



MADA HOTELS

Reflections

KILIMA SAFARI CAMP

ELEPHANTS: Once again under threat?



NKEIYAN NALEPO

My dream is
bigger than
Kilimanjaro



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EXCITING TIMES AHEAD FOR MADA AND ITS CUSTOMERS



Welcome to the sixth edition of Reflections – the annual in-room and corporate magazine of the Mada Hotels group.

This 72-page edition of Reflections is published at an exciting time for Mada Hotels as we expand our property portfolio in Kenya and broaden the areas of operation of our ballooning company, which is now based at three locations in Kenya and Tanzania.

During 2013 we are refurbishing and upgrading the newest member of the Mada family, Hunters Lodge – an iconic stopover on the Nairobi-Mombasa highway.

BALLOONING

In June and for the first time, we launch ballooning activities in the Serengeti. This follows the success of our operation in Tarangire National Park and, of course, our long-standing presence in the Masai Mara National Reserve. In total, we will be flying eight balloons from our various bases.

In this issue of Reflections we raise concern (in fact, it's our cover story) about the growing and unfortunate resurgence of poaching as a threat to our wildlife. Mada Hotels is directly involved in efforts to combat this menace. I am pleased to report that we continue to work closely with the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) and Tanzanian National Parks (TANAPA) in this regard.

TRADITIONAL

This magazine also highlights the stark contrast of the work and the traditional home life of our female Maasai staff employed at our Kilima Safari Camp. I think it makes fascinating reading.

Elsewhere in the magazine, there are features on the historical kingdoms of Uganda, Nairobi's amazing colonial heritage and the spectacular Kilifi dhow race.

As in previous editions, we also profile some of our key staff – the people who really make our organisation tick.



I hope you enjoy reading our magazine and I also hope your stay with Mada Hotels is a pleasant one.

Please feel free to write to me with any comments.

Tinu Mhajan

Chief Executive, Mada Hotels Group

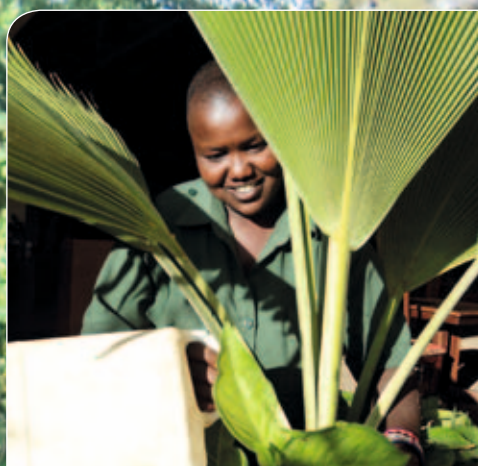


MADA HOTELS



'My dream is bigger than Kilimanjaro'

BY ROSELYNE
OMONDI-OGAO



Memories of first-time experiences have a way of lingering in your mind. Like when you first visited another country, set foot on African soil, went on a balloon safari, saw how gloriously Mount Kilimanjaro rises to meet the sky, or walked into an authentic, lived-in manyatta (dwelling of the Maasai) in the heart of Amboseli.

Nkeiyan Nalepo, 35, remembers the day she landed her first job at a hotel in Kenya's third-largest national park, Amboseli. A Maasai woman with seven children aged from seven and 20, her outlook on life was becoming gloomy and she needed a change. "My family was growing so I needed cash to help nurture it. But I can't read or write."

OPPORTUNITY

When Mada Hotels opened Kilima Safari Camp, not far from her home, Nkeiyan seized the opportunity. She mastered her courage and went to the camp and proclaimed: "Ninaomba kazi" (I'm looking for a job). Asked what kind of job, she didn't really know what to say. "Not knowing how to read or write is so limiting." She supported her bid with a quick: "I'm hard-working and willing to take any job." She was referred to the manager in charge of the grounds and offered a job as a gardener.

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"The work women and girls do never seems to end"

Her day starts at around 5 am. "I wake up to milk the cows, two to four of them, and boil the milk." She then makes tea for her family before heading to the camp, about 10 minutes' walk away.

"Work starts at 8 am. I tend the flowers, weeding, pruning and watering," she says. She works until noon and then takes a lunch break, resuming her work at 2 pm and going home at 5 pm. Nkeiyan divides her time between the flowers and the vegetable garden where she grows capsicum, onion, tomato, sugar cane and kale for use at the camp.

WORKING

Once home, Nkeiyan, like other working women, completes her daily household chores. "The work women and girls do never seems to end," she says. "I help to fetch water, gather firewood and then cook a meal for the family, usually ugali with meat or milk or githeri (boiled then fried mixture of dried beans and maize). She works throughout the week, taking a break on Sunday afternoons.

"I may use my free time to look for firewood in the neighbourhood, or rest."

Married at only 17, Nkeiyan is determined to give her children a better life. She is happy that her oldest, aged 20, is not yet married. "Our culture is beautiful and functional in many ways, but it limits the extent to which girls and women can reach their potential – even now in the new Kenya where primary education is free. There are two schools near here. However, once a girl is married, usually very young, her life and needs take a back seat. School and ideas about furthering education or starting a business are shelved, almost permanently. Her new job becomes bearing children and taking care of her husband and homestead." Her husband also works at a hotel in Amboseli.

Most of her children have been to Amboseli Primary School. "I want them to have more options in life, so I encourage them to work hard and finish primary and secondary school if possible." Her children can read, write and communicate in Maa (the language of the Maasai people), English and Kiswahili.



Nkeiyan enjoys working at the camp because it exposes her to new things. She says she didn't know the first thing about horticulture before she started working at the camp two years ago. "In fact, I learnt on the job, working with others." She wants to continue earning enough money to care for her expanding nuclear and extended families.

The location of Nkeiyan's home, within walking distance of Amboseli National Park and against the magnificent backdrop of Mount Kilimanjaro, strikes me as a reflection of her hope and dreams. While she has her culture and people to fall back on, she realises there is another way of living and doing things. "I have dreams bigger than Kilimanjaro," says Nkeiyan. "Meeting different people has been great for me. My children's lives will be richer and better because of the decisions I make now."

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FINE OLD BUILDINGS REVEAL CITY'S

It's fair to say that modern Nairobi has failed to make a smooth transition from colonial outpost to its position today as East Africa's pre-eminent commercial hub.

In fact, Nairobi's colonial splendour – if that is what it was – has been largely eaten up by a rapacious city and the Kenyan capital has ended up with many dubious examples of dreary late 20th century architecture.

Nevertheless – and luckily – several important colonial nuggets remain. And if visitors take their time to walk around the central business area, then these somewhat utilitarian colonial masterpieces are still there for all to see. Indeed, some are fulfilling the same function today for which they were intended decades before.

FUNCTIONAL

During the early colonial days many state buildings were functional rather than beautiful; but when Lt Col Sir Edward Grigg arrived in Kenya as governor in 1925 he set about changing this.



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Disappointed by what he saw, Grigg sought to improve the architectural stock and drafted in Herbert Baker, a British-born South African. Baker had an impeccable architectural pedigree and had even worked alongside Edwin Lutyens designing New Delhi.

Baker designed the East African Railway headquarters – a building that today looks overly grand and outrageously incongruous given the general scruffiness of Nairobi's railway station and its environs – as well as City Hall and the Law Courts. He also designed the truly delightful State House in Mombasa.

Some sniffy critics have complained about the similarity in style of Baker's grand buildings of state. But this was true of the British Empire in general; fine buildings were often duplicated to save on the cost of architects.

Aside from Nairobi's imposing public edifices, there are some privately constructed buildings. Probably the most notable is the McMillan Memorial Library, an impressive building established in 1931 in loving memory by the widow of Sir William Northrup McMillan. In former times the library was very much the focal point of Nairobi's high society.

HISTORY

One of the oldest buildings still in use is the Nairobi Gallery, which houses the art collection of former vice president the late Joseph Murumbi. Built in 1913 and located on the corner of Kenyatta Avenue and Uhuru Highway, the Gallery was the Old PC's Building, unofficially referred to in colonial times as Hatches, Matches and Dispatches in reference to the births, marriages and deaths recorded there.

Other notable buildings to look out for are the Bank of Baroda, the New Stanley Hotel, the Royal College of East Africa (now the University of Nairobi) and the Parliament buildings.

The original Stanley Hotel opened in 1902 but the current building is later. The Stanley is more than just a hotel; it is a property that is inextricably linked with Kenya's colonial history. Here is a local newspaper cutting from the 1930s:

There is probably no other colony in the British Empire where a hotel has been more intimately associated with communal development and welfare than has The Stanley of Nairobi with the modern history and progress of Kenya. That celebrated establishment has been so long a popular rendezvous of the colonists that it has acquired an individuality entirely of its own.



Opposite The Stanley on Kimathi Street is The Oakwood, owned by Mada Hotels. It may not be one of Nairobi's grandest buildings, but The Oakwood has been around for many years.

KENYAN STONE

Completed in 1922 and constructed of Kenyan stone, the mock-medieval All Saints Cathedral, close to the Railway Golf Club, was built in contrast to Baker's classical style evidenced elsewhere in the city. The cathedral is a pastiche of a traditional English church.

The Standard Chartered Bank building is a rare example of a colonial building still being used by the private sector.

In addition, institutions such as the Muthaiga Club and Nairobi Club offer a different and very appealing kind of colonial design.

There is also a somewhat later and less grand craze for art deco styles. These can be seen

in some of Nairobi's older shopping districts, some early plazas and cinemas and in the houses built in areas such as Parklands.

But walk around Nairobi as there is always plenty to see and admire – especially if you are a fan of colonial-style design.





NEW CONFERENCE HALL FOR KILIMA SAFARI CAMP

Kilima Safari Camp's new conference hall opened in February 2013. The main conference hall, which is unique to Amboseli, covers 200 square metres and there are two additional boardrooms, each of 25 square metres.

Mada Hotels says the hall will accommodate up to 300 people in a theatre-style configuration.

The hall's design is in line with that of the camp and has been created to blend with the environment. Many local materials from the Amboseli area have been used in its construction.

Mada's Tinu Mhajan says: "There is growing demand for conference facilities in game lodges and retreat areas and Kilima Safari Camp is ideally suited for this. The new Emali Loitoktok road is now completed, so Kilima Safari Camp is a very comfortable 210 km drive from Nairobi and easy to reach without having a 4x4 vehicle."

The hall is expected to be used by organisations such as businesses, NGOs and government bodies and for team-building events.

Apart from the actual conference facility, there are two acres of grounds around the conference room for any outdoor activities that may be required by participants.



FIG TREE CAMP WINS CAMPAIGN FOR LOWER PARK FEES

Mada Hotels has led a campaign to cut the cost of Fig Tree camp guest visiting the Masai Mara National Reserve.

As a result, guests at Fig Tree Camp can expect to save US\$10 a day on their fees. Mada Hotels sought a clarification from Narok Country Council of a pricing anomaly that resulted in Fig Tree Camp's guests paying a fee of \$80 per night instead of \$70 for those inside the reserve.

But Mada correctly argued that, because Fig Tree Camp was originally built inside the park before a change in the park's border in the 1980s, it should be treated the same as those properties inside the reserve. The court upheld Mada's case.

Tinu Mhajan explains: "We believed that Fig Tree clients needed to be treated the same as those clients staying in other properties inside the park. This ruling only applies to Fig Tree Camp, and other properties outside the park continue to pay the \$10 supplement".



