



THE
ELEPHANT
WATCH
PORTFOLIO



Photo by Daryl Balfour



Photo by Thomas Gruber

INTRODUCTION

At the heart of the Elephant Watch Portfolio are two private luxury lodges, Olerai House and Elephant Watch Camp, an exquisite family home, Sirocco, a self-catering Cabin, and a tailor-made boutique safari business. The portfolio, founded by Oria Douglas-Hamilton, a native Kenyan of Italian-French extraction, has grown out of her passionate love of Africa, its people and wildlife. Each lodge has its own particular character and style. Come and enjoy our hospitality, with its delicious food, its tranquillity, its Afro-Italian chic – and the great outdoor adventure that beckons from beyond.

ORIGINS

Oria started her first tourism venture on her family farm, on the shores of Lake Naivasha, where she grew up with her siblings as children of nature. The farm was built up by her French mother, Giselle - a sculptress and pupil of Auguste Rodin - and her Italian father, Mario Rocco. Oria made it into a wildlife sanctuary, now home to zebra, buffalo, hippo, giraffe, leopard, gazelle and colobus monkeys. Olerai House is a country lodge, bedecked with flowering creepers. Animals and birds throng the lawn that opens out towards Lake Naivasha and Mt Longonot, towering in the distance.

Across the sanctuary is Sirocco - the family's Art Deco residence - which emerges from between giant fig-trees like an enchanted Italian *palazzo*. Close by, tucked away amongst yellow fever trees, is Giselle's art studio - known as The Cabin - where she spent many years creating her unique portraits of Kenyan people as they were in the '30's, adorned with beads, feathers and skins. Each house is beautifully furnished, the atmosphere cosy, the vista a constantly changing theatre of nature and colour.

Soon after, Oria created Elephant Watch Camp on the banks of the Ewaso Nyiro river in Samburu National Reserve, one of the few places in the world where you can have unusually close encounters with elephants. Oria's husband, Iain Douglas-Hamilton, a world-renowned elephant conservationist, had already built the *Save the Elephants* research centre just seven kilometres downstream. Out walking along the riverbank, Oria discovered an idyllic spot with huge spreading *Acacia* and *Kigelia* trees, where elephants now rest in the shade or feast on acacia pods by the tents. Follow the track and discover the magic. Visitors often ask Oria where else they should go in Africa. From this was born her boutique safari business, based on a lifetime of travel and adventure. Choose one of her journeys. Walk, drive or fly - and touch the soul of the continent.

THE
**ELEPHANT
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PORTFOLIO

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OFFICE HOURS

9 a.m. - 6 p.m. (KENYA TIME)

Photo by Daryl Balfour





OLERAI HOUSE

FACT FILE

LOCATION

Olerai's wildlife sanctuary is a 300-acre Eden on the northern shores of Lake Naivasha, one of a string of lakes between the volcanoes of the Great Rift Valley. A freshwater lake at the highest elevation of the Kenyan Rift - 1,884 metres (6,181 feet) - Naivasha nestles in a complex geological cradle of volcanic rocks and sedimentary deposits. The name derives from the local Maasai name *Nai'posha*, meaning "rough water" because of the sudden storms which can arise. The lake is home to over 400 different species of bird, and many other animals such as buffalo, hippo, zebra, impala, leopard and giraffe.



Photo by Georgina Goodwin

ACCOMMODATION

There are three unique places to stay at Olerai:

Olerai House has six individually decorated bedroom suites - twin or double. Extra beds for children under 16 can be added to three for family rooms. Cots are available on request. The sitting room with log fire, TV room and dining room are shared facilities. Guests are welcome in the kitchen, to chat or swap recipes, and the veggie garden too where they can pick fresh organic produce for the next meal. Sleeps 12 - 14.



Photo by Georgina Goodwin

The Cabin, refurbished in 2013, is a private self-catering cottage in its own garden, perfect for a family or group of friends. It has two bedrooms - one double and one twin (an extra bed can be added for a child under 16) - with a shared bathroom, sitting room, dining area, kitchen and verandah. Olerai's signature homemade dishes and organic farm vegetables can be ordered directly for easy cooking. Sleeps 4 - 6.

Sirocco House, Ori's private home, is an Art-Deco villa built in the 1930's, that can be rented for family get-aways, conferences or special occasions, including weddings, banquets, and private lunches and dinners. There are two double rooms en-suite, one twin en-suite with a smaller room for children, and an extra room with bathroom close by. The house includes a banqueting hall, library, extensive verandah, garden and swimming pool. Sleeps 10 - 14.



