely resonate with you.

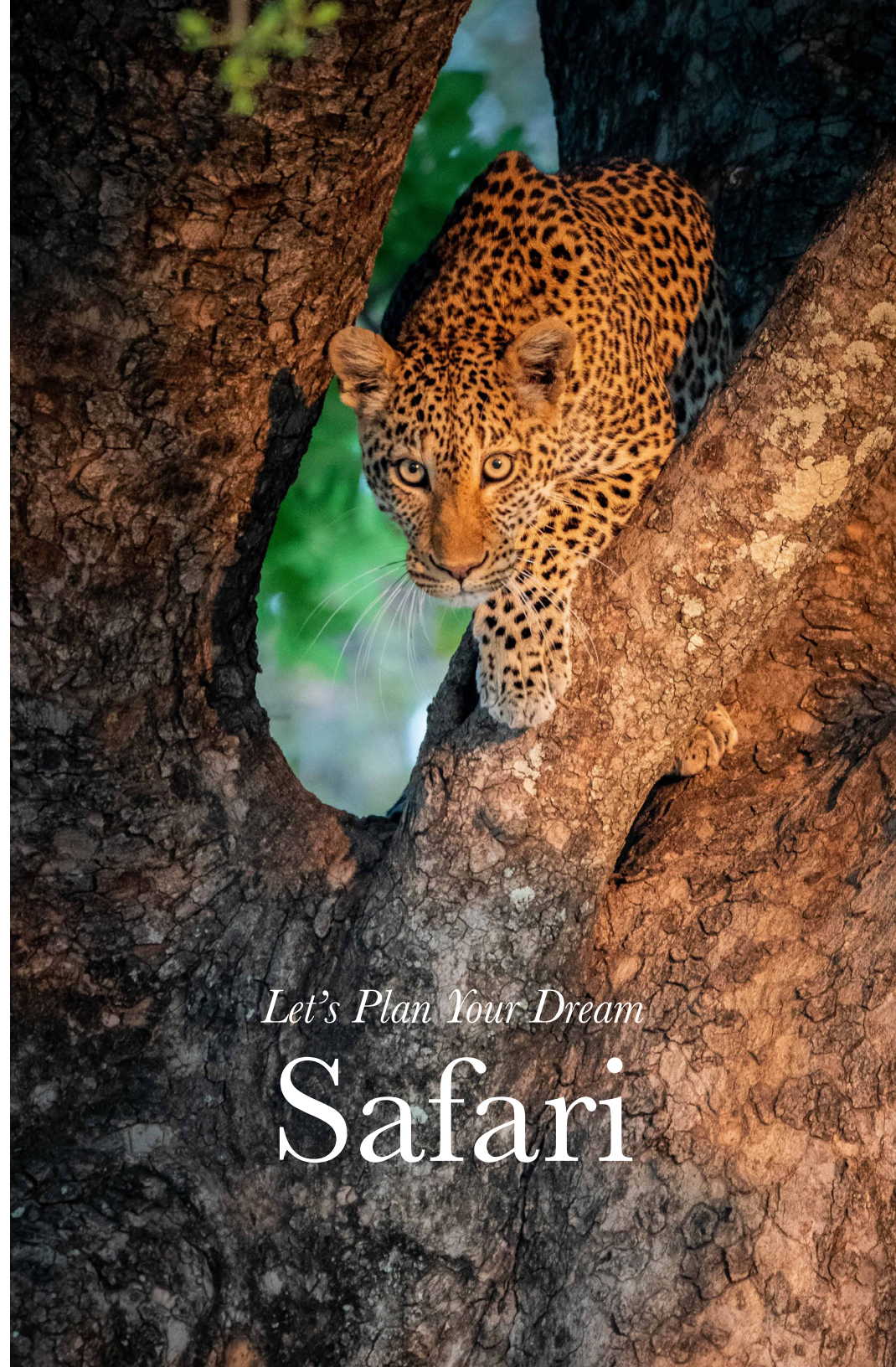
My time on safari changed how I see the world, and I want to share that experience with others. I created this small safari guide to inspire your next trip. It includes some of my favorite wildlife destinations, but we can book anywhere you want to go because we design each trip to meet your specific desires.

If you'd like us to start planning your next trip, email me directly at: scott@faunatravel.com

Why book with Fauna?