FIG TREE CAMP AWARDED CERTIFICATE OF EXCELLENCE



The popular traveller-led website Trip Advisor has awarded Mada Hotels' Fig Tree Camp a Certificate of Excellence.

Tinu Mhajan proudly states: "This is the first Certificate of Excellence we have received, but as of now other Mada properties on Trip Advisor enjoy the same star rating as Fig Tree Camp.

He added: "The award is really a recognition of the entire Mada team, whose combined efforts have been recognised by our clients, and for that we are very grateful.



BALLOON SAFARIS SET FOR TAKE-OFF IN SERENGETI

June 2013 sees the launch, quite literally, of Mada Hotel's new Serengeti balloon operation.

The company is already active in Tarangire and the Masai Mara and this new operation will be the third base for its balloons.

The new ballooning operation will be based at two locations in the Serengeti and will initially fly two balloons.



MADA LOOKS TO INDIA

Mada Hotels chose for the first-time to exhibit in India when the group attended a travel event in Delhi and then four days of road shows in Kolkata, Hyderabad and Chennai.

Marketing manager Betty Olwenyi was given the task in January 2013 of promoting Mada Hotels to the fast-growing Indian tourism sector.

This was Betty's first trip to India and, while a seasoned traveller on behalf of Mada Hotels, she was taken aback by the cultural variety that India had to offer.



Explaining the potential of the Indian market, Tinu Mhajan says: "India is one of the fastest-growing economies of the world and has a strong middle class now travelling and exploring the world. Kenya, with its quality of parks and beaches, is a natural attraction for the Indian market. Mada Hotels expects India to be one of the fastest-growing tourism markets in the next five years."

Tinu adds: "At the road shows we showcased the products and services of Mada Hotels across East Africa and were impressed with the feedback we received. As first-time exhibitors at the show, the tourism trade welcomed a new and quality product to add to their Kenya portfolio."



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POACHING MENACE RETURNS

I guess we all thought that the problem had been solved. Surely large-scale elephant poaching was a thing of the past – or at least the issue was manageable.

Many thought the elephant killings were opportunistic and isolated and nothing very much to worry about. Others, however, believed the matter was being swept under the carpet.

So imagine the concern among conservationists and those in the tourism sector when Kenya hit the headlines again in early 2013 after a gang of poachers massacred an entire family group comprising 11 elephants. This is thought to be the single worst incident of its kind in Kenya.

SHOCKED

This was a problem that seemed to have been beaten. But in 2011 there was an upturn in poaching that shocked Kenya, with the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) confirming that 275 elephants had been killed in a period of 12 months.

These already troubling numbers are disputed by conservationists at Ecotourism Kenya, however. Chief executive Kahindi Lekalhaile believes the true figure is closer to 10 times that announced by the KWS. If that is true, then Ecotourism Kenya's count is especially troubling.

The elephant population of Kenya had recovered steadily since the dark days of the late 1980s. And even with poaching apparently on the increase, overall elephant numbers continue to grow.

So some might argue: what's the problem?

In fact, elephant numbers are more adversely affected by drought – especially in Amboseli and Tsavo – than by poaching. Nevertheless, one is a naturally occurring phenomenon and the other is preventable.

For example, in the mid 1970s Tsavo East and Tsavo West were home to some 35,000 elephants. But about 6,000 animals died during one harsh drought and by the late 1980s numbers had fallen to just 5,400 with an upsurge in poaching causing much of the reduction. However, numbers have since risen to a healthier figure of around 12,000.

KWS, which has lost a number of rangers in recent years, is trying to combat the poaching menace and now believes it is getting on top of the problem.

In January 2013 Mr Kiprono said: "Poachers are now stockpiling ivory for speculative purposes ahead of the International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) meeting in March in Bangkok. Incredible demand for ivory in some Asian countries is also putting pressure on elephant populations in Kenya."

Efforts are also being made to find a way to protect elephants from attack. One idea now being developed in Samburu National Reserve is being pioneered by a



This is a complex issue driven in part by poverty, international demand, greed and ignorance

group of researchers backed by Save the Elephants, the UK's Oxford University and the Disney Worldwide Conservation Fund and supported by the KWS. This involves placing an alarm collar around the necks of elephants.

Could this be a solution? Possibly, but poaching is a complex issue driven in part by poverty, international demand, greed and ignorance. Let us hope that KWS is a good as its word and that the days of elephant poachers really are numbered.

KWS director William Kiprono has warned poachers that he has them in his sights and rangers have shot and killed suspected poachers in recent months. Mr Kiprono has described poachers as assaulting Kenya's national heritage, no less. "We are ready to fight poachers at all costs," he said.

BETTER-THAN-EVER TRANSPORT LINKS WILL BOOST ECONOMY

A modern and efficient transport system is the key to economic success for any nation. In Kenya, the creation of a modern transport infrastructure has been given top priority by the government under its Vision 2030 master plan.

The difficulty of moving goods and people over large distances has long been an obstacle to effective commerce and trade

in Kenya, with a total area of 224,000 square miles (over 580,000 sq km).

Now, with a significant amount of financial and practical assistance from other nations – notably China – the government is well on the way to creating a multimodal transport network fit for the 21st century, with major infrastructure projects under way in air, sea, road and rail transport.

RAIL

Kenya and Uganda have been in joint negotiations with China to fund and construct a new standard-gauge railway linking the two countries.

Transport minister Amos Kimunya said in September 2012 that Kenya was in talks with China over the construction of a new line between Mombasa and Malaba that could speed the movement of freight by up to three times.

The government of Uganda is also negotiating for funds to build the section of line that runs into its territory from the border point of Malaba.

The aim of the new line is to provide faster and more efficient movement of freight between the Port of Mombasa and the hinterland. It will also help to ease the burden on the nation's highways.

Mr Kimunya said that, once completed, the new line would carry about 70 per cent of Kenya's total rail freight. The rest would be carried by the existing narrow-gauge line, built over 100 years ago in colonial times.

The existing railway is operated jointly by Kenya Railways Corporation (KRC) and the private consortium Rift Valley Railways (RVR). Work has begun on refurbishing the line between Mombasa and Nairobi with the help of \$49 million in loans.

COMMUTER LINE

In Nairobi, construction of a US\$200 million commuter train network is well under way. The aim of the new rail line is to ease road congestion in the Kenyan capital, especially between the main airport and the city centre.

The first section of line is between Jomo Kenyatta International Airport and the main railway station in Nairobi. Once this link is completed, there are plans to extend the commuter line north and west.

SEA

In the Port of Mombasa, work began in December 2012 on construction of a second container terminal in Kilindini Harbour.

The new KES 28 billion terminal is a joint venture between Kenya and Japan. With a capacity of 1.2 million teu, it will double the port's container handling capacity as well as improving operational efficiency.

Speaking at the ground-breaking ceremony, President Mwai Kibaki said the expansion of Mombasa Port would position Kenya as a regional maritime hub.

ROAD

A new major highway between Nairobi and Thika, about 50 km north of the capital, was officially opened by President Kibaki in November 2012.

The KES 31 billion Nairobi-Thika Superhighway has been funded by the Chinese government, the African Development Bank and the Kenyan government. It took three years to expand the road from two lanes to eight lanes (four in each direction).

President Kibaki said the highway provided a reliable transport corridor linking Kenya with Ethiopia via Moyale and with Tanzania via Namanga.

Meanwhile, the government has finalised plans to build the Dongo Kundu bypass to connect the Mombasa-Nairobi road with the Mombasa to Lunga-Lunga road.

VISION 2030

Vision 2030 envisages Kenya, East Africa's biggest economy, becoming a middle-income country by that year. Under the plan, the government aims to increase the rate of economic growth to 10 per cent by 2015 and sustain that through 2030 by investing in infrastructure including roads, railways, airports and seaports.

AIR

Construction of a new US\$ 655 million terminal at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA) was given the go-ahead in September 2012.

This major project will be undertaken by two Chinese companies – Anhui Construction Engineering Group and China National Aero-Technology International Engineering Corporation – in a joint venture.

The new Terminal (Unit 4) will boost the airport's passenger handling capacity and will play a key role in transforming JKIA into a regional hub. Construction is expected to take about 36 months.

Covering an area of about 178,000 square metres and arranged on four levels, Unit 4 will be a hub terminal providing efficient connectivity for transit passengers.

Facilities will include 50 international check-in counters, 32 contact and eight remote gates and associated aprons with 45 aircraft stands and linking taxiways.

The new terminal will help ease congestion at JKIA, which was built in the 1970s to handle 2.5 million passengers. Its total throughput in 2012 was nearly 7 million passengers.

Speaking in December 2012, President Kibaki said the KAA would be investing US\$ 1 billion over the next five years in the expansion of airports and airstrips in Nairobi, Kisumu, Isiolo, Embu, Nyeri and Mombasa at a cost

LAMU

In March 2012 work began on a US\$ 23 billion port project and oil refinery in the Lamu region near the border with Somalia.

The proposed 32-berth port will serve as an international gateway for the Lamu Port South Sudan Ethiopia Economic and Transport Corridor project (LAPSSET).

This project also embraces plans to build an oil pipeline, a railway and a main highway linking Lamu with South Sudan and Ethiopia. South Sudan plans to use Lamu as its main outlet for exports of crude oil. Over 60 per cent of South Sudan's crude production goes to China.

At the ground-breaking ceremony, Prime Minister Raila Odinga said LAPSSET would open markets in Asia, the Middle East, Europe and the Democratic Republic of Congo.



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Colourful legacy of 'the four kingdoms'