Photo by Georgina Goodwin



Photo by Georgina Goodwin

DESCRIPTION

Olerai is one of those hidden places to go for a romantic weekend, to get away from the smoky rumbles of city life or to iron out hours of travel fatigue. The sanctuary is a private Garden of Eden, where by day one can stroll across the verdant grass surrounded by hundreds of wild yet curious animals. As twilight falls, hippo and buffalo emerge from the papyrus, hyena call and leopard pad silently down the main avenue. This is the time to huddle around a warm log fire, sip wine, tell stories and luxuriate in the sounds of the night.

WHAT SETS US APART

- A farm with history: A private estate in the same family since 1929, now a wildlife haven and sanctuary.
- Colourful and artistic: A family-run, high-end boutique location, with beautifully decorated rooms, direct access to lawns and fields that stretch to the shores of Lake Naivasha and look upon Mt Longonot beyond.
- Peaceful and charming: A haven of tranquillity and beauty set among giant acacia trees.
- Secrets of the sanctuary: Intimate yet open to nature. Embrace the freedom. Walk among zebra, giraffe and gazelle. Watch monkeys playing. Pick your own fresh herbs and vegetables. Chat in the friendly kitchen. Enjoy the smell of freshly baked bread and rosemary-scented roast chicken straight from the oven.
- Place to let go: A welcome change from city life or rough safari roads, with soft green lawns, an explosion of flowers and a chance to get up close to animals on foot, or mingle with monkeys and zebras at lunch.
- Organic homemade and original dishes: Produce from the abundant organic potagers (gardens) forms the basis of every meal, made according to Oria's family recipes. Take kikapus of farm vegetables, homemade marmalade, chutneys, relishes and freshly baked bread, home to enjoy.
- Close to Nairobi: A two-to-three hour drive from Nairobi or 20-minute flight, landing at either Loldia Airstrip, 10 mins from Olerai, or Olerai's private airstrip.

ACTIVITIES

Olerai House

- Bird watching and animal-spotting
- Guided walks and hill-hikes
- Swimming
- Curl up with a book in Olerai's garden

Around and about

- Biking and walking in Hell's Gate Nat. Park
- Hot lake plunge at Olkaria Spa
- Climb Mt Longonot
- Bird-watching on Lake Naivasha
- Boat ride to Hippo Pool
- Horseback riding at Green Park
- Golf at Rift Valley Club
- Flamingo spotting on the little lake
- Walking in Eburru forest
- Flower farm visits
- Picnic on Crescent Island, Lake Naivasha
- Beautician



Photo by Georgina Goodwin



Photo by Georgina Goodwin

NEED TO KNOW

GETTING THERE

Olerai House, Sirocco, and The Cabin, are located in the Great Rift Valley on the shores of Lake Naivasha at an altitude of 6,000 feet (1,830 metres).

- Driving from Nairobi takes 2-3 hours, depending on traffic and route taken.
- Daily morning flights on Safarilink from Wilson airport in Nairobi to Loldia Farm airstrip (about ten minutes drive from Olerai). Safarilink also connects to the Maasai Mara daily from Loldia.
- Private charters can fly directly into Olerai's private airstrip. Charter flights to the coast, Lake Victoria and northern or southern Kenya are easy to organise. This is the best way to travel across the country.

AIRSTRIPE COORDINATES

- Olerai airstrip: S 0° 43.271', E 36° 17.229'
- Loldia airstrip: S 0° 41.625', E 36° 19.011'

DAILY MANAGEMENT AND STAFF

The Sanctuary has a manager on-site and the Houses are fully staffed with well-trained cooks and room stewards. Security guards are on duty day and night.

CLIMATE

- Weather: It is beautiful all year round. Visitors can expect:
 - Generally hot, dry days and cooler nights.
 - December-March are the dry months.
 - The long rains usually begin in April with short rains in October/November.
 - May-July are the 'winter' months, when it can be quite cold with sunny days.
 - August, September and November are the 'spring' months with beautiful clear weather.
 - February and October are when the trees burst into flower. Keep an eye out for the magnificent jacarandas.
- Altitude: 6000ft above sea level.

WHAT TO BRING

- Lightweight clothes and hat for the day. Warmer, smarter clothes for the evening. A fleece or shawl is a must.
- Good walking shoes are essential, with lighter shoes/slipper socks for the evening.
- Swimwear and riding gear. Golf equipment can be hired at Rift Valley Lodge.
- Sunglasses, sunscreen, a flashlight, mosquito repellent and a camera to capture the memories around you.

