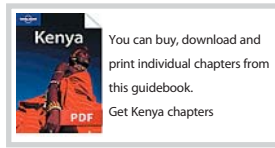


# Getting Started



Planning a trip to Kenya is a pleasure in itself: the country is so versatile it's virtually a blank canvas, catering equally for thrill seekers and sun seekers, budget backpackers and high-end high rollers, those who like it tough and those who just want to get going. Whatever you want to do here, you'll discover that it's pretty straightforward to sort yourself out on the ground – in fact, in many cases you'll find that advance planning is often trickier and less reliable than dealing with everything in person once you arrive.

## WHEN TO GO

There are a number of factors to take into account when considering what time of year to visit Kenya. The main tourist season is January and February, when the weather is generally considered to be the best – many areas of the country are hot and dry during these months. It's also when you'll find the largest concentrations of birdlife on the Rift Valley lakes. At this time, the animals in the wildlife parks tend to congregate more around the watercourses as other sources dry up, making them easier to spot. However, the parks can get crowded and rates for accommodation generally go through the roof. Make sure you avoid Christmas and Easter unless you want to pay a fortune.

June to October could be called the 'shoulder season' (see p345), as the weather is still dry. During this period the annual wildebeest migration takes place, with thousands of animals streaming into the Masai Mara National Reserve from the Serengeti in July and October.

During the long rains (the low season, spanning from March to the end of May) things are much quieter, and you can get some good deals; this is also the case during the short rains from October to December. The rains generally don't affect your ability to get around unless you're right out in the sticks (although Amboseli National Park can be flooded); it's just that you may get rained on, especially in the Central Highlands and western Kenya.

If you're planning to visit Lamu, you might want to time your visit to coincide with the centuries-old Maulid Festival (see p218).

## DON'T LEAVE HOME WITHOUT...

- Sunglasses and hat
- Binoculars
- Answers – on a range of topics, for discussions with inquisitive locals
- Patience – for everyday delays, especially on public transport
- Vaccination card, insect repellent and malaria prophylaxis
- Disposable nappies – if you actually have kids
- Common sense – for avoiding scams (p354)
- Lots of camera film
- Space in your bag – for oversized souvenirs
- Entry visa – if you're feeling organised you could also arrange this before setting out, though they are available on arrival at most airports and land borders. See p366 for full details.

## COSTS & MONEY

Travelling in Kenya can cost as much or as little as you like, depending on what kind of standards you're happy with. In general, for the midrange traveller staying in small hotels with a decent level of comfort, eating the occasional Western meal, using matatus and taxis, taking in the odd museum and treating yourself to a beer of an evening should come out in the region of KSh3000 per day. Budget travellers could get this down to as little as KSh800 by foregoing private bathrooms, eating in Kenyan canteens, walking or taking local buses and skipping the booze, while top-end types can find themselves paying anything from KSh8000 upwards for a taste of the high life. Accommodation is the biggest single expense, and staying in Nairobi or on the coast will push costs up sharply (see p345).

On top of this, you'll probably want to allow some extra cash for pricey tourist activities such as trekking, diving and other excursions. The biggest one-off outlay for most visitors will be visiting the national parks, whether on a safari or independently. Basic camping packages cost from US\$70 per day (see p64); staying in lodges adds at least another US\$50, while using air transport and visiting the country's most exclusive getaways could run over US\$500! Package deals from Europe can offer good value out of season, especially if you want to stay around the coast.

## TRAVEL LITERATURE

Reading up before you go is a great way to get a feel for Kenya – all kinds of foreign authors have written on the country, and the prospective visitor can choose from a wide range of perspectives on every facet of its culture.

Already a firm favourite among animal lovers and conservationists, *A Primate's Memoir: Love, Death and Baboons in East Africa*, by Robert M. Sapolsky, is an engaging account of a young primatologist's years working in Kenya.

Equally personal and a bit less serious at heart, David Bunnun's entertaining *Tick Bite Fever* tells of the author's accident-prone childhood in Africa, complete with suicidal dogs and Kenya Cowboys.