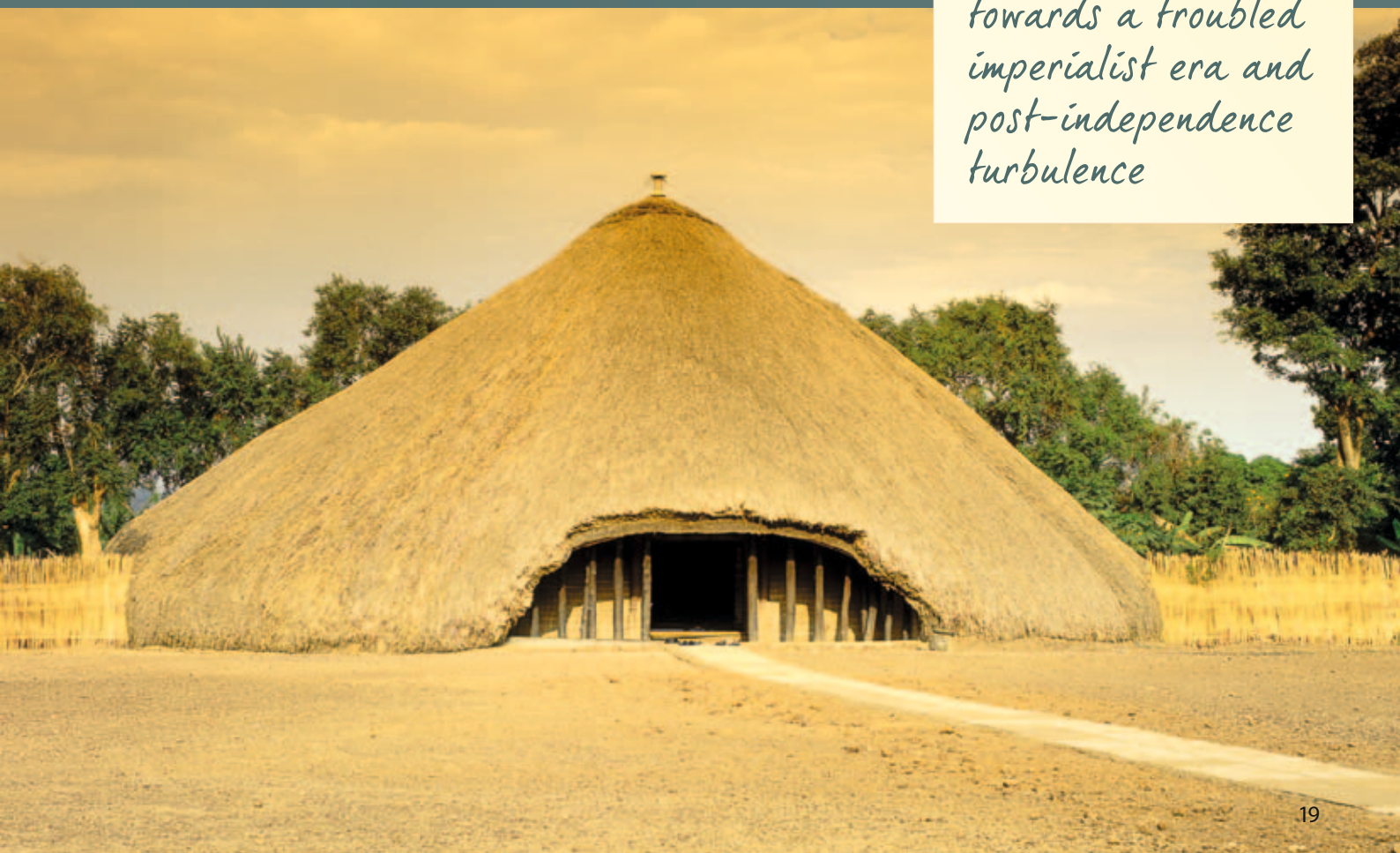
In the second half of the 19th century Victorian explorers approaching the lake sources of the Nile were amazed to find four powerful, centralised kingdoms with histories dating back to the 15th century.

RULERS

Their arrival heralded interesting times for the rulers of these kingdoms – the kabakas, omukamas and omusingas – and their subjects. A series of wars led towards a troubled imperialist era and post-independence turbulence. Yet today, as Uganda celebrates 50 years of independence, all four

traditional kingdoms remain proud cultural entities. Buganda, the goal of the explorer John Speke in 1862, still lies on the northern shore of Lake Victoria beside the source of the Nile. Buganda's age-old enemy, the once great empire of Bunyoro, exists, though greatly reduced, beside Lake Albert. Immediately to the south is Toro, the youngest kingdom, carved out of Bunyoro territory at the foot of the fabled Mountains of the Moon. Between Toro and Lake Victoria lies Ankole, previously the fourth kingdom but no longer officially recognised by government.

A series of wars led towards a troubled imperialist era and post-independence turbulence





Ankole's latent status is ironic, since it best embodied the common traditions of the four territories. Most obvious was a caste system that consisted of ruling bahoma clans and an underclass of baira (servants). The bahoma were characterised by a fondness for cattle that extends back to the age of the Bacwezi, a shadowy race of ancient Ethiopian pastoralists who supposedly introduced Uganda's now characteristic long-horned cows.

STAPLE CROPS

The baira were expected to grow staple crops, a task greatly eased by the introduction of the nutritious, easy-to-grow banana from Asia. Cushioned from subsistence concerns, the bahoma elevated the status of their cattle from walking larders to symbols of wealth. Quantity and quality were both prized assets. Bunyoro's Omukama Kabarega owned 30,000 animals, including a core of pure-white cows whose milk was reserved for the royal household.

Although explorers were impressed by the kingdoms, a darker side led Speke to describe Buganda as 'Eden after the Fall'. Wanton, mediaeval-style cruelty was commonplace. In Buganda, Speke described a man whose ears had been removed as a punishment for being 'too handsome'; while at royal funerals in Bunyoro, onlookers were seized, divested of their limbs and tossed into the burial pit. War was frequent. In 1875 Henry Stanley witnessed a Bugandan expedition against Buvuma Island before his subsequent explo-

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rations were prevented by a Bunyoro invasion of Toro. Such wars gained territory, slaves and cattle. Slaves boosted the population of a kingdom and were treated as ordinary citizens until Arab traders arrived in the 1840s. Thereafter, slaves became a commodity to barter with guns and cotton.

ABSORBED

In the 1890s the kingdoms were absorbed into the British Protectorate of Uganda. Ankole's rulers saw little threat and readily collaborated. The Toro king actively welcomed the British, who had evicted an occupying Bunyoro army and restored his throne. Bunyoro resorted to an ultimately futile war that left it weakened and depopu-

If the protectorate was met with mixed feelings, an altogether darker period followed independence

lated. An equally unwilling Buganda might have resisted the imperialists but was weakened by civil wars and an unstable and erratic kabaka (king).

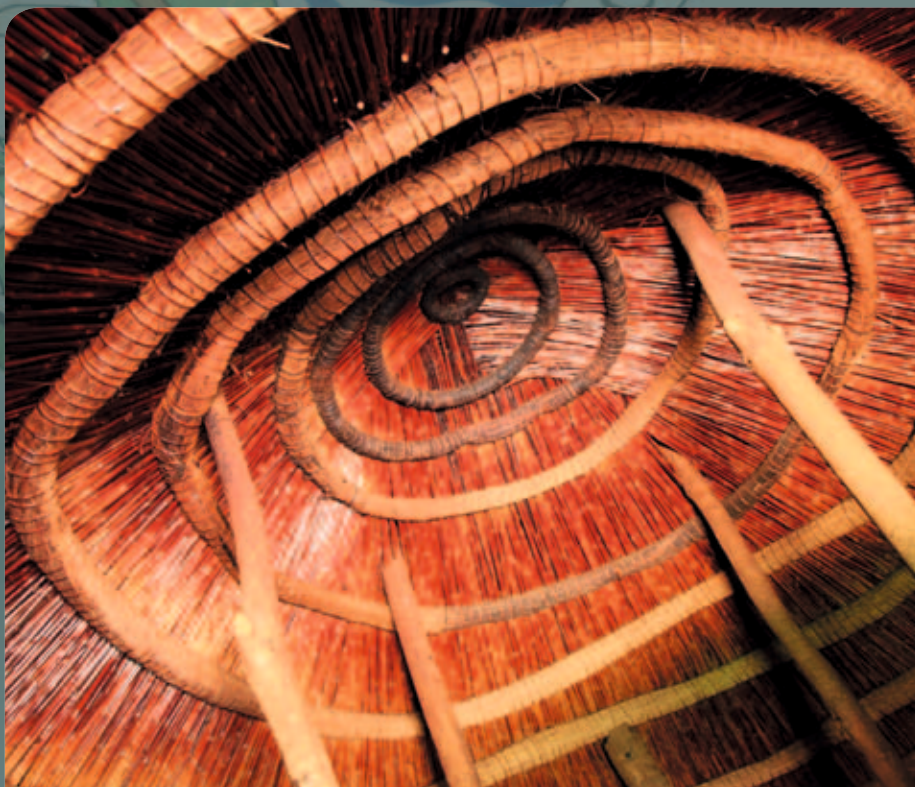
If the protectorate was met with mixed feelings, an altogether darker period followed independence. In 1966 Prime Minister Milton Obote exiled Uganda's first president, Kabaka Frederick Mutesa of Buganda, and abolished the kingdoms. These lay dormant until 1994 when President Yoweri Museveni restored Buganda, Toro and Bunyoro. The homeland of Museveni, Ankole, was not included – ironically, since only here is cattle-keeping still practised with historical levels of enthusiasm. This exclusion is attributed to another ingrained tradition, an especially marked bahoma-baira caste system, and fears of recreating a divided society.

Although reduced to cultural institutions, today's kingdoms remain a focus for local pride. In November 2012 the subjects of Toro enthusiastically celebrated the wedding of Princess Komuntale, sister of Omukama Oyo Nyimba Rukidi, while in Buganda people are rallying to raise funds to restore the famous Kasubi Tombs, burial place of four kabakas, which were gutted by fire in 2010.

HISTORY

Buganda's tourist guides view the disaster pragmatically – 'the building is gone, but the history remains' – and still relate history and culture at the charred tombs as well as at the Lubiri Palace, the Wamala Tombs and the Nagalabbi Coronation Site.

Other kingdoms afford comparable significance to their own cultural sites, such as Mparo Tombs in Bunyoro and the Toro palace in Fort Portal. Curiously, history and culture are most vividly presented in the latent Ankole kingdom. Opened by President Museveni in December 2011, the Igongo Cultural Centre, between Kampala and Bwindi National Park, is a popular destination for locals and mountain-gorilla-bound tourists alike.



MEET THE MADA TEAM

'THE TICK BEHIND THE TOCK'



Cecilian Samson

Reservations & Marketing Manager in Tanzania

Cecilian Samson has been with Mada Hotels for three years.

Her main responsibility is day-to-day marketing. She says the job of marketing involves a lot of challenges in terms of winning the business from tour operators and suppliers. She enjoys meeting new people, gaining new experience and learning more day by day.

Cecilian has been in the industry for 15 years, during which she has gained a lot of experience in the tourism sector.

Describing the team she works with, Cecilian says: "What I can say is that I have a fabulous team who work hard and always make my life easy – thank God."

Cecilian has a small family and she enjoys being with them. "We are happy of what we are," she says.

In her free time, Cecilian likes to socialise with friends and enjoy the evening breeze with a glass of whisky.



I have a fabulous team who work hard and always make my life easy



My biggest challenge is satisfying every guest in terms of quality food and service

Arjun Singh Rana

Head chef, Jinja Nile Resort

Arjun Singh Rana has been with Mada Hotels for four years. He joined the hotel industry because he loves cooking various dishes and he also enjoys meeting new people. Previously, he worked in Mumbai at two five-star hotels, Holiday Inn and then J.W. Marriott.

At Jinja Nile Resort, Arjun is in charge of the kitchen department and is responsible for food production, hygiene and staff training. As one of the top resorts in Uganda, Jinja Nile receives guests from around the world and Arjun sees his biggest challenge as satisfying every guest in terms of quality food and service.

Arjun works with a 25-strong team divided into four categories: Hot Kitchen, Pastry, Cold Kitchen/Salads and Tandoori.

Mada Hotels has two types of training programmes. One is conducted on a weekly basis in its units and the other is organised by its head office in Nairobi, with staff from all the various Mada Hotels properties taking part. The aim is to update staff on changing trends in the hospitality industry.

Arjun is married with one daughter. In his free time, Arjun loves reading and playing football.

Chamil Silva

Chef, Mada Hotels

Chamil Silva has been with Mada Hotels for five months.

He has 12 years of experience in the hotel sector, working for some of the world's leading hotel chains in such exotic locations as Sri Lanka, the Maldives, Abu Dhabi and Qatar. "It was my dream as a child to work in the hotel industry and it is also an advantage to me because I have met and learned a lot of cultures," says Chamil.