- ◆ **Less Stress** - A personal travel advisor to save you time, plan your ideal vacation, and help with any issues that may arise during your trip.
- ◆ **Better Experience** - We know the wildlife and adventure travel landscape and design creative itineraries to maximize your travel experience.
- ◆ **Travel Perks** - Free upgrades, breakfasts, and special amenities at 1,200+ five-star hotels and resorts – plus complimentary books and music playlists.

Contact me to plan your safari at scott@faunatravel.com



Let's Plan Your Dream

Safari

Where to Safari?

Want to travel to Africa but aren't sure where to go?
Here's a short primer to get you started.



Lion in the Maasai Mara, Kenya
Courtesy of Great Plains Conservation



Zebra near Okavango Explorers Camp
Courtesy of Great Plains Conservation

Botswana

Botswana is arguably the world's premier wildlife destination. The Okavango Delta and surrounding reserves are filled with large populations of elephants and predators, and the standard of camps is unparalleled. A stop in the dry Kalahari Desert or Makgadikgadi Pan offers a nice contrast to the delta in an itinerary.

Kenya

Kenya is a classic safari destination that is perfect for first-time visitors to Africa. The country is famous for the Maasai Mara National Reserve, which shares the Great Wildebeest Migration and beautiful Maasai culture with its neighbor Tanzania. We are particularly fond of northern Kenya, including the Laikipia Plateau and Samburu National Reserve.

Malawi

Until recently, Malawi was off the safari circuit, but it has slowly opened up to tourists over the past decade. The lodges here aren't as luxurious, but your money will go further. There is also a fantastic diversity of landscapes to explore, including the shockingly blue Lake Malawi or the dreamy Nyika Plateau.

Namibia

Namibia is, first and foremost, a desert landscape lover's paradise. The red dunes of the Namib-Naukluft National Park and the remote Skeleton Coast offer a plethora of otherworldly vistas. Wildlife, like lions, rhinos, and desert-adapted elephants, can still be found in smaller numbers.



Cape Town, South Africa



Elephant at Toka Leya Camp in Zimbabwe
Courtesy of Wilderness Safaris

Rwanda

This beautiful place emerged from the Rwandan genocide as one of Africa's most progressive and prosperous countries. It is also the best destination to view mountain gorillas if you want a luxurious lodge to relax in after your trek. With the recent opening of Akagera National Park, the country can now offer a savannah safari, and there are beautiful hikes and tea plantations in the south.

South Africa

South Africa is one of the most diverse destinations in the world, making it an excellent choice for families or first-time visitors to Africa. On one trip, you can stay in a dynamic city and an idyllic wine region, go whale watching, and have a fantastic safari. In addition, there are many direct flights to Johannesburg and Cape Town from the United States.

Tanzania

Tanzania is an epic destination for the wildlife enthusiast. The country's northern half includes several massive national parks, including Serengeti, Tarangire, and Mount Kilimanjaro. The country's southern half is less visited, with more remote camps, baobab trees, chimpanzees, and plenty of plains game. A Tanzania itinerary finishes nicely in Rwanda or on the beaches of Zanzibar.

Uganda

Uganda has one of the highest primate populations on earth and is one of the best places to see mountain gorillas, chimpanzees, and a variety of monkeys. A trip there is complemented by Nile River excursions and more traditional safari offerings. The lodges are less luxurious than in Rwanda, but the wildlife viewing is excellent. Because of

petty crime, visiting Uganda gives some pause, but the wildlife areas are safe for travelers.

Zambia

Zambia often flies under the radar, but it is an excellent safari destination and home to the walking safari. The Lower Zambezi and South Luangwa parks feel more like southern Africa, while Liuwa Plain and Kafue have an East African grassland feel.

Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe shares Victoria Falls with its northern neighbor, Zambia, and the parks along the Zambezi River, including Mana Pools, have some of the best game viewing around. Hwange and Gonarezhou National Parks also have some of Africa's highest densities of elephants.

Consider the Congo

The Republic of Congo, also known as Congo, is understandably confused with its troubled neighbor, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). However, travel in Congo is just as safe as in South Africa. The number of annual visitors to the country is tiny compared to the rest of Africa, and there are only a few lodges in the massive Congo basin. This allows for a uniquely exclusive wildlife experience in the world's second-largest rainforest.

You may find yourself sitting around a fire pit with a gorilla researcher, gorillas walking through camp, and few other tourists in the entire National Park.



Canoeing at Tembo Plains
Courtesy of Great Plains Conservation

What's your story?

Fauna Travel's philosophy of itinerary design is inspired by our background in luxury travel editorial. Rather than planning a generic overview of the standard destination highlights, we look for a storyline or theme that makes your trip transcendent.