For a more serious look at social and cultural issues, read *No Man's Land: an Investigative Journey Through Kenya and Tanzania*, by George Monbiot, which follows the fortunes of the region's nomadic tribes.

Bill Bryson turns his social conscience and trademark gentle humour on the region in his *African Diary*, concentrating on a seven-day trip to Kenya. All profits (and the author's royalties) go to CARE International.

Londoner Daisy Waugh provides a city girl's take on the thoroughly untouristy town of Isiolo in *A Small Town in Africa*, giving a more modern alternative to the many settlers' tales in print.

Increasingly hard to find but worth the effort, *Journey to the Jade Sea*, by John Hillaby, recounts this prolific travel writer's epic trek to Lake Turkana in the days before the Kenyan tourist boom.

Finally, whether you like her attitude towards the natives or not, *Out of Africa*, by Karen Blixen (Isak Dinesen), remains perhaps the single definitive account of the colonial experience in Africa.

## INTERNET RESOURCES

**Artmatters** ([www.artmatters.info](http://www.artmatters.info)) Information on arts and culture from Kenya and East Africa.

**Destination Kenya** ([www.destinationkenya.com](http://www.destinationkenya.com)) Handy directory of hotels, safari operators and other companies offering tourist activities.

**Jambo Kenya** ([www.jambokenya.com](http://www.jambokenya.com)) A broad-based information website with lots of tourist information.

## HOW MUCH?

Local matatu ride: KSh20

Plate of stew/

*biryani*/pilau: KSh120

Large juice: KSh60

Pair of *kangas*: KSh350

Taxi home: KSh400

## LONELY PLANET INDEX

Litre of petrol/gas: KSh72

Litre of bottled water:

KSh55

Bottle of Tusker: KSh80

Souvenir T-shirt: KSh1000

*Sambusa* (street snack):

KSh10

## TOP TENS

### Books

Reading about Kenya could take a lifetime, with everything from fiction to memoirs and social analysis covering the country. These favourites encompass the broad spectrum of Kenyan writing and writing on Kenya. See p41 for more on local literature.

- *Mzungu Boy* (2005) Meja Mwangi
- *Petals of Blood* (1977) Ngugi wa Thiong'o
- *Flame Trees of Thika* (2000) Elspeth Huxley
- *I Laugh So I Won't Cry: Kenya's Women Tell the Stories of Their Lives* (2005) ed Helena Halperin
- *A Primate's Memoir* (2004) Robert M Sapolsky
- *The In-Between World of Vikram Lall* (2005) MG Vassanji
- *Tick Bite Fever* (2004) David Bennun
- *The Green Belt Movement: Sharing the Approach and the Experience* (2005) Wangari Maathai
- *Wildlife Wars: My Battle to Save Kenya's Elephants* (2002) Richard Leakey
- *The Tree Where Man Was Born* (1972) Peter Matthiessen

### Films

Kenya's spectacular landscapes are a magnet for film-makers, serving as a backdrop for a thousand human stories. This selection highlights fact and fiction, bringing together Hollywood and Nairobi's disparate approaches to the medium. For more on the Kenyan film industry, see p42.

- *Nowhere in Africa* (2002) Director: Caroline Link
- *Enough is Enough* (2005) Director: Kibaara Kaugi
- *Safari ya Jamhuri* (Road to Freedom; 2003) Director: Wanjiru M Njendu
- *Africa, the Serengeti* (1994) Director: George Casey
- *The Constant Gardener* (2005) Director: Fernando Meirelles
- *Babu's Babies* (2003) Director: Christine Bala
- *The Oath* (2004) Director: Nathan Collett
- *14 Million Dreams* (2003) Director: Miles Roston
- *Born Free* (1966) Director: James Hill
- *Out of Africa* (1985) Director: Sydney Pollack

### Photo Books

Kenya has provided a fertile field of inspiration for generations of photographers, and in many Nairobi bookshops you can't move for the piles of glossy pictorial tomes showcasing every aspect of the country's geographical and cultural marvels. These are just some of the best examples.