MEALS AND FOOD

- The food is one of the highlights. Three organic gardens supply year-round fruit, vegetables and herbs for daily use in the kitchen.
- Fresh bread, pasta, ice cream, jams, jellies and condiments are homemade.
- Menus are planned according to season
- Please inform us of any dietary requirements or allergies prior to arrival.
- Any purely lunch bookings need to be confirmed and paid for 48 hours in advance.

WATER

- Bottled water is available free of charge. Water is brought to Olerai in large recyclable containers. As a stand against pollution, we do not encourage the use of plastic bottles. Please re-use any water bottles you bring with you and take them away when you leave.
- Drinking water in glass bottles is found in all bedrooms and served at meals.

HEALTH

- Full medical and travel insurance is recommended.
- There is no malaria in Naivasha.
- The Flying Doctors' evacuation service is recommended and can be organised at the office for a small fee.
- It is imperative for all travellers to have a yellow fever vaccination no less than 10 days prior to travel.

ELECTRICITY

- The mains power line supplies 240V electricity, with a back-up generator for emergencies.

COMMUNICATION SERVICE

- Mobile phone network is available through Safaricom/Vodafone and Airtel, but may be limited from time to time.
- Wi-Fi is available in Olerai and Sirocco.

VEHICLES

- There is a 4x4 vehicle on the estate that can be rented for exclusive use for US\$200 per day.

LANGUAGES

- Staff at the Houses speak English and Kiswahili.
- Among themselves they will communicate in a variety of languages, including Kikuyu, Kikamba, Kisamburu and Kiswahili.

CURRENCY

- Hotel rates, internal flights, car-hire and park-entrance fees are quoted in US dollars (please

note that all dollar notes printed before 1999 are not accepted in Kenya). All other prices are in Kenya shillings, and most major currencies are fully convertible.

PAYMENTS

- All payments for accommodation, travel and transfers should be arranged in advance with the Elephant Watch Portfolio head office in Nairobi. Extras can be paid in cash or by credit card directly at Olerai. There is a 3% charge on visa card payments. Travellers' cheques are not accepted.

TIPPING GUIDELINES

- Tipping staff is a custom in Kenya and very much appreciated. A lot of people you may not see are working hard to make your stay as agreeable as possible. We operate a communal tipping system, which is distributed to all the staff at the end of the month. A recommended tip is \$10-20 per guest per night.

ACCOLADES AND GUEST COMMENTS

"We have been here now for the third time in one year and this is really our favourite place in Naivasha. Apart from the quietness, the beautiful garden, the friendly staff and the great food, this is like paradise. Last night, sitting at the campfire, we saw buffaloes and hippos at a very short distance. Amazing thanks. We will be back." - **R. Otto, C. Otto and S. Otto**

"The highlight of our stay in East Africa! The food, environment and staff are all beyond expectations. Thank you so much for a very memorable holiday." - **Jan, Canada**

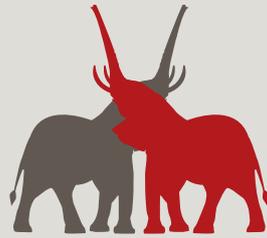
"An unforgettable introduction to Kenya for all of us. Exquisite food, hippos in the night, hornbills at breakfast and charming, charming people. Thank you so much!" - **T. Camilleri, USA**

"Words are not enough to tell you how wonderful it is to stay here... please just go." - **P. McBride, UK**

"I was slightly hesitant about choosing this place due to the lack of reviews (and information) I could find before we stayed. Ironically it was probably the most magical place of the 10-day safari!" - **Meyers, USA**



Photo by Georgina Goodwin



ELEPHANT WATCH CAMP

FACT FILE

LOCATION

Situated in the dry north of Kenya, in a land of endless rugged beauty and untamed wilderness, Elephant Watch Camp perches on the sandy banks of the Ewaso Nyiro River beneath *Kigelia* and *Acacia* trees in Samburu National Reserve. This ecosystem has one of the largest elephant populations in Kenya, each one individually identified and studied by researchers at *Save the Elephants*, an NGO founded by Oria's husband, world renowned zoologist, Iain Douglas-Hamilton. It is home to a number of species only found in arid zones, including the Somali ostrich, Beisa oryx, Grevy's zebra, gerenuk and reticulated giraffe. The reserve is also home to all three of the big cat species, wild dog, as well as 350 bird species. The nomadic Samburu people live among the animals as they have for centuries.