As an independent agency, we book hotels that suit your tastes and vision instead of funneling you through a single company's properties. We take the time to understand your personal preferences and passions to craft a vacation that fits your personality and delivers a wealth of inspiring and unforgettable moments.

Our clients are looking to literally go the extra mile for a unique experience that isn't available everywhere. This can mean a luxury trek in Africa or taking a new approach to a classic destination focused on interesting people and spectacular landscapes.

FAUNA ITINERARY

A Zambezi River Story

Journey downstream on the mighty Zambezi River and explore how your story fits into this wild place. The river has supported great civilizations and is still a source of life for the people and wildlife of central Africa today. This trip will put you in touch with the

water as you traverse the northern border of Zimbabwe, with highlights that include a Victoria Falls swim or helicopter flight, breathtaking sunsets at Lake Kariba, and traversing the length of Mana Pools National Park by boat.



Day 1-3: Victoria Falls

Victoria Falls River Lodge

Start upstream at Victoria Falls, the largest curtain of water on Earth. Our favorite lodge is Victoria Falls River Lodge because of its modern suites that stand above the river.



Day 4-6: Lake Kariba

Bumi Hills

Lake Kariba, the largest artificial lake in Africa, is your next stop downstream. Bumi Hills has panoramic views of the lake and is an excellent base for a water safari.



Day 7-12: Mana Pools

Little Ruckomechi Camp & Tembo Plains Camp

Mana Pools is a photographer's dream. Start at one end of the park at the adventurous Little Ruckomechi and then boat downstream to the luxurious Tembo Plains.

Contact Fauna to plan your safari - scott@faunatravel.com

Experience Africa on Foot



Trekking the Great Rift Valley / Courtesy of Lake Natron Camp

WALKING ITINERARY

Trekking the Great Rift Valley to the Serengeti

Tanzania's Great Rift Valley may be a less well-known trekking destination than Kilimanjaro. Still, the ancient Maasai trails that connect the highland craters to Lake Natron are magical, with none of the crowds of the mountain peaks. You're more likely to run into goat herders than a flock of tourists here.

Plus, this route connects the Ngorongoro Crater and Serengeti regions, so you can spend an epic week trekking from one safari to the next. This trip also includes the option to summit Ol Donyo Lengai, an active stratovolcano and the most challenging day hike in Africa.



Day 1: Arrival in Arusha

Day 2-3: Ngorongoro Highlands *The Highlands*

The Highlands is located on the rim of the tranquil Olmoti Crater, near Ngorongoro. Enjoy crater hikes, Maasai village visits, and driving safaris while preparing for your trek.



Day 4-6: Trek to Lake Natron

Mobile Camps & Lake Natron Camp

Maasai guides will now lead you on a multi-day hike through scenic villages and rolling hills to Lake Natron Camp. You'll traverse 7-10 miles daily, and mules carry all gear.



Day 7-9: Lake Natron to Olduvai

Lake Natron Camp & Mobile Camps

Stay at Lake Natron Camp for two nights before beginning the next section of your trek to Olduvai Gorge. You can summit a volcano or relax and enjoy the flamingoes.



Day 10-13: Serengeti

Namiri Plains

Take a car on the last leg of the journey to the Serengeti for a multi-day safari at the comfortably chic Namiri Plains, known for its cheetah population.

Zambia's Finest Walking Safari

Norman Carr pioneered the walking safari in Zambia in the 1950s, and his original camps in South Luangwa National Park remain the best places to explore Africa on foot. They are now owned by Time + Tide, a stylish safari company with award-winning guides. Walking between their four camps will be the wildlife experience of a lifetime for active travelers. The walking season aligns with the dry months of May - November. Walks are led by an expert guide and are done at your own pace – usually lasting around 3-4 hours. We suggest two to three nights at each camp.

Itinerary Overview

Start your walk with a couple of nights to settle into the wild at Luwi, a classic canvas-tented camp. Next, walk to Nsolo Camp, where you may see the resident lion pride, a seasonal colony of carmine bee-eaters, and many leopards. Continue your walk along the Luagwa riverbank to Kakuli and then to Mchenja. Mchenja has a pool overlooking the Luangwa River, where you can enjoy a drink and watch hippos. The last leg of your trip will be a drive to Chinzombo, the best luxury safari camp in Zambia.