- *Africa Adorned* (1984) Angela Fisher
- *Shootback* (2000) ed Lana Wong
- *African Ark* (1990) Carol Beckwith and Angela Fisher
- *Maasai* (1990) Tepilit Ole Saitoti and Carol Beckwith
- *Turkana: Kenya's Nomads of the Jade Sea* (1997) Nigel Pavitt
- *African Visions: Diary of an African Photographer* (2001) Mirella Ricciardi
- *This Is Kenya* (2005) Jean Hartley
- *Journey Through Kenya* (1994) Mohammed Amin, Duncan Willets and Brian Tetley
- *Through Open Doors: A View of Asian Cultures in Kenya* (1983) Cynthia Salvadori
- *African Ceremonies* (1999) Carol Beckwith and Angela Fisher

**Kenya Association of Tour Operators** ([www.katokenya.org](http://www.katokenya.org)) Contains the full list of KATO-approved member companies.

**Kenya Meteorological Office** ([www.meteo.go.ke](http://www.meteo.go.ke)) Local and national weather forecasts.

**Kenya Wildlife Service** ([www.kws.org](http://www.kws.org)) Up-to-date conservation news and detailed information on national parks and reserves.

**Kenyalogy** ([www.kenyalogy.com](http://www.kenyalogy.com)) Tourist information and safari guide for visitors, with plenty of practical advice.

**Kenyaweb** ([www.kenyaweb.com](http://www.kenyaweb.com)) An excellent and varied source of information on everything to do with Kenya.

**Lonely Planet** ([www.lonelyplanet.com](http://www.lonelyplanet.com)) Well, how could we not plug ourselves? Information on travelling to Kenya and elsewhere, travel news and the Thorn Tree bulletin board.

**Magical Kenya** ([www.magicalkenya.com](http://www.magicalkenya.com)) The official website of the Kenya Tourism Board; has some good information on sights and activities.

**National Museums of Kenya** ([www.museums.or.ke](http://www.museums.or.ke)) Information on museums and projects across Kenya.

**Nation Newspaper** ([www.nationmedia.com](http://www.nationmedia.com)) Kenya's foremost newspaper has a very good website with news, information and regular features on tourist issues.

# Itineraries

## CLASSIC ROUTES

### SUN, SURF & SWAHILI

Two Weeks/Mombasa to Lamu

The best place to start here is the coastal gateway of Mombasa, where exploring the city's **Old Town** (p160) is a must. You can then choose whether to head north or south; for this itinerary we're starting with the latter, as it makes a nice progression.

The first stop on the way down is quiet **Tiwi Beach** (p170), a tranquil white-sand paradise perfect for self-caterers. Just down the road, you can head on to **Diani Beach** (p172) for a taste of the more full-on resort experience, with all the activities you can handle.

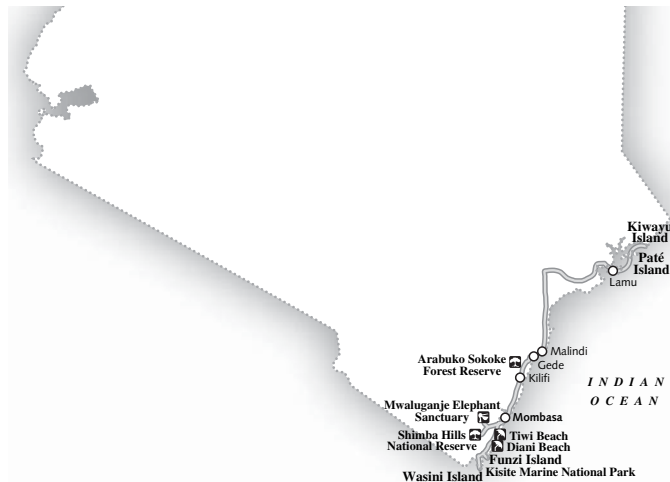
At the far southern end, near the border with Tanzania, **Funzi** (p179) and **Wasini** (p179) Islands provide a dose of real, unspoiled coastal life, and also afford easy access to the excellent **Kisite Marine National Park** (p180).