His daily duties and responsibilities involve checking the kitchen, introducing the new food preparation and food presentation, training the chefs in food hygiene and controlling the overall food costing. The challenge is to keep food costs within budget in all the Mada Hotels while upholding the company's reputation for top quality meals.

Chamil describes the team he works with as "friendly and hard-working".

In his free time, Chamil enjoys listen to music and reading.



It was my dream
as a child to
work in the
hotel industry



Joining the hotel
industry, was a
"career dream"

Esther Kinaiya

Guest relation officer, Kilima Safari Camp, Amboseli

Esther Kinaiya has been with Mada Hotels for five years. She enjoys meeting different guests with different ideas, dealing with customers and colleagues in a thoughtful, appropriate and efficient way, and ensuring customer satisfaction.

Esther has previous experience of the hospitality industry, having worked for five years in a customer care department, which she loved doing. In joining the hotel industry, Esther says she has achieved her "career dream".

Her main responsibilities are to welcome guests, relate with them, deal with any complaints and give a full report to the manager. "Not all clients are friendly," says Esther, "so handling them and make them feel they are not in the wrong place is a challenge".

Her job requires her to cooperate with all departments and share information and ideas so that together they can achieve a quality product and excellent service.

Esther is a single mother of two, a boy and a girl, and "I love them so much," she says.

In her free time, Esther enjoys swimming, making friends, travelling and watching movies.

Govind Lalji Devji

Company engineer, Mada Hotels Group

Govind Lalji Devji has been working with Mada Hotels for the past 10 years. Describing what he most enjoys about the job, Govind says: "Mada Hotels builds all their properties and I have the pleasure of being involved in most of our projects from design to completion and it is always exciting to work in different areas."

Govind has plenty of experience in the engineering sector, having run his own construction business in Mombasa for many years.

His first project at Mada Hotels was at Kilifi Bay Beach Resort. He was closely involved in construction of the Jinja Nile Resort in Uganda and Kilima Safari Camp in Amboseli and he is currently working on a major renovation of Hunters Lodge.

Govind is in charge of a large construction and maintenance team who are constantly managing new projects and renovations at the various Mada properties. "Many of our properties are in remote locations and careful planning is often required in mobilising equipment and manpower," he says.

Describing the team he works with, Govind says: "I'm lucky to have a well experienced team who, like myself, have been with Mada for a long period of time and understand our company culture well."



I'm lucky to
have a well
experienced team

James Nzingu

Manager, Oakwood Hotel

James Nzingu has been with Mada Hotels for one year. He enjoys meeting new people and getting new ideas for improving his work.

Previously, James worked at Amboseli Lodge for five years as a lodge accountant. Later, he joined Bamburi Beach Hotel, where he worked for 10 years as a food and beverage controller before joining Mada Hotels.

James is responsible for the overall supervision of the Oakwood Hotel on a day-to-day basis. One of the challenges is guest complaints “– which I don’t take for granted,” says James. “I listen to them and act appropriately.”

Describing the team he works with, James says: “My motto to my staff is, what can you think of today in regard to improvement that will make us better than yesterday?”

He says his main ambition is “to make Oakwood Hotel a better place than how I found it”.

James is married with five children. Away from work, he enjoys spending time with his family “—and challenging them to be better than me when they grow up”.



My ambition is to make the Oakwood Hotel a better place

Capt John Medlock

Chief pilot, Fig Tree Camp

John Medlock has been with Mada Hotels since June 2012. He has 29 years’ experience as a balloon pilot, starting in the UK, then working in Australia, Canada and Tanzania. He has also flown in Hungary, the USA, France, Poland, Thailand and Russia. What he enjoys most about the job is that “every flight is different and there are opportunities to view the animals from an aerial perspective, which is always exciting”.

As chief pilot, John supervises all aspects of the balloon operation, from pilot rosters to balloon maintenance and airworthiness as well as compliance with Civil Aviation Authority rules. He says the challenge is keeping up to date with changes in regulations and constantly maintaining the fleet of seven balloons in the Mara. All pilots are checked out regularly with flight reviews and all crew and pilots attend annual courses in crew resource management as well as fire and first aid training.

John describes his team as “a world-class group of crew and pilots, many of whom I have flown with in other parts of the world over many years. The local ground crew and drivers are all extremely professional. Without their support we could not operate.” John says he joined the ballooning industry because it allows him to travel to interesting parts of the world and meet wonderful new friends.

John is married. “My wife is here with me and loves living in the Mara,” he says. When they have some free time, he and his wife love to go on game drives as they are both keen photographers.



the ballooning industry has allowed me to travel to interesting parts of the world

Mbinda Kimau

Senior driver, Mada Holdings

Mbinda Kimau has been with Mada Hotels since 1975. Driving has always been his passion and he enjoys doing long trips.

Before joining Mada Holdings, he worked with Davinder Singh, a specialised mechanical engineer. He has also worked with Elite Studio.

His duties involve assisting in transport-related chores and maintaining and servicing his truck.


His job can involve such challenges as the less than perfect road infrastructure, especially in the Masai Mara reserve.

The people he works with are “cooperative and understanding, willing to learn and assist if required,” says Mbinda.

Mbinda is a father of five and likes to spend as much time as possible with his family. He also enjoys travelling up country and he is “a good farmer”.



Driving has always been my passion and I enjoy doing long trips



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NEW LEASE OF LIFE FOR HUNTERS LODGE

Hunters Lodge, a famous stopover on the road from Nairobi to Mombasa, joined Mada Hotels in 2012, becoming the latest addition to one of East Africa's fastest-growing hospitality groups.

Surrounded by spectacular countryside, the property is located about 160 km from Nairobi on the Mombasa Road. Traditionally, the lodge has offered good, reasonably priced accommodation and inexpensive camping; but now it is being modernised and expanded to bring the property into line with the high standards set by the Mada Group. A new management has also been installed.

The lodge can trace its origins to Dennis Hunter, son of the famous white hunter and author, J.A. Hunter (see separate story). In 1958 J.A. Hunter, with his son David, built Hunters Lodge at Makindu. The lodge was run by David and his mother Hilda and they were later joined by Dennis. J.A. Hunter died in 1963.

Anyone born in Kenya in the 1950s and 1960s will be familiar with Hunters Lodge. In those days, most people would drive to the coast on holiday, and no trip to the coast was complete without a stopover at Hunters Lodge. For early starters, it was a delightful breakfast stop – or a lunch stop for late starters – on the way down and an ideal place to break for tea or a beer on the return journey. Almost everyone who stopped over en-route to or from the coast would have also done a little fishing in the spring and played on the mini golf course.

SUNDOWNERS

Sadly, however, the days of leisurely gin-and-tonic sundowners at the Mombasa Road resort are long gone. The once-popular property is a mere shadow of its former self, having fallen into a decline in recent years. Now, the Mada Group has set itself the task of turning things around through new investment, fresh ideas and better marketing.

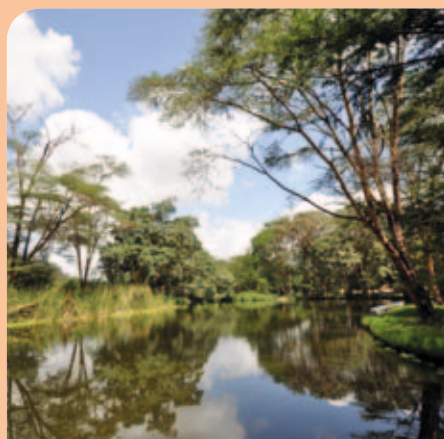
Mada hopes to win back business by offering attractive breakfast and lunch menus while also providing a range of amenities for customers undertaking the six-hour drive between the Kenyan capital and the coast.

POTENTIAL

Mada chief executive Tinu Mhajan said: "Mada Hotels appreciates the tremendous potential the property has and wants to bring back the great memories travellers had in the old days of stopping at Hunters Lodge. The location still offers one of the best bird-viewing spots south of Nairobi and the springs still flow freshly through the property."

Tinu added: "In fact, all of Mada's properties across East Africa enjoy tremendous locations and we are pleased that Hunters Lodge will also fit into this pattern."

The existing 12 rooms are being totally renovated and enlarged and there are plans for a



further 40 rooms. A new conference centre will be added. In its design, the new property will reflect the old charm of Hunters Lodge; but now it will offer rooms with a contemporary style and top quality amenities. Mada aims to ensure that the new look blends with the surroundings. Work on the refurbishment began in late 2012.

The hope is that, once again, Hunters Lodge will become the natural stopover for drivers on the Mombasa-Nairobi highway.

ENTERTAINING ADVENTURES OF A VERY NON-PC HERO

John Hunter was aptly named. To have such a family name and be famed throughout East Africa as, perhaps, the leading big game hunter of his generation is something of a coincidence.

Sometimes referred to as J.A. Hunter, he was born in Scotland in 1887 and moved permanently to Africa in 1908.

John Hunter is still revered as something of a sharpshooting colonial hero – a rough, tough character from an earlier, non-PC age. Yet, today, history does not treat him kindly. His legendary hunting skills credit him with killing over 1,000 white and black rhino – a gory feat that will no doubt horrify most of today's conservation-minded visitors to Africa.

Yet, his hunting of wildlife was often at the behest of others – the colonial governments of Kenya, Tanganyika (as it was then) and even the Belgian Congo. Contracted to clear areas of 'dangerous' animals so that the authorities could resettle a problem tribe or two or to make way for incoming farmers, Hunter was called in to undertake this often unsavoury and unpleasant work.

Later in life he had something of a Damascene conversion and acknowledging the error of his earlier ways he took a real interest in preserving wildlife – albeit too late to arrest the sad decline in many of the species (especially the rhino) he had previously been slaughtering.

But Hunter the man was more than a ruthless killer; he was very much a fearless pioneer who 'opened up' parts of Africa by leading early European expeditions to the Ngorongoro Crater and a succession of safaris deep into the then unexplored bush.

He wrote several books during his lifetime – a happy mix of adventure novels and the autobiographical. Again, these are very much of their time and on reading today his views of Africa are through the eyes of an unflinching

colonialist. What's more, and as a confirmation of his fame and notoriety, Hunter was also the subject of at least three books written by others.

As a delighted recent reader of his book 'Hunter' said: "This collection of life stories is told simply and clearly. Hunter writes with skill and it's easy to imagine sitting around a campfire listening as he speaks down the years of a time forever closed to us now."

SETTLED DOWN

After an adventurer's life, John Hunter decided to settle down and in 1958 he built Hunters Lodge in Makindu (close to the Mombasa-Nairobi Highway) and ran the property with the help of his wife and two of his three sons until his death in 1963 at the age of 75.

Fifty years after his death, Mada Hotels has taken over the ownership and management of Hunters Lodge with the aim of modernising the property while paying homage to the memory of one of East Africa's truly great adventurers. And John Hunter's spirit lives on in Makindu.





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Fun event has brought serious benefits to Kilifi

It has become Kilifi's big day. What began in 2005 as something impromptu, small and intensely local has grown into a full-blown event.

This is the Kilifi Dhow Race, an improbable, tongue-in-cheek regatta that is now the undisputed highlight of the delightful creek-side town's social calendar, with over 50 boats taking part in the 2012 competition

The shape and traditional sail formation of a dhow do not inspire thoughts of sleek lines and high speeds. Yet, in the expert hands of local fisherman, these ungainly craft can almost create an illusion that Kilifi Creek is, in fact, Newport Rhode Island or Cowes.