Courtesy of Congo
Conservation Company



Gorilla Trekking

Spending an hour with some of our closest wild relatives is possibly the most transformative wildlife experience on earth. We can enable your encounter with either mountain or lowland gorillas, but each experience is unique:

Mountain Gorillas

Volcanoes National Park in Rwanda and Bwindi Impenetrable Forest in Uganda are home to the last mountain gorillas. Only around 1,000 remain in the mountains between the two countries. Both places deliver an incredible experience, but prices are lower in Uganda, and lodges are more luxurious in Rwanda. All travelers start their treks at the ranger station, where they are assigned a guide and a group of habituated gorillas. Depending on their location, it may involve a strenuous hike up the mountain. Porters are available to assist. Permits

must be purchased in advance, which are \$700/day in Uganda and \$1500/day in Rwanda.

Western Lowland Gorillas

You can also see lowland gorillas in the dense rainforests on the western boundary of Odzala-Kokoua National Park in Congo. Congo is safe but undeveloped, and the camps are remote so you may be the only travelers in the entire park. You depart directly from the lodge into the jungle, but gorillas may roam about camp. Permits here are \$400 per day.



FAMILY ITINERARY

A Kenyan Family Adventure

This all-ages itinerary is perfect for the adventurous family looking to take an extended African safari. Kenya has more kid-friendly camps than most countries, along with some of the best wildlife on the continent. Start with the iconic Giraffe Manor before heading to the scenic Laikipia Plateau. Then finish your trip with a longer stay on the vast plains of the Maasai Mara.

Peak season during the Great Migration (August-September) books up quickly, so it's best to plan 1.5 years out. Late April-June and mid-November-December are the rainy seasons. Outside these times, you can find more options, better prices, and still see incredible wildlife.

Family Safari FAQ

A safari is the ultimate family vacation. It will change how your kids see the world and leave you with a lifetime of memories. Taking your family on safari is easier than you might think. Conveniently, most safari lodges are all-inclusive, so you can relax and focus entirely on the experience with your family.

How old do kids need to be?

Children of all ages can safari, but many camps will have minimum ages. These vary across Africa, and different places suit different ages better.

How much will it cost?

Most safaris will offer variable rates depending on age. Infants and toddlers usually stay free, while a half-price rate is often available to

young children. Over 16 pay the adult price. Families with young children must also pay for a private vehicle and guide. However, we suggest doing this anyway because it gives you the flexibility to set your schedule around the kids.

Is childcare available?

The availability of childcare varies widely among camps. Many properties have developed kids' clubs, while others will have full babysitting services.

What about malaria?

Camps control mosquitoes with sprays and netting. You can also take prophylactic medications, but there are also many malaria-free areas in Kenya and South Africa.



Day 1-4: Nairobi

Giraffe Manor

Start your trip with a storybook stay at Giraffe Manor and visit the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust elephant orphanage while you're in Nairobi.



Day 5-8: Laikipia Plateau

Lewa Wilderness

Fly to the malaria-free highlands surrounding Mt. Kenya for your first safari. The weather, horseback riding, and rhino sightings are excellent here.



Day 9-12: Maasai Mara

House in the Wild

The climax of your safari will surely be on the plains of the Maasai Mara. The area is famous for the Great Migration, but there is plentiful game here year-round.



Blue waters of Mozambique / Courtesy of Azura

ROMANTIC ITINERARY

South Africa: Bush to Beach

The Indian Ocean is home to some of the world's best beaches, and they make a wonderful place to dust off after your safari.

A “bush to beach” vacation is an archetypal African itinerary that involves 4-6 days on safari and another 4-6 at a beach resort. It was the format of my honeymoon, and it's a perfect blend of adventure and relaxation for nature-oriented couples.

You can spin this trip in many ways based on your destination and camp

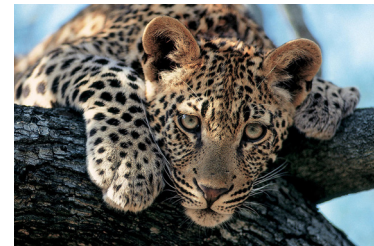
preferences, but this is one of the most popular South African itineraries. It begins with fine dining in the Cape Winelands before a safari in the greater Kruger area. From there, it's a short flight to the blue waters of Mozambique for the relaxing conclusion of your trip.



Day 1-4: Cape Winelands

Babylonsoren

Arrive in Cape Town and transfer to the scenic Winelands. We love the gardens at Babylonsoren, but charming food and wine hotels abound here.



Day 5-8: Sabi Sands

Londolozi

Londolozi is the original luxury safari lodge in South Africa, and now it has a pioneering wellness program. It's also the best place to see leopards in the wild.