On the way back north, detour off the main road to visit the densely forested **Shimba Hills National Reserve** (p169), home to the rare sable antelope, and the **Mwaluganje Elephant Sanctuary** (p170).

Once you've passed Mombasa and the northern beach strip, a stop at the charming small town of **Kilifi** (p196) is essential, if only to admire the spectacular creek views from the massive road bridge. From here you can also visit the **Arabuko Sokoke Forest Reserve** (p201) and **Gede ruins** (p202), two real highlights of the coast, en route to the historic town of **Malindi** (p205), now a popular resort centre.

Finally, at the end of the trail awaits the wonderful **Lamu archipelago** (p212), tropical paradise and Swahili heritage gem. As well as exploring the old town and taking the mandatory dhow trip, the much quieter **Paté** (p226) and **Kiwayu** (p228) Islands are well worth two or three days of your time.

This 1500km itinerary takes in all the major spots covered by most safari companies and ends up on the coast for a change of scene. It should take around three weeks, including travelling time, and can easily be broken down into separate sections, such as a five-day trip to the Masai Mara and Lake Nakuru.



### CLASSIC KENYA

Three Weeks/Nairobi to Mombasa

For those who want to see the jewels in Kenya's tourist crown, this selection of popular parks brings together a wide variety of landscapes, all within easy reach of the country's two main international airports.

Starting in **Nairobi** (p95), as most people do, the first port of call is the world-renowned **Masai Mara National Reserve** (p286), possibly the definitive slice of safari Africa. It's no coincidence that this is the most popular park in Kenya, and the annual wildebeest migration is truly spectacular.

Take three days or so here, then it's north to **Lake Nakuru National Park** (p243), where one or two days is generally enough to make the most of this flamingo-packed lakeland.

From here the trail leads northeast to the **Samburu National Reserve** (p324), a dusty red contrast to the Mara savanna.

Take a couple of days here, then head to **Mt Kenya** (p261), Africa's second-highest mountain, where a decent trek will take up a good five to six days.

From the giddy heights of the mountains you can head to **Amboseli National Park** (p137), where the even higher peak of Kilimanjaro looms over the open plains.

Then it's a straightforward drive to **Tsavo West National Park** (p143) and on to **Tsavo East National Park** (p145), Kenya's largest and wildest wildlife parks. Together with the private ranches and conservancies around the outside of the parks, these are worth at least four days of your time.

Finally, head down the highway to the ancient Swahili port of **Mombasa** (p154). From here you can fly straight home or start a whole new journey, exploring the Kenyan coast.



The convenient north-south layout of the coastal road system makes this 500km trip very straightforward and completely flexible timewise. You could travel end to end in a few days, but two to three weeks gives you ample time to explore all the major sites.

## ROADS LESS TRAVELLED

### DESERT FRONTIERS

Heading out into the wild is one of the great Kenyan experiences, and some of the tracks here are very unbeaten indeed – this is one itinerary where the journey is so much more than any single destination. The focal point of the trip is Lake Turkana, the vast lake that dominates the northwest corner of the country.

On the eastern side, the gateway to this region is the small town of **Isiolo** (p319), north of Mt Kenya. There are several good national parks and wildlife reserves in this area, and a side trip out to **Wamba** (p327), in the Matthews Range, is great for walkers.

Alternatively, you can plough straight in to the desert route and head up the rough road to **Marsabit** (p327), the dusty tribal centre of this remote area, which boasts a fine national park.

Assuming you're not tempted to hop over the border to Ethiopia at **Moyale** (p330), a real wild frontier, take the western loop to Turkana via **North Horr** (p337), heading for the tiny lakeside settlement of **Loyangalani** (p336), a base for trips into even more remote parts of the country.

From here the trail leads south again, passing all kinds of scenic zones and the stopover towns of **South Horr** (p335) and **Baragoi** (p335). It's worth stopping for a couple of days in **Maralal** (p332), to replenish supplies and sample the joys of camel trekking.