The dhow race was originally arranged by Kilifi Boatyard. Subsequent events were co-funded by Mnarani Fishing Club and Imperial Bank with co-sponsorship by local businessmen.

The boatyard's Peter Bateman explains: "The first makeshift event was staged to create a spectacle for the people of Kilifi and Kilifi Boatyard customers. It served as an unusual thank-you from the boatyard to the fishermen of Kilifi and that has continued."

COLOURFUL

Naturally, much of the social side of the event centres on the boatyard – ordinarily a haunt of the coastal cognoscenti and colourful and weathered nautical characters, but swelled to overflowing during the Dhow Race by cheery visitors from Mombasa, Malindi, Watamu and even Nairobi. The boatyard is famous, of course, for its delicious weekend lunchtime seafood menu and its easygoing, sand-between-the-toes atmosphere.

The sailing participants are divided into two classes of craft, Engarawa and Jehazi,

the nominal crew of each class being four and five people respectively with additional passengers. The very first race consisted of just eight Engarawas and five Jehazi dhows. In 2012 these had grown to 35 Jehazis and 27 Engarawas. With the advent of a different Mozambique boat type coming to Kilifi, the

This improbable, tongue-in-cheek regatta is now the highlight of the creek-side town's social calendar





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dhows may need to be divided in the future. An additional two-man dugout canoe race was incorporated for the first time in 2011. This new and separate race starts when the dhows have passed under the Kilifi Creek bridge and have sailed to the back of the creek.

The canoe race runs from the ferry landing in Mnarani to the ferry landing in Kilifi and ends at the boatyard. Peter says: "The canoe race was started to ensure that the spectacle and competitive spirit was spread further throughout the local community." The dugouts are treated as a single class.

The participants are all fishermen, but spectators are encouraged to ride a dhow for a fee of KES 1,000 per person and this money goes towards the prizes.

LAGOON

The main dhow race starts on the reef outside of Kilifi creek and the course runs inland under the Kilifi Bridge into the Kilifi lagoon. At the south-western corner of the lagoon is an island which the dhows have to circumnavigate. They then return to round a buoy under the bridge and finish at Kilifi Boatyard. The prize-giving is held at the boatyard and winners of various categories can expect to receive prizes of KES 10,000.

The event has been organised by Capt Shallo, a local dhow operator. It took place in association with Kilifi Boatyard and Mnarani Beach Management units. As part of the organising committee, they adju-

SO MANY GOOD SPIN-OFFS

Peter Bateman, whose was involved in launching the event, explains the rationale behind the dhow race and the benefits for Kilifi:

"The event was started, in part, as a thank-you from Kilifi Boatyard to the local fishermen for allowing us to co-exist in harmony on the creek." This has now grown into an event that serves many needs and is:

- A fabulous sporting spectacle that unites various facets of local society
- Good for coast tourism
- Promotes sport that is not traditionally promoted
- Brings together a large group of people working in competitive sports
- Attracts some 350 competitors
- A forum for lectures on safety at sea and good fishing practices involving NGOs, CBOs and the Kenya Maritime Authority
- A non-political event.

dicate on point of sail and confirm the race results for each class. This format allows the event to be self-regulating.

Safaricom has been the headline sponsor of all three dhow races since 2010 and is set to sponsor 2013. The event meets Safaricom's goal of encouraging competitive sports that unite local communities. And this aim has surely been achieved.



ECCENTRIC BEAUTY OF THE UPSIDE DOWN FOREST

There is one aspect of the 2,600 square metre Tarangire National Park that makes it special and distinct from other African game reserves.

No, it's not the park's impressive herds of elephants – although these are special enough – nor the opportunity to view game in almost complete solitude.

OUTSTANDING

But the outstanding feature of Tarangire is its huge number of baobab trees. Sometimes known as the upside down tree, the mighty baobab dominates the Tarangire landscape in a way that has no equal outside, perhaps, Madagascar.

The baobab tree comes in all sizes, shapes and colours.

BAOBAB FRUIT HAS MANY USES

The baobab tree produces a velvety shelled, coconut-sized, fruit. They weigh around 1.5 kg, so try to avoid one falling on your head.

The tart baobab fruit is not especially nice to eat, but elephants seem to enjoy it.

Both the European Union and the USA have begun to import the dried fruit pulp.

In Tanzania, it is added to aid fermentation of sugar cane when making beer. It can also be frozen when in powder form.

Along the east African coast, baobab seeds are cooked with sugar, coloured, and sold as snacks. But these seeds can also be used as a thickener in soups.

And it's the sight of open savanna dotted with acacia and solid-looking baobabs that gives the Tanzanian landscape its unique appeal. In Tarangire, however, this spectacle is intensified by the sheer number and size of the baobabs, which dominate the skyline as far as the eye can see.

Adansonia digitata, to give the baobab its Latin name, can grow to 30 metres and seems to live forever. The baobabs of Tarangire are used for shade, food and even as a home by some creatures.



EVERYONE HAS AN ATTRACTIVE SIDE

- even hyenas



Even the least attractive of God's creatures is loved by someone. Or so it seems – and especially in the case of the less-than-attractive spotted hyena.

Definitely not cuddly or cute and a carnivore with a reputation for eating just about anything, bones and all, and not caring

Definitely not cuddly or cute, the hyena is probably the Mara's least-loved creature

too much how its food is obtained or from whom, the hyena is probably the Mara's least-loved creature.

REDEEMING

Yet, someone has discovered that the 'ugly duckling' hyena does have some redeeming features. That someone is researcher Kay Holekamp, from the United States, who has become something of a cheerleader for the hyena. Kay's team has been studying hyenas in the Mara since 1988. Funding for the hyena research comes from a US organisation, the National Science Foundation (NSF).

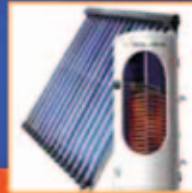
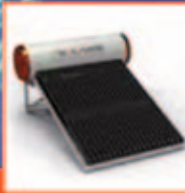
Kay outlines why the NSF is backing her work: "They have been interested to support our work because they agree that, by studying a creature that appears to violate so many of the basic rules of mammalian biology, we can determine what the rules really are," she says.

In addition to NSF funding, donations have come from private citizens both in the USA and elsewhere.

While not actually based at Fig Tree Camp, the hyena project has enjoyed a long and close working relationship with the nearby Mada property. Acknowledging support from



“Hot water
regardless of
the weather”



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Fig Tree, Kay says: "Their vehicles have pulled ours out of mud or rivers on multiple occasions, they have invited us to share meals with them, they have given us pretty good prices when we have brought our study-abroad class to Kenya from the States, and they have allowed us to fly with their pilots in balloons to find radio-collared hyenas who we can't locate from our vehicles on the ground."

The hyena work is usually conducted by a couple of Americans and/or European students, and several Kenyans, including research assistants, askaris and camp attendants.

"Right now we are trying to understand why hyenas are so good at resisting diseases and toxins in hope of finding treatments for maladies like food poisoning, etc," says Kay. "We are also currently working on acoustic and chemical communication among the hyenas, effects of people on their stress physiology and behaviour, testing whether they can be used as ecosystem sentinels, and several other projects."

COLLARED

Researchers have radio-collared a few hyenas in each of the study groups or 'clans'. "The collars allow us to find the hyenas even when they are in thickets or off far away on foraging trips," says Kay. "Some of the collars deployed at present are VHF but others are GPS collars that download data documenting the hyena's travels via communication with cell towers in and around the Mara."

Former student Dr Stephanie Dloniak, now chief science officer for the Kenya Wildlife Trust, estimates there are between 380 and 465 adult



spotted hyenas in the Mara and environs. There is considerable local variation based on the extent of anthropogenic disturbance in the reserve. Overall, and as with lions and most other large carnivores, the number of spotted hyenas has been dwindling in recent years.

"We have documented threats to spotted hyenas and other large carnivores in recent years, and found that humans are currently their main mortality source – until a decade ago this was lions," says Kay. "Tourists don't bother the animals at all, but local herders may spear, snare or poison them, especially if the hyenas attack livestock."

So, after 25 years in the field, how long will this work continue? Kay says it's not yet clear and that much depends on Kenyan politics and her ability to continue to find the funds to support the project.

One thing is for sure: even after a quarter of a century working in the Mara, there is still much to learn.





MOUNTAIN BIKERS

COMPLETE THE ULTIMATE CHALLENGE

Kenya's premier mountain biking experience, the 10 to 4 Mountain Bike Challenge, took place on 22 and 23 February on the slopes of Mount Kenya.



Now in its 12th year and sponsored by Safari Air Express (SAX), the event is held over two consecutive days with routes designed to challenge the most enthusiastic bikers, while offering suitable options for beginners, family riders and children.

The 10 to 4 raises funds for the Mount Kenya Trust, which aims to plant some eight million trees on more than 2,000 hectares in Mount Kenya Forest as well as being active in other local conservation projects.

FOREST

For the most part, the course is made up of protected forest and private farms and ranches on the northern slopes of Mount Kenya, including the Kisima and Ol Donyo Farms, Ngare Ndare Forest Trust and Borana Ranch, where the Borana Race Village is located.

Participants and their families and friends can use the campsite at Borana Race Village, which provides catering, refreshments, showers and entertainment. There is a charge of KES 1,500 per person per weekend to use the site.

HARDCORE

The Hardcore event on Day 1 starts and finishes at Borana Race Village. The start for the Classic, the Extreme, the Rush and the Slide events on Day 2 are in the same place as in previous years, up the mountain on Kisima Farm at 9,464 ft above sea level.

Competitors and their family and friends are encouraged to make a long weekend of the event and spend two to three nights at the Borana Race Village, where caterers will set up stalls offering a wide selection of refreshments, reasonably priced and nutritious meals and snacks.

There is no organised campsite located near the start. This allows all the service providers as well as the event organisers to be concentrated at the race village. But the owners of Kisima Farm allow responsible and self-sufficient campers to pitch their tents at the former Top Camp site near the start. Luxury tented accommodation and hotels can also be booked.

The 10 to 4 raises funds for the Mount Kenya Trust, which aims to plant some eight million trees on more than 2,000 hectares in Mount Kenya Forest

EVENT PRIZE LIST

Cash prizes are awarded for riders in the following categories:

- Riders with the lowest aggregate time for the Hardcore event on Day 1 and the Classic on Day 2 were declared the overall winners of the 2013 Mountain Bike Challenge
- First male and first female
- Second male and second female
- Third male and third female.

Non-cash prizes were awarded in the following categories:

- Most successful team (best of four riders) with the lowest aggregate time for Hardcore Day 1 and Classic Day 2 events

HARDCORE DAY 1

Non-cash prize were awarded to:

- King/queen of the mountain – first to the top

- First male and first female

CLASSIC, RUSH AND SLIDE

Non-cash prizes awarded to the following categories in each event:

- First male and first female
- Second male and second female
- Third male and third female
- First school team (best of four riders)
- Best in age 10 to 13 category of Slide
- First boy and first girl
- Best in age groups under 18, over 40, over 50 and over 60 in the Classic
- First man and first woman
- Competitor/team who bring the highest sponsorship.