Day 9-12: Mozambique

Azura Benguerra Island

Bazaruto National Park has crystal clear water, world-class snorkeling, tall dunes for exploration, and a handful of excellent resorts to stay in after your safari.



More at FaunaTravel.com

See more unique itineraries on our website, or email scott@faunatravel.com to design a custom trip.



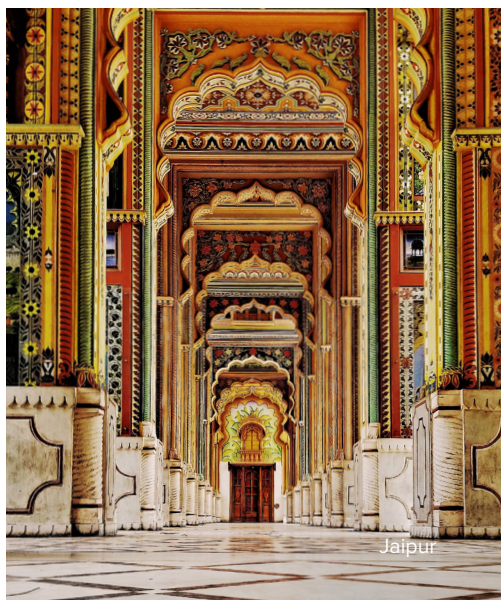
Tiger in Pench National Park / Courtesy of Jamtarra Wilderness Camp

The Indian Safari

We love a safari in India as much as any in Africa, but it's a safari of a different flavor. There are tigers, leopards, bears, antelope, and elephants, but you can also eat incredible food and see cultural icons like the Taj Mahal. Adventurous travelers should include time to track snow leopards through the Himalayas.



Leopard at Suján Jawai



Jaipur

◆◆◆ Tiger Insights

A safari in India can be as compelling as any in Africa, but unlike driving up to a pride of lions in the Serengeti, tracking a tiger can require hours of listening. However, the moment the tiger is revealed is much more profound for your patient efforts. The open forests you're waiting in also make for incredible birding and photography.

Tiger safaris operate in the dry season from October - April, and the best months are December - March. Like gorilla trekking, you'll need a permit to enter a specific tiger reserve zone at a particular time to control visitor numbers. Popular parks like Ranthambore can still feel busy, but there are over 50 reserves in the country to explore.

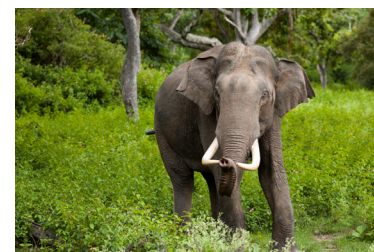
Our Favorite Safari Camps



Jamtarra Wilderness Camp

Madhya Pradesh

Pench is an excellent place to see tigers, and Jamtarra is a stylish canvas camp that will connect you to both nature and the local community.



Evolve Back Kabini

Karnataka

South India has excellent big cat viewing, and Evolve Back is on the cusp of two of the best areas, Nagarhole and Bandipur National Parks.



Suján Jawai

Rajasthan

This luxury tented camp sits on one of India's few large private game reserves. The dramatic rocky hills are one of the world's best places to track leopards on foot.



Giraffe Manor

Meet Fauna Travel Designer, Scott Dubois

After working in travel editorial for years, I decided to pursue my dream of starting a travel company that creates the world's best outdoor travel experiences. I'm an avid gardener and hiker with a background rooted in environmental education, geography, and visual design. I've worked as an elementary school teacher and a web designer, but my most recent job was as a creative director at a storied luxury travel publication.

While working there, I stayed in dozens of the world's best hotels and explored the stunning landscapes they were located in. Those days in nature changed how I see the world, and I want to share that through Fauna Travel.

“It’s not about selling travel—it’s about building positive relationships and connecting people with nature.”

— *Scott Dubois, Fauna Founder*

My wife, Wynn, is an accomplished editorial and advertising photographer, and together we have traveled the world. Nowadays, we have two young children in tow, which allows us to see the world through their eyes.

“When I contacted Fauna, I had decision fatigue and zero bandwidth to arrange an escape when I needed one. However, they were able to understand what I wanted from my trip with a brief phone call and quickly made the impossible possible! It was a dream spot I would have never found on my own! In 24 hours, they booked private cars to remote places, wellness services, and activities in nature every day.”

— *Fauna Client*

FaunaTravel.com

This issue was written and designed by Scott Dubois
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