You could end the trip here, but for the full effect head up to the other side of Turkana, passing through the lush western area around **Marich** (p339) to reach sweltering **Lodwar** (p340) and the lovely lake shore at **Eliye Springs** (p342). The true hard core can even head up to **Lokichoggio** (p343) and gaze longingly towards the Sudanese border.

Depending on the kind of route you take, covering the full scope of this extended wilderness trip could clock up well over 2000km and take anything up to a month with stops.



### Three Weeks/Isiolo to Lokichoggio

### WESTERN WETLANDS

### Two Weeks/Naivasha to Narok

To the west of Nairobi lie some of Kenya's most fertile and scenic spots, characterised by bodies of water and often neglected by visitors in favour of the high-profile national parks.

An excellent place to start is **Lake Naivasha** (p233) in the Rift Valley, a popular freshwater lake with easy access to several national parks and scenic spots. Then it's an easy hop to **Lake Nakuru** (p243) and the smaller lakes **Bogoria** (p246) and **Baringo** (p247), with their wealth of birdlife.

From here, the road west leads past the **Lake Kamnarok** and **Kerio Valley National Reserves** (p309), perfect and little-explored territory for trekkers.

Depending on time, you can take the more direct Eldoret road or the longer Cherangani Hills loop to reach the agricultural town of **Kitale** (p310) and the lovely **Saiwa Swamp National Park** (p315), which is a real wetland treat.

Heading south now, the **Kakamega Forest Reserve** (p304) is an essential stop for walkers and birdlovers alike, and can justify a couple of extra days' stay if you have time. Then continue down the road to the region's main city **Kisumu** (p290), on the shore of Lake Victoria, for a few urban comforts.

Skirting the Winam Gulf, you'll reach the busy service town of **Kisii** (p299), a handy hub for Lake Victoria's small islands, and the tiny **Ruma National Park** (p297), a rarely visited gem.

At the far end of this south road is **Isebania** (p375), where you could cross into Tanzania. Otherwise, if you have a 4WD you can travel the hard way through the **Masai Mara** (p286), ending up in **Narok** (p285). From here you can head back to Nairobi or start the whole circuit again.



This two-week circuit takes in the best of Kenya's temperate western zone, from the Rift Valley to Lake Victoria, in a busy round trip of around 1500km. An extra week can give you more time for the major parks.

## TAILORED TRIPS

### NATIONAL PARKS: SAVANNA, FOREST & MOUNTAIN

If you have your own transport, it's possible to visit a wide selection of Kenya's parks in a month, starting from Mombasa and ending up in Nairobi (or vice versa).

Just south of Mombasa, **Shimba Hills National Reserve** (p169) is a fine slice of protected forest. As you leave the coast, the road bisects the **Tsavo National Park** (p142), the country's largest, and also skirts the less-established **Chyulu Hills National Park** (p140).

A short detour takes you through **Amboseli National Park** (p137), a perennial favourite, then go via Nairobi to reach the **Masai Mara National Reserve** (p286), the country's most popular safari spot.

North of the Mara, western Kenya holds several excellent parks, including **Kakamega Forest Reserve** (p304) and the **Saiwa Swamp National Park** (p315).

Heading back east you'll find **Lake Bogoria National Reserve** (p246) and the popular **Lake Nakuru National Park** (p243).

Entering the Central Highlands, **Aberdare National Park** (p256) is a good stop before heading north for **Samburu, Buffalo Springs and Shaba National Reserves** (p324) and the **Marsabit National Park** (p329).

Returning to Nairobi, go east round Mt Kenya to visit **Meru National Park** (p277) and the small **Oi Donyo Sabuk National Park** (p281), then finish up with the incongruously urban **Nairobi National Park** (p125).

### FOOTSTEPS ACROSS THE LANDSCAPE

Keen walkers and trekkers should never be far from a promising path in Kenya, and a three-week circuit allows intensive exploration of some of the country's best trails.