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HOTEL LA MADA, *Nairobi*



KILIFI BAY BEACH RESORT, *Kenyan Coast*



THE OAKWOOD HOTEL, *Nairobi*



BAOBAB SEA LODGE, *Kenyan Coast*



JINJA NILE RESORT, *Uganda*



KILIMA SAFARI CAMP, *Amboseli*



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NOW BALLOON FANS CAN FLOAT OVER SERENGETI, TOO



Adventures Aloft – the ballooning arm of Mada Hotels – is set for big things as the company adds a second, twin-location site to its operations in Tanzania.

In 2013, and building on the early success of its ballooning in Tarangire National Park, the company will launch flights in the Serengeti National Park.

Adventures Aloft is only the second company licensed by the Tanzania National Parks Authority (Tanapa) to operate balloons in

the country's best-known park. Mada chief executive Tinu Mhajan says: "We've been allocated two sites in the northern Serengeti: one in the Togoro Plains area and the other at Kogatende." The company will dedicate one balloon to each site.

The Togoro Plains site will cater for guests staying in and around Lobo Wildlife Lodge, while the Kogatende site, close to the Mara River, will serve clients in the far north of the park.

TWO BASES

"It is our intention to have both areas operating year-round," explains Tinu. "The Serengeti is a very large park, so we need two bases to cater for clients staying in both areas of the Serengeti and without having them drive too far to get to their respective balloon site."

As Reflections went to press in February 2013, Adventures Aloft was busy preparing for the arrival of two new balloons from the leading UK manufacturer Cameron Balloons and getting the launch sites ready. "Balloons for both sites have already been ordered and will be air-freighted to Tanzania from the UK," says Tinu.



He expects the two balloons to arrive before May and flights to commence in June. "Initially, we will be constructing a balloon base at both sites for our pilots and crew. After that, we will be looking at putting up a tented camp once the balloon operation has begun."

Any camp that Adventures Aloft builds in the area will be designed to offer the best in guest luxury while allowing clients to maximise their Serengeti experience. Construction and design will be carried out in a way that blends in with the environment.

Each balloon base has about 25 staff. The camp, when completed, will employ a further 40 staff members.

"We've been allocated two sites in the northern Serengeti: one in the Togoro Plains area and the other at Kogatende."



And a name for the new camp? "Balloon Camp Serengeti is, of course, a natural choice for us, given the great success we've had with Balloon Camp Tarangire," says Tinu. "But we will make a final decision closer to the time we start building."

Clearly, the Serengeti is perfect balloon-operating country. In contrast with Tarangire, where giant baobabs and impressive elephant numbers provide an amazing spectacle but make the ballooning more of a challenge, the

Serengeti has an almost treeless savannah landscape, just like the Mara across the border in Kenya.

TRACK RECORD

So why did Tanapa choose Adventures Aloft as the park's second operator? It seems that a strong track record was a major factor in the decision. "Tanapa was looking at opening up new areas of the Serengeti to ballooning and were looking for an operator with experience in hot air balloons," says Tinu. "They

were aware that Adventures Aloft had been operating in the Masai Mara since 1985 and were also aware of our operation in Tarangire, where we started flying two years ago."

Tanapa is a well organised body, sensitive to the conservation of its parks. All planning decisions relating to new guest activities are taken after assessing the impact of those activities. Tanapa is keen to add new services for guests visiting the Serengeti, but rightly insists that the utmost care is taken to ensure that eco systems are not adversely affected.

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THE MADA FAMILY



The Mada Hotels group operates eight properties, six in Kenya, one in Uganda and one in Tanzania. The six properties comprise: a tented camp in the Masai Mara, two

beachside hotels, two hotels in Nairobi and a resort in Jinja in Uganda plus a new hotel under construction in Zanzibar and another to be taken over in Kenya.

LOCATIONS

1. Kilifi Bay Resort, Kilifi

2. Baobab Lodge, Kilifi

3. Kilima Safari Camp, Amboseli

4. Oakwood, Nairobi

5. La Mada, Nairobi

6. Fig Tree Camp, Masai Mara

7. Jinja Nile Resort, Jinja

8. Adventures Aloft, Masai Mara

9. Adventures Aloft, Serengeti

10. Adventures Aloft, Tarangire

11. Balloon Camp, Serengeti

12. Balloon Camp, Tarangire

13. Hunters Lodge



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8/9/10



11



12



13



A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF AFRICAN WONDERS

ADVENTURES ALOFT: MASAI MARA | TARANGIRE | SERENGETI



Adventures Aloft has been operating for over 25 years. The company employs highly experienced pilots and has a perfect safety record. All the pilots are commercially rated on the large-sized balloons used by the company. Thanks to the skills and knowledge of its staff, guests are able to relax and enjoy the flight, knowing they are in good hands.

Travelling in a hot air balloon gives passengers a weightless feeling that creates a sense of freedom and tranquillity. Over the years, Adventures Aloft has become very good at creating memorable experiences for its passengers. Each flight is planned with precision so that all passengers have to do is enjoy

the view. Since it began operating in the Masai Mara, the company has built a reputation for professional and friendly service. The business has expanded as a result of its growing popularity. In 2011 the company began flights from Tarangire National Park and added a new balloon to its Masai Mara operations.

COFFEE AND CAKE

Flights typically take off at 06.30. Passengers are woken early so they can freshen up and enjoy some coffee and cake. The hour-long flights provide guests with a bird's-eye view of the landscape. A chase crew follows the balloon, carrying equipment and ensuring a smooth landing.

FLOATING ABOVE THE BAOBAB TREES

Using an A-415 Cameron balloon with a capacity of 16 passengers, Adventures Aloft began operating in Tarangire in 2010.

Company staff collect passengers from lodges and camps throughout the park and bring them to the launch site. Typically, flights take off at sunrise. Take-off sites can vary depending on the weather, but all are easily accessible.

The balloon's exact path is determined by the prevailing winds, but mostly follows the meandering Tarangire River. These flights offer passengers a unique opportunity to gaze downwards on the various wild animals as they come to drink and cool off by the river.

On landing, guests are served breakfast on the riverbanks as they enjoy panoramic views of the Tarangire River and the

cool breeze through the baobab trees. Following a hearty breakfast, guests are taken on a game drive en route back to their lodge or to the drop-off point, as agreed by the tour guide.

EXPERTISE

In addition to the pilot, it takes a fleet of vehicles and several members of staff to make the flights run smoothly. The balloon crews have years of expertise and knowledge, thus helping to uphold the high standards that passengers expect from Adventures Aloft.

Bookings should be made in advance to avoid disappointment. Guests can either contact Adventures Aloft directly or book through a tour operator or via staff at their own camp.



Guests are served breakfast on the riverbank with panoramic views of the Tarangire

After landing, the balloon crew sets up a champagne-style breakfast complete with butler service, an open bar serving Bloody Mary cocktails and a hearty English-style breakfast. To mark this once-in-a-lifetime adventure, all passengers receive a certificate from the pilot as a memento of their flight. The morning's adventure is rounded off by a game drive back to camp.

Adventures Aloft abides by eco-friendly practices and all operations are carried out with minimal impact on the environment. The company expects its passengers to follow a similar code of conduct. ■



BEST VIEW OF THE MASAI MIGRATION

Adventures Aloft has been creating memorable balloon safaris in the Masai Mara National Reserve since 1997 and is now flying seven balloons, with a total capacity of 92 passengers, on a daily basis.

OUTSTANDING

Balloon safaris are the most outstanding way to see the annual wildebeest migration for which the Masai Mara is famous. Whatever the time of year, passengers are guaranteed a spectacular view across the reserve.

There are daily flights from two separate locations, at Fig Tree Camp and Siana Springs Intrepids, departing at about 06.30. For guests not staying at those two resorts, Adventures Aloft offers a transfer service to and from most of the camps and lodges in and around the Mara.

The company has a fleet of Cameron balloons, consisting of five A-415 balloons with a flying capacity of 16 passengers each and one A-315 balloon carrying 12 passengers.



Each passenger receives a certificate from the pilot as a memento of the flight





A GREAT WAY TO ESCAPE THE BUSTLE OF NAIROBI

HOTEL LA MADA

La Mada is a four-star boutique hotel surrounded by the lush Karura Forest, home to a rich birdlife and several monkey colonies. In fact, it is hard to believe that the hotel is just 8 km from the centre of Nairobi.

Set in seven acres of land with a tranquil stream running through the grounds, this is a great place to relax and unwind – ideal for those wishing to escape the noise and bustle of the city.

CRISP LINEN

The hotel is intimate and friendly with many personal touches. It has just 35 guest rooms, comprising 25 double rooms, six twin rooms

and four executive suites. All accommodation is luxuriously furnished with crisp white linen and towels, large wooden beds and spacious en-suite bathrooms.

Guests can choose from a variety of top quality cuisine at La Mada. In addition to the elegant à la carte dining room, there is the Lion's Den Restaurant, located in the forest, which serves barbecue lunches. There is also a charming coffee shop, perfect for an afternoon beverage, while the pool bar serves refreshing drinks in a picturesque setting.

Thanks to its location, the hotel has become increasingly popular for business meetings and conferences. In response to demand and its growing popularity, there are now

La Mada is intimate and friendly with many personal touches



There is a range of facilities to make every guest's stay as relaxed as possible



four conference halls. There is also a well equipped executive boardroom with LCD projectors, computers and a secretarial and photocopying service.

COCKTAILS

Experienced staff are on hand to organise functions and make every conference a success. Activities include special events in the Lion's Den Restaurant, poolside cocktails and live band entertainment.

There is a range of facilities to make every guest's stay as relaxed as possible. For example, the large swimming pool is ideal for a revitalising swim, while the airport shuttle service helps take the stress away from travelling. In addition, there is free Wi-Fi to keep guests fully connected. ■

FACT FILE

STAR RATING: ****

LOCATION: Nairobi, Thika Road

NUMBER OF ROOMS: 35

LEISURE: Swimming pool

DINING: Two restaurants

BARS: Pool bar

CONFERENCING: Four conference halls, one meeting room and a boardroom

ENTERTAINMENT: Live bands

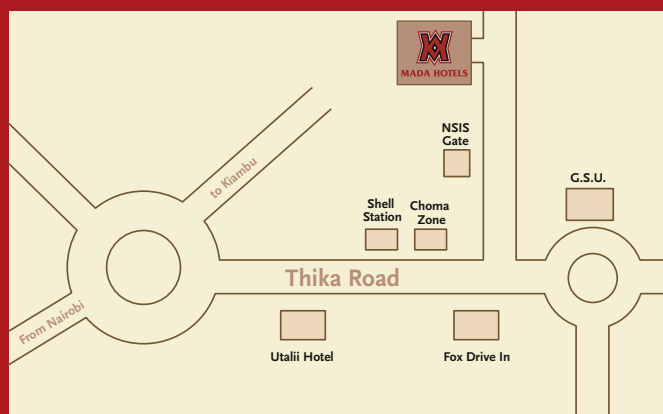
NEARBY ATTRACTIONS: Karura Forest

ADDITIONAL FACILITIES: Curio shop, airport shuttle service, business centre and free Wi-Fi.



LOCATION

| | DISTANCE | ESTIMATED TIME |
|----------------|----------|----------------|
| CITY CENTRE | 10 KM | 15-20 MINS |
| JKIA | 25 KM | 20-40 MINS |
| WILSON AIRPORT | 18 KM | 25-35 MINS |





A HINT OF COLONIAL DAYS

THE OAKWOOD HOTEL

The Oakwood Hotel is a small, exclusive and perfectly located property. In fact, it's the ideal accommodation for guests who enjoy the hustle, bustle and non-stop night-life of Nairobi.

