

## **AORTIC 2009 Pre- and Post-conference Tours**

Regions covered by programmes :

### **Ngorongoro Crater**

The conservation area covers approximately 8,288 sq. kms, is 16 to 19 kms across the floor, and surrounds three lakes - Natron, Eyasi and Manyara. Physical features include extensive plains, highland plateau, volcanic mountains and scenic craters as well as superb mountain forest.

There is a shallow soda lake, springs and streams of fresh water as well as swamps. The crater floor has beautiful grasslands carrying an estimated 30,000 large mammals. This high concentration of resident animals offers a tremendous spectacle. Bird life is also rich with over 350 species identified in this area.

Ngorongoro Crater is not a national park, Maasai pastoralists are permitted to graze their animals within the area, but, thanks to scrupulous restrictions on human activity, it remains a paradise of nature.

### **Serengeti Sanctuary**

Serengeti is easily Tanzania's most famous national park, and it's also the largest, 14,763 square kilometres of protected area that borders Kenya's Masai Mara Game Park. Its far-reaching plains of endless grass, tinged with the twisted shadows of acacia trees, have made it the quintessential image of a wild and untarnished Africa. Its large stone kopjes are home to rich ecosystems, and the sheer magnitude and scale of life that the plains support is staggering.

The park has varied zones in which each ecosystem is subtly different. Seronera in the centre of the park is the most popular and most easily visited area. The Grumeti River in the Western Corridor is the location for the dramatic river crossing during the wildebeest migration. Maswa Game Reserve to the south offers a remote part of the park rewarding in its game-viewing and privacy, and Lobo near the Kenyan border offers a chance to see plentiful game during the dry season.

### **Lake Manyara National Park**

Your first view as you approach Lake Manyara National Park is spectacular, regardless of direction. When you approach it from the east the Rift Valley escarpment looms on the horizon forming an impressive backdrop to the lake. If you come from the west and pause at the top of the escarpment, the Park lies in a green strip below you, the lake glistening in the sunlight.

The Park is famous for its tree climbing lions which prefer the acacias. Manyara is also famous for its concentrations of elephant.

### **Tarangire National Park**

Covers approximately 2600 square kilometers and, in the dry season, is second only to the Ngorongoro Crater Conservation Area in concentrations of wildlife. Tarangire lies to the south of the large, open grass plains of southern Maasailand, and derives its name from the Tarangire River, which provides permanent water for wildlife in the area.

It is the vast number of baobabs that first capture the eye as you enter Tarangire National Park. The gently rolling countryside is dotted with these majestic trees, which seem to dwarf the animals that feed beneath them.

The park is spectacular in the dry season when many of the migratory wildlife species come back to the permanent waters of Tarangire River. Huge herds of wildebeest, zebras, elephants, eland and oryx gather to stay in Tarangire until the onset of the rains when they migrate again to good grazing areas.

### **Selous**

The name derives from hunter-explorer Frederick Courtenay Selous, a naturalist and conservationist as well as a hunter. He was killed in the First World War in the Beho Beho region of the Reserve.

The Selous is a vast tract of untouched wilderness, inhabited only by wildlife and a few small-tented camps. Exploration by boat on Rufiji River and on foot with professional guides adds an extra dimension to game viewing, while enabling visitors to get a much closer feel for nature and the wilderness of Africa. A boat trip on the Rufiji river exposes one to tall Borassus palms that tower above the riverbanks, hippo and crocodile abound and the bird life provides a never-ending movement of colour.

The Selous National reserve is bigger than Switzerland, and second only to the Serengeti in its concentration of wildlife. The Reserve, wild and untarnished, has a varied terrain of rolling savannah woodland, Miombo forestland, grassland plains, rocky outcrops, the Majestic Rufiji River and surrounding lakes.

Tanzania is home to one of the single largest remaining elephant populations in the world. Most of these elephants are found in the remote and wildly beautiful Selous Game Reserve, a World Heritage Site. Unique and teeming with multitude of big game, crocodile, hippo and wild dog.

### **Zanzibar**

The name Zanzibar came from a combination of two Arabic words, 'Zinj', meaning black, and 'barr', being the Arabic word for land, the result meaning 'Land of the Blacks'.

Zanzibar is a series of many islands, the main ones being Unguja and Pemba and lies off the coast of Tanzania in the Indian Ocean. In addition to the two main islands, there are many other islands and islets in the Zanzibar archipelago which stretches from the top of Pemba to the south point of Unguja.



Zanzibar is famous for once being the commercial centre of East Africa and the last place to abolish the slave trade. Today it combines ancient Islamic ruins, noble Arabic houses with miles of white palm fringed beaches and coves.

The ocean offers warm clear blue waters, idyllic islands excellent reefs for snorkelling and diving, fantastic deep sea fishing, water sports and of course delicious fresh fish. And if you thought that wasn't enough, visiting the Spice plantations of cloves, cinnamon, nutmeg, vanilla, cardamom and others, or haggling for carvings in the Central Market is great fun too.

Most of the population lives in the more fertile regions of the north and west. The beaches and the reefs on the eastern coasts make them ideal for fishing villages, tourist guesthouses and resorts.



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