Starting at the coast, **Arabuko Sokoke Forest Reserve** (p201) is crisscrossed with walking tracks and offers guided bird walks. Off the main Nairobi–Mombasa road, the **Sagala Hills** (p149) and **Taita Hills** (p149) also offer a plethora of possibilities away from the usual tourist routes.

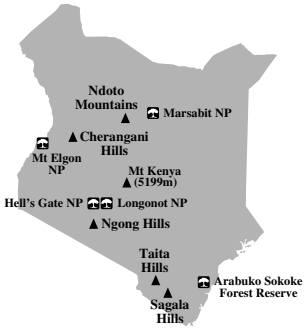
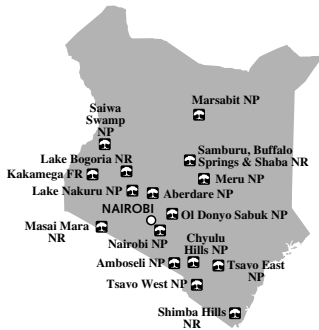
South of Nairobi, the green and pleasant **Ngong Hills** (p130) are a prime rambling destination. Nearby, in the Rift Valley, **Longonot National Park** (p231) offers trekkers the chance to wander up Mt Longonot, while craggy **Hell's Gate National Park** (p237) is great to explore on foot.

Western Kenya has huge potential for serious trekkers, particularly on **Mt Elgon** (p312), by the Ugandan border. The **Cherangani Hills** (p315) are

another prime area to get lost in for a couple of days or more.

Heading north, the **Ndoto Mountains** (p327) is a great remote mountain range, while Mt Marsabit provides the exercise in **Marsabit National Park** (p329).

And of course, finally, there's **Mt Kenya** (p261), the granddaddy of them all. Wherever else you walk, this one's essential!



### ACTIVITIES: LAND, SEA & SKY

Fans of an active lifestyle are spoilt for choice here, and sampling all the options across the country could easily take up two weeks or more.

**Diani Beach** (p172), south of Mombasa, is a great place to start, with the full range of water sports plus other pastimes such as quad biking and forest walks.

Seaborne activities are popular along the rest of the coast as well. **Malindi** (p205) is the region's major deep-sea fishing centre, while **Wasini Island** (p179) offers superb diving and **Lamu** (p212) is perfect for dhow trips and windsurfing.

Heading inland, the Taita Discovery Centre, in **Rukinga Wildlife Conservancy** (p149), runs conservation programs for volunteers and visitors alike.

Due south of Nairobi, **Lake Magadi** (p131) makes an interesting detour to investigate the hot springs and picnic in the arid wastes.

Over to the west, **Hell's Gate National Park** (p237) is the best spot in the country for mountain biking, while the **Masai Mara National Reserve** (p286) specialises in balloon safaris.

You can also take to the air in the Central Highlands, at the gliding club in **Nyeri** (p254). Nearby, the **Aberdare National Park** (p256) offers excellent river fishing.

Finally, real adrenaline junkies can hit the rapids for some white-water rafting on the **Ewaso Ngiro River** (p350).

### TRIBAL TOUR

If you're interested in meeting Kenya's fascinating tribal peoples, these are some good places to seek them out.

Just outside Nairobi, **Bomas of Kenya** (p124) provides a touristic but interesting overview of various tribal cultures.

Kenya's most famous tribe is the Maasai; you'll see them on a daily basis all over southern Kenya, but their true heartland is of course the **Masai Mara** (p285).

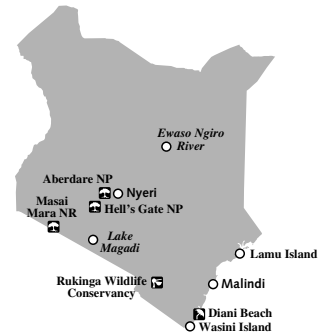
Out west is the domain of the influential Luo, centred in **Kisumu** (p290); little of their traditional culture remains.