The Oakwood resides in the Elite House building, formerly Livingstone House. The property was built in the 1950s and although it maintains its colonial architecture it has recently been refurbished for the comfort and convenience of its guests. The hotel retains some of the original features, including the Otis lift, which is manually operated and has an open-cage design.

In the heart of the business district, the hotel has become increasingly popular with business travellers who want the convenience of a central location with all the benefits of a comfortable boutique hotel.

The hotel is great for easy connections and shuttle services to other major cities and towns in East Africa and near the railway station. Also in close proximity are the many bars, restaurants and evening entertainment that make Nairobi one of Africa's most exciting cities.

TRADITIONAL

Aptly named, The Oakwood is decorated with traditional wood furnishings and fixtures that create a homely and warm atmosphere.

There are just 20 self-contained rooms, all with telephone, TV, in-house video, mini fridge and tea/coffee-making facilities.

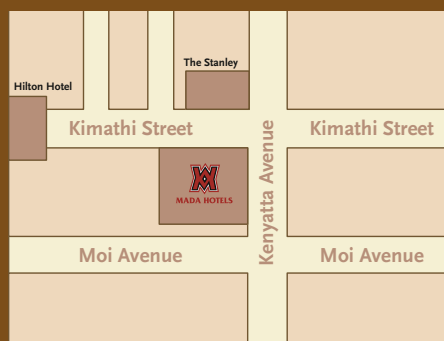
The hotel has a stylish bar and a restaurant with an à la carte menu. A full traditional English breakfast is included in the room rate.

The Oakwood offers a wide range of facilities, including a business centre with Wi-Fi connection and ample parking (at an additional cost). There is also a laundry service for the convenience of guests. ■

The property was built in the 1950s and maintains its classic old-style colonial architecture

LOCATION

| | DISTANCE | ESTIMATED TIME |
|----------------|----------|----------------|
| CITY CENTRE | 0 KM | 0 MINS |
| JKIA | 12 KM | 20-30 MINS |
| WILSON AIRPORT | 8 KM | 20 MINS |



FACT FILE

STAR RATING: ****

LOCATION: Kimathi Street, Nairobi

NUMBER OF ROOMS: 20

DINING: One restaurant

BARS: One bar

NEARBY: Close to all business facilities.





PANORAMIC OCEAN VIEWS

KILIFI BAY BEACH RESORT



Located on the white sandy beaches of Kilifi, the four-star Kilifi Bay Beach Resort is small and exclusive, with unspoilt panoramic views of the Indian Ocean. It is the only hotel on this beautiful stretch of beach, so guests can be assured of total peace and quiet during their stay.

The hotel gardens contain hundreds of palm trees creating shade while the cool breeze blows in from the ocean. All the buildings and guest accommodation has recently been refurbished and are painted white and the interiors are fresh and modern.

With only 50 rooms, the resort puts emphasis on personalised service, ensuring that all guests are well looked after during their stay. Each room has its own private balcony where guests can relax with a sundowner or just read a book.

SUNDOWNER

To help guests unwind, a free massage service is available. There are also two swimming pools, perfect for a relaxing dip.

The main restaurant serves buffet breakfasts, light lunches and sumptuous evening



FACT FILE

STAR RATING: ****

LOCATION: Kilifi

NUMBER OF ROOMS: 50

LEISURE: Two swimming pools, snorkelling, windsurfing, scuba diving, glass-bottom boat, big game fishing, cruises in the creek

DINING: Two restaurants

BARS: Three bars

CONFERENCING: Facilities and capacity for up to 80 delegates

ENTERTAINMENT: Acrobatic shows, discos, live music and traditional African shows

NEARBY ATTRACTIONS: Kilifi Harbour and Creek

ADDITIONAL FACILITIES: Massage service

meals. The dinner menu is a selection of international cuisine, with themed nights and barbecues throughout the week. In addition, the Tepenyaki restaurant offers an exotic mix of Japanese cuisine and delicious seafood.

BOAT EXCURSIONS

The Coconut Bar on the beach serves snacks and drinks throughout the day. There are two further bar areas within the resort: one in the lounge reception area, popular for pre-dinner cocktails, and the Pool Bar, ideal for a refreshing beverage while guests relax and soak up the sun.

The hotel boat 'Baobella' departs throughout the day on scenic excursions through Kilifi Creek, with soft drinks and snacks provided. Other water sports include snorkelling, diving and canoeing, all of which are available from the beach.

Kilifi Bay Resort is a well established conference venue. The atmosphere is quiet and the staff are trained to cater for large groups. Various activities are available for special functions, including beach dinners, day trips to Malindi and beach cocktail parties. ■

The emphasis here is on personal service. Guests are well looked after during their stay



LOCATION

| | DISTANCE | ESTIMATED TIME |
|-----------------|----------|----------------|
| MOMBASA AIRPORT | 64 KM | 1 HR 20 MINS |
| RAILWAY STATION | 58 KM | 1 HR 15 MINS |
| MOMBASA TOWN | 56 KM | 1 HR 15 MINS |
| MALINDI TOWN | 55 KM | 1 HR 15 MINS |
| MALINDI AIRPORT | 50 KM | 1 HR |



The atmosphere is quiet and staff are trained to cater for large groups. Various activities are available for special functions



Kilifi is small, picturesque and self-sufficient, with fruit markets, small shops, banks, post office, pharmacy and a hospital

MAGICAL BOUTIQUE LODGE

BAOBAB SEA LODGE

For guests who want to relax, soak up the sun and enjoy the magic of the Kenyan coast, the Baobab Sea Lodge, set in seven acres of tropical gardens with 60 metres of ocean frontage, is the ideal spot

This recently refurbished boutique hotel is located in the old coastal town of Kilifi, halfway between Mombasa and Malindi. Kilifi is small, picturesque and self-sufficient, with fruit markets, small shops, two banks, a post office, a pharmacy and a hospital. Kilifi also has many grand houses, both alongside the creek and overlooking the ocean.

When it comes to dining at Baobab, every meal is fresh and unique. With meal plans

from all-inclusive to basic bed-and-breakfast available, guests can eat in the hotel as little or as often as they want. The main restaurant serves a variety of good-tasting cuisine and has themed nights with live entertainment throughout the week including acrobatics, discos, live music and traditional African shows with dancers. Guests who prefer a quieter and calmer evening may choose to have a cocktail in one of the two bars, or catch up on the latest news in the TV lounge.

MASSAGE

For the ultimate in relaxation, visitors can enjoy a free massage, which is available to all hotel guests. More active types can enjoy the large variety of water sports on



*A perfect venue
for conferences
with a theatre-
style room for up
to 200 people*



offer, including snorkelling, deepsea fishing, windsurfing, scuba diving, canoeing and a glass-bottom boat. The hotel's boat, the 'Baobella', is also available for excursions in and around Kilifi Creek.

QUALITY

With so much on offer, it may come as a surprise that Baobab Sea Lodge has just 30 guest rooms. What's more each of the rooms has recently been refurbished for maximum comfort. The philosophy here is 'quality not quantity' so that guests are well attended by friendly and professional staff.

The Baobab Sea Lodge is a perfect venue for conferences with a theatre-style room available for up to 200 people. Banquets can also be arranged in either indoor or outdoor settings. ■



FACT FILE

STAR RATING: ***

LOCATION: Kilifi

NUMBER OF ROOMS: 30

LEISURE: Two swimming pools, including a children's pool, tennis, snorkelling, windsurfing, scuba diving, glass-bottom boat, game fishing and creek cruises

DINING: One restaurant, banquets on request

BARS: Two bars and a swim-up pool bar

CONFERENCING: One conference room, public address systems, LCD projector and computers

ENTERTAINMENT: Live music, theme nights and traditional African shows

NEARBY ATTRACTIONS: Kilifi Harbour, Kilifi Creek, fruit markets and curio shops



LOCATION

| | DISTANCE | ESTIMATED TIME |
|-----------------|----------|----------------|
| MOMBASA AIRPORT | 63 KM | 1 HR 20 MINS |
| RAILWAY STATION | 55 KM | 1 HR 15 MINS |
| MOMBASA TOWN | 53 KM | 1 HR 15 MINS |
| MALINDI TOWN | 52 KM | 1 HR 15 MINS |
| MALINDI AIRPORT | 47 KM | 1 HR |





EXCLUSIVE CAMP OFFERING ULTIMATE BALLOON SAFARIS

BALLOON CAMP

Balloon Camp, which opened in July 2011, is a luxurious boutique-style property in the heart of Tarangire National Park. Located on Boundary Hill, the camp offers spectacular views over the national park.

Here, as the name implies, guests can expect to enjoy the very best kind of balloon safari experience.

The philosophy at Balloon Camp is one of quality over quantity. Accommodation consists of just six grand safari tents with king-sized four-poster beds and large open-plan bathrooms. Each tent is raised on stilts

with spacious verandas from which to enjoy Tarangire's famously beautiful sunsets.

Of course, the camp's main attraction is the availability of hot air balloon safaris. Flights depart daily from a take-off area near Tarangire Sopa Lodge. Operations are run by the Mada-owned company Adventures Aloft, which has years of experience in creating memorable adventures for its clients.

CHAMPAGNE

Flights typically take off at 6.30 am and last for about an hour. On landing, the balloon crew sets up a full English breakfast, complete

*Each tent is
raised on stilts
with spacious
verandas from
which to enjoy
Tarangire's
beautiful sunsets*



FACT FILE

LOCATION: Tarangire

NUMBER OF ROOMS: Six

LEISURE: Balloon safaris

DINING: One restaurant / champagne breakfast in the park

with Bloody Mary cocktails and champagne, on a site next to the Tarangire River. Each passenger then receives a certificate from the pilot as a memento of the flight. This special morning is rounded off by a game drive en route to the lodge or main gate.

GAME DRIVES

An impressive fleet of 4x4 vehicles is stationed at the camp, allowing guests to enjoy games drives throughout the park.

In the evenings, guests are treated to a gourmet meal before retiring to the lounge bar where coffee, whisky and other drinks are served. ■





An impressive fleet of 4x4 vehicles is stationed at the camp, allowing guests to enjoy game drives



LOCATION

| | DISTANCE | ESTIMATED TIME |
|---------------|----------|----------------|
| ARUSHA | 115 KM | 2 HRS |
| KURO AIRSTRIP | 15 KM | 30 MINS |





Only from Fig Tree can visitors enjoy the special experience of moonlit champagne bush dinners

A SPECIAL TREAT FOR SAFARI LOVERS

FIG TREE CAMP

Guests at Fig Tree Camp, in the heart of the Masai Mara National Reserve, can expect a very special highlight to their holiday: the chance to enjoy a moonlit bush dinner with champagne.

Located on the banks of the Talek River, the camp has a fleet of 4x4 vehicles, all driven by professional guides with a fund of local knowledge who are always on hand to answer questions by guests.

Fig Tree Camp also offers guests an in-depth understanding of the local area, with lectures by naturalists and game walks led by Maasai morans.

Exclusive to Fig Tree, the moonlit champagne bush dinners are a truly magical, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that involves a night game drive and a candle-lit barbecue dinner in a special conservation area.

CHARMING

Breakfast, lunch and dinner (all of which are inclusive in guests' room rates) are served in the main dining area. Each meal offers a huge selection of food from a large buffet. Evenings are lively, with local Maasai to sing and dance for guests after their meal. The charming tree-house coffee deck is ideal for afternoon relaxation surrounded by trees and wildlife.