The Pokot, found north of Kitale and the **Cherangani Hills** (p315), maintain their age-old pastoral lifestyles, including castle rustling!

On the other side of Lake Turkana, the Samburu are just as distinctive as the Maasai, and **South Horr** (p335) is a good place to encounter them. Further north you'll find the Turkana and Rendille, warrior cultures based around **Marsabit** (p327), and the tiny El-Molo tribe at **Loyangalani** (p336).

Back down in the Central Highlands, the Kikuyu are Kenya's largest tribal group, with their traditional homeland around **Mt Kenya** (p261).

Of the coastal Mijikenda peoples, the Digo, near **Diani Beach** (p172), are the easiest to visit. **Bombolulu Workshops** (p167) and **Ngomongo Villages** (p194), located north of Mombasa, showcase various tribes for tourists, and **Lamu old town** (p213) is the best surviving example of Swahili culture.



# Snapshot

Kenya has long been regarded as an island of stability in Africa. That is not to say that things have been uneventful. After much international prodding and internal dissent through the 1990s, Kenya was able to finally embrace multiparty democracy and shrug off Daniel arap Moi's stranglehold on power in late 2002. Somewhat unexpectedly Moi resigned at the end of his term and the Kenyan electorate overwhelmingly rejected his designated successor by voting in Mwai Kibaki and the National Rainbow Coalition (Narc). The pundits heralded a new chapter in the saga of Kenyan politics – but things are not always as they seem.

Kibaki rode to victory as an anti-corruption champion, but little progress was made on that front. In February 2005 the UK High Commissioner to Kenya Sir Edward Clay lamented a familiar litany of ills that still plague the country: abuse of authority, conflict of interest, patronage, nepotism, and favouritism and corruption, both small- and large-scale, in all manner of guises. A corruption inquiry was promptly launched, resulting in several government ministers threatening to resign and the vice president admitting there was 'massive corruption' at senior levels of government.

Bearing this in mind, it is little wonder that long-held dream of economic prosperity has been unforthcoming. Kenya has fallen 20 places on the UN Human Development Index (HDI) over the past three years.

Nonetheless, it seems that the independent spirit of the Kenyan people cannot be repressed. In a blunt rebuke to Mr Kibaki in November 2005 the electorate voted against proposed constitutional changes. These would have been the first constitutional changes in Kenya for 40 years, with some observers claiming they would have handed Kibaki more power and led the country back into shady political territory of earlier times. During the campaign 'Yes' and 'No' camps came to be associated with bananas and oranges respectively in an effort to help illiterate voters. Never before had humble fruit assumed such political significance. The campaign was tense yet orderly, with Mr Kibaki congratulating the electorate for participating in such a historic occasion in a peaceful fashion. He then promptly dismissed his entire cabinet. Kenya watchers are no doubt puzzling over what may transpire from here.

While internal political life remains tumultuous, Kenya is still a regional heavy hitter. It has played a major role in the (thus far fruitless) international attempts to stabilise neighbouring Somalia, and after years of false starts, Kenya has finally joined hands with Tanzania and Uganda in a customs union – paving the way for full revival of the long-defunct East African Community.

Perhaps most indicative of Kenya's sense of self is its recently announced intention to host the 2016 Olympics. No African country has ever hosted the Olympics and Kenya has until to 2009 to prepare its bid. Despite internal ructions and the daily struggle that life entails for many, it seems Kenyans retain an innate self-confidence, a belief that things are on the improve and a desire to see their homeland take a prominent place on the world stage.