ADVENTURES ALOFT

The balloon safari company Adventures Aloft is a member of the Mada Hotels group and is based at the camp. Flights depart each morning at 06.30. The experience offers guests a bird's-eye view of the Mara as they watch the sun rise over the plains. To top off this special occasion, a full champagne-style breakfast complete with open bar is organised on the landing site to celebrate the flight.

In terms of accommodation there are 38 classic safari tents and 10 superior Ngamboli tents, all with single and double beds and private patio on the Talek River. Guests looking for a more luxurious travelling experience could choose to stay in one of the 32 garden chalets with private balconies.

CONFERENCE

New additions at Fig Tree Camp include conference facilities – perfect for those seeking a private retreat in a safari setting. Equipment includes LCD projectors, computers and a secretarial services. ■

Guests looking for a more luxurious travelling experience could choose to stay in one of the 32 garden chalets



LOCATION

| | DISTANCE | ESTIMATED TIME |
|--------------------|----------|----------------|
| NAIROBI | 240 KM | 4 HRS 30 MINS |
| NAROK | 110 KM | 2 HRS |
| KEEKEROK AIRSTRIP | 24 KM | 40 MINS |
| OL KIOMBO AIRSTRIP | 14 KM | 30 MINS |



FACT FILE

LOCATION: Masai Mara National Reserve

NUMBER OF ROOMS: 80

LEISURE: Balloon safaris, game drives, nature walks, massage service and a swimming pool

DINING: One buffet-style restaurant, bush dinners

BARS: Two bars and a tree-house coffee deck

CONFERCING: Two conference rooms

ENTERTAINMENT: Champagne bush dinners and guest lectures

ACCESS: Airstrip nearby. Guests can fly in from either Nairobi or Mombasa



MOUNTAIN VIEWS AND SUPER-LUXURY TENTS

KILIMA SAFARI CAMP

Kilima Safari Camp is set in 360 acres in Amboseli National Park and enjoys commanding views of Mount Kilimanjaro.

Guests have a fine choice of accommodation in the form of 50 classic safari tents, 10 superior tents and 12 luxury lodge rooms. From the comfort of their own room, guests can view the animals as they come to drink at the nearby waterhole, which attracts a wide variety of animals and birds.

Guests can enjoy game drives in comfort and style thanks to an impressive fleet of 4x4 vehicles. The professional driver guides are very knowledgeable, allowing clients to get the most from their safari experience.

Kilima Safari Camp offers a great selection of activities. In addition to classic game drives, Maasai morans are available to take clients on game walks, while a local naturalist offers free lectures about the local environment.

TREATMENTS

Those looking to relax and unwind can make use of the massage room, which offers a variety of treatments. Alternatively, the ornate swimming pool is perfect for a refreshing dip after a morning game drive.

Kilima's culinary delights include moonlit bush dinners, a magical experience that offers guests the chance to dine under the stars in the Amboseli. The camp also has

FACT FILE

LOCATION: Amboseli National Park

NUMBER OF ROOMS: 72

LEISURE: Game drives and nature walks

DINING: Restaurant and bush dinners

ENTERTAINMENT: Guest lectures

NEARBY ATTRACTIONS: Mount Kilimanjaro

ADDITIONAL FACILITIES: Resident nurse, massage service, excursions



In addition to classic game drives, Maasai morans can take clients on game walks

a fine restaurant serving a hearty breakfast, a buffet lunch and delicious evening meals.

For guests at Kilima, the three-storey Kibo Lounge is a true high point, in more ways than one. Situated in the centre of the dining room, the lounge is actually a look-out tower with splendid views of Mount Kilimanjaro, Amboseli National Park and the waterholes in front of the camp. This is a perfect place for guests to relax, watch the sunrise with a morning cappuccino or just gaze at the stars after dinner.

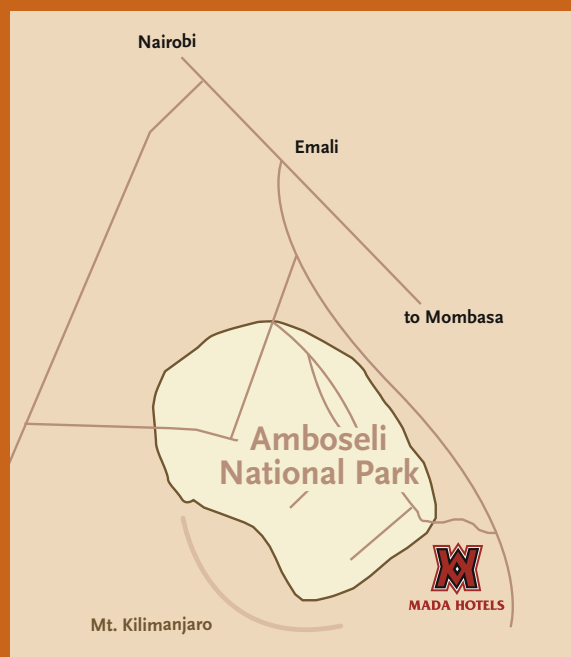
A new conference hall was added in 2013 making the property an ideal getaway for retreats and seminars. ■





LOCATION

| | DISTANCE | ESTIMATED TIME |
|-------------------|----------|----------------|
| NAIROBI | 235 KM | 5 HRS |
| NAMANGA | 80 KM | 2 HRS |
| AMBOSELI AIRSTRIP | 12 KM | 20 MINS |



The camp has a strategic location with panoramic views of Mount Kilimanjaro



The elegant main restaurant seats up to 150 guests and has a terrace with excellent views

IDEAL GETAWAY WITH PANORAMIC VIEWS

JINJA NILE RESORT

Jinja Nile Resort has been voted 'Best Weekend Getaway' and 'Best Country Hotel in Uganda' by Travel News magazine for five years in a row – and the reasons are not hard to find.

Offering some of the finest accommodation and hospitality in Uganda, the resort has a strategic location with panoramic views of the River Nile.

LUSH GARDENS

Popular with both business travellers and tourists, the resort is spread over 75 acres of lush gardens with beautifully landscaped lawns, palm trees and tropical plants. All

public areas and the colonial-style accommodation have been designed to give guests Nile-facing views.

OPTIONS

There are various dining options. The elegant main restaurant seats up to 150 guests at a time. It has a terrace overlooking the swimming pool and offers an excellent view of the River Nile and the surrounding countryside. The equally spacious Conference Dining Room is located near the conference halls for fast and efficient service to delegates. It has an independent bar for serving refreshments to conference and workshop attendees.



The newly opened Nile Palace is a restaurant and bar located on a 20 metre cliff over the river. With its unique location and exquisite food, the restaurant has become popular as a venue for special events.

EQUIPMENT

The heath club features Italian Technogym equipment as well as a sauna, a steam bath and a massage room.

In terms of business facilities, the resort has three conference halls, three meeting rooms and a boardroom. For larger events and outdoor concerts, Jinja Nile Resort has a large amphitheatre, facing the river, with a capacity of 3,000 people. ■



LOCATION

| | DISTANCE | ESTIMATED TIME |
|-----------------|----------|----------------|
| ENTEBBE AIRPORT | 105 KM | 1 HR 30 MINS |
| KAMPALA | 75 KM | 1 HR |
| JINJA TOWN | 4 KM | 15 MINS |
| MALABA | 135 KM | 2 HRS |



FACT FILE

STAR RATING: *****

LOCATION: 4 km from Jinja town centre

NUMBER OF ROOMS: 134

LEISURE: Gym, health club, swimming pool, badminton, three pool tables, squash court, sauna, steam bath, massage service and a tennis court

DINING: Three restaurants, plus two private dining rooms

BARS: Five bars

CONFERCING: Three conference halls, three meeting rooms and a boardroom

ENTERTAINMENT: Weekend discos

NEARBY ATTRACTIONS: Nine-hole golf course

ADDITIONAL FACILITIES: Children's park, experienced nannies and gift shop



The resort has three conference halls, three meeting rooms and a boardroom. There is also a large amphitheatre facing the river with a capacity of 3,000 people



WHAT'S COOKING

Chamil Silva, Mada Hotels chef

OLIVE TAPENADE STUFFED BITTER GOURD WITH PEPPER SAUCE

A great vegetarian starter.....simple and quick with great results

INGREDIENTS

- 1 medium-sizes bitter gourd
- Pinch of saffron
- 3 cloves garlic crushed
- 50 g pitted Kalamata olives chopped
- 1 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp. chopped parsley
- 1 tbsp. chopped white onion
- 1 tsp. chopped fresh basil leaves
- 1 whole yellow capsicum
- 20 ml white vinegar
- 1 tsp. English mustard
- Salt and white pepper to taste
- 1 tbsp. lemon juice
- 10 g grated gorgonzola cheese (Italian bleu cheese)
- A bouquet garni

PREPARATION METHOD

Prep: 10 minutes | Cook: 10 minutes

1. Firstly take out the seeds from the bitter gourd and wash. In a pan boil water. Add the saffron, garlic, salt, pepper and a bouquet garni. In this blanch your bitter gourd and later keep in iced water for cooling.
2. In a bowl mix your olives, the olive oil, parsley and a little lemon juice. Now blend this to make a paste. Season the bitter gourd with some lemon juice, salt, pepper, mustard, olive oil and basil. Stuff the paste into the bitter gourd.
3. Roast the whole yellow capsicum and skin it. Blend the capsicum with vinegar, some mustard cream, olive oil, salt and pepper in a creamy sauce.



4. Split the bitter gourd into two and garnish with your favourite lettuce. Drizzle with pepper dressing and the Italian bleu cheese.

COOKING TIPS:

Before blanching the bitter gourd add a pinch of baking soda in the hot water for no discoloration of the vegetable.

In the iced water with the bitter gourd add some turmeric powder, sugar and vinegar to remove any bitterness from the bitter gourd.

HERBS & LEMON INFUSED BAKED TILAPIA

A French-style entrée with an Asian infusion

INGREDIENTS

- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 350 g whole tilapia
- 1 tsp. fresh ground black pepper
- 1 tsp. sea salt
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh dill leaves
- Juice of a lime
- 1 tbsp. butter
- 3 cloves garlic ground
- 1/2 cup chopped white onion
- 1/4 cup dry white wine
- 1 cup fish stock
- 1/4 tsp. ground cumin
- 1/4 tsp. cayenne pepper
- 1/2 tsp. chives
- 2 tbsp. balsamic vinegar
- 1 tsp. hoisin sauce

PREPARATION METHOD

Prep: 30 minutes | Cook: 30 minutes

1. Preheat oven to 180°C. and grease a 20 x 30 cm baking dish with some olive oil.
2. Season the whole fish with garlic, black pepper, cayenne pepper, chives, dill leaves and sea salt. Drizzle the tilapia with lime juice and the remaining olive oil, then set aside.
3. In a separate saucepan heat butter and sauté the onion and garlic first. Add white vinegar, the white wine and the hoisin sauce and simmer for 5 minutes, seasoning with salt and pepper.



4. Bake the fish for approximately 20 minutes. When baked, spread the sauce over the whole fish. Serve with choice of starch.

COOKING TIPS:

Before baking the whole fish, marinate and refrigerate for at least an hour for the marination to work efficiently. Serve immediately after baking for great results.



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