## FAST FACTS

Population: 31.6 million

Total fertility rate: 3.47 children per woman

Population growth rate: 2.6%

Workforce engaged in agriculture: 75%

Highest point:

Mt Kenya 5199m

Land boundaries: 3477km

Number of Kenyan deaths in the Boxing Day 2004 tsunami: one

Oldest town: Lamu (est 15th century)

Number of times Kenya has not won the Olympic steeplechase: none

# The Authors



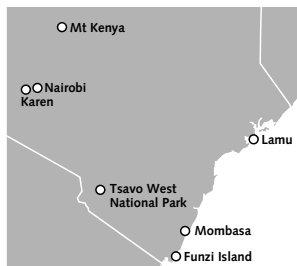
## TOM PARKINSON

**Coordinating Author,  
Nairobi, Around Nairobi, Southern Kenya, The Coast**

Tom's association with Kenya began just across the border, gazing north from the Serengeti. As co-author on the previous edition of this book he covered 10,000km in the west and north. Second time around, the delights of Nairobi and the coast conspired to give him another perspective on Kenya, from night-clubs and Swahili ruins to barracuda teeth and charity dinners, with a few new scars to show for it. Having worked extensively in North and Central Africa for Lonely Planet, Tom is no stranger to potholes, predators and pit latrines, but finds Kenya keeps giving him reasons to come back.

### My Favourite Trip

As alluring as the wilderness always is, Kenya's sheer variety gets me every time. Once I've had my fill of good food in Karen (p129) and late nights in Nairobi (p116), it's time to head down to steamy Mombasa (p154), taking the Namanga border route to pass through the Ngulia Hills in Tsavo West (p143). For pure escapism I'd have to head south to Funzi Island (p179), but otherwise it's a leisurely meander north towards Lamu (p212), my all-time favourite tropical island and Swahili paradise. And if all the dhows, juice and seafood get too much, a short flight and a crowded matatu can take me to Mt Kenya (p261), for glaciers, rainforest and East Africa's best trekking. Spice of life? You betcha!



## MATT PHILLIPS

**The Rift Valley, Central Highlands,  
Western Kenya, Northern Kenya**

Matt first travelled in Kenya while on an independent journey that saw him cross 21 African nations en route from Cape Town to Ceuta (that wee Spanish enclave in northern Morocco). He knew he'd love it before his passport's first Kenyan stamp was even dry – moments after stepping over from Uganda, the lone cloud in a dark midnight sky erupted with lightning and flashed like a light bulb for what seemed like an eternity. Since then Matt's done his best to experience all that's supernatural about Kenya, whether crossing the bleak northern deserts, freezing his assets atop Mt Kenya, tracking hyenas in the Mara and, yes, getting soaked while nature puts on light shows.

### My Favourite Trip

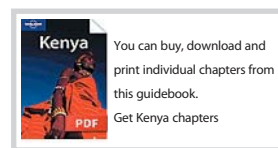
I'd start in Eliye Springs (p342), beneath the palms on Lake Turkana's gloriously isolated western shore. A long journey south sees me climbing through the lush Cherangani Hills (p315) en route to the heavenly cheese sanctuary of Eldoret (p306). With my tummy full, I head north to Turkana's eastern shore. Stopping at panoramic Lesiolo (p335) is mandatory, before I trade glances with striking Samburu tribespeople in South Horr (p335). I next head across Mt Kulal's unearthly shattered lava fields (p336) before the Jade Sea and Turkana tribes at Loyangalani (p336) take my breath away. From there I head east to climb Mt Marsabit (p327) and then south to trek within the Ndoto Mountains (p327).



## CONTRIBUTING AUTHORS

**Will Gourlay** first fell for Kenya watching a sunset from the Ngong Hills. Subsequent jaunts to Lamu, Lake Turkana and the Western Highlands had him by turns exhausted, dusty and sunburnt, but always exhilarated. A *miraa*-chewing episode with Somali women in taffeta dresses only served to heighten his exhilaration... Will wrote the Snapshot (p24) and updated The Culture (p35), Food & Drink (p89) and Tribes of Kenya (p43) chapters. He is a commissioning editor in Lonely Planet's Melbourne office.

**Dr Caroline Evans** wrote the Health chapter (p385). Caroline studied medicine at the University of London and completed general practice training in Cambridge. She is the medical adviser to the Nomad Travel clinic, a private travel health clinic in London, and is also a GP specialising in travel medicine. She has been an expedition doctor for Raleigh International and Coral Cay expeditions.



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### LONELY PLANET AUTHORS

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