Photo by Simon Niblett

ACCOMMODATION

Elephant Watch is an eco-bush camp. It has been cleverly made out of fallen trees and locally available materials. Green to the core, Oria's guiding philosophy emphasises recycling, composting, solar energy and minimal pollution.

The camp has six wide and breezy desert-style tents, draped in multi-coloured cottons, each covered with a high thatched roof. Using the unique shapes of dead trees stripped of their bark by elephants, each tent is individually decorated with unique pieces of handcrafted furniture, a king-size bed and crisp cotton sheets. Side tables with books and solar-powered bedside lamps add to the cosy atmosphere. The en-suite bathrooms are built around the gnarled trunks of acacia trees and are open to the African sky. Water from the camp well is heated in the sun and poured into hand-painted buckets for a reviving "bush" shower.



Photo by Hilary Hurt

Elephant Watch has become home to some of the largest elephant bulls in Samburu, and they regularly walk among the tents. During the *sagaram* season, they are with us almost everyday. Of the six tents, two can be fitted with extra beds for children under 16. Extra tents can be put up during Christmas to cater for increased need.

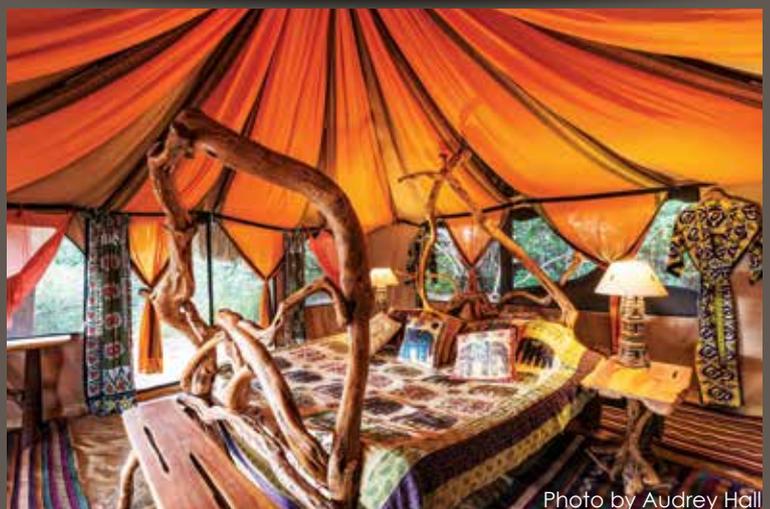


Photo by Audrey Hall



Photo by Simon Niblett

DESCRIPTION

Elephant Watch is the ultimate eco-lodge, blazing a trail for others to follow by nurturing an holistic, profoundly meaningful and proactive engagement with the wild world. The intimate connection of watching elephants with the camp's highly trained guides is completely different from any other experience in Africa. It is a deeply personal immersion into the world of an alien but parallel animal intelligence that is much like our own. Trained by *Save the Elephants* to recognise 900 individual elephants on sight, our guides know Samburu's intricate elephant family structures intimately. They remember each elephant's family history, stretching back 17 years, and can authoritatively interpret the complex relationships in herds that sometimes comprise of several hundred animals. In addition, recruited as local experts by *Ewaso Lions* to help gather information on predators, they can identify all lion, leopard and cheetah by name, and are equally enthusiastic about giraffe, oryx, monkeys or crocodiles. They are justifiably proud of their sharp eyes and detailed knowledge, and we are proud of our partnership with them to create an experience that is uniquely Samburu and that gives something back to this beautiful land.

WHAT SETS US APART

- An intimate view of elephant world: Get to know the characters, friendships and drama queens firsthand.
- Eco-design: The camp combines artistic inspiration with a purist's respect and love for nature.
- Conservation in action: Observe the cutting-edge conservation work of the Douglas-Hamilton family.
- Highly trained guides: Scientifically trained guides lead groups on foot and in specially adapted vehicles. They can identify hundreds of individual elephants living in up to 64 family groups.
- Samburu culture: Gain a rare insight into the proud Samburu warrior culture.
- Safari welcome: Warm evening showers, organic soaps and shampoos, fluffy towels, handmade cotton dressing gowns, beautifully cooked food and a cool glass of wine served beneath flickering lanterns by the river's edge - creates a gracious, warm, enveloping atmosphere, unlike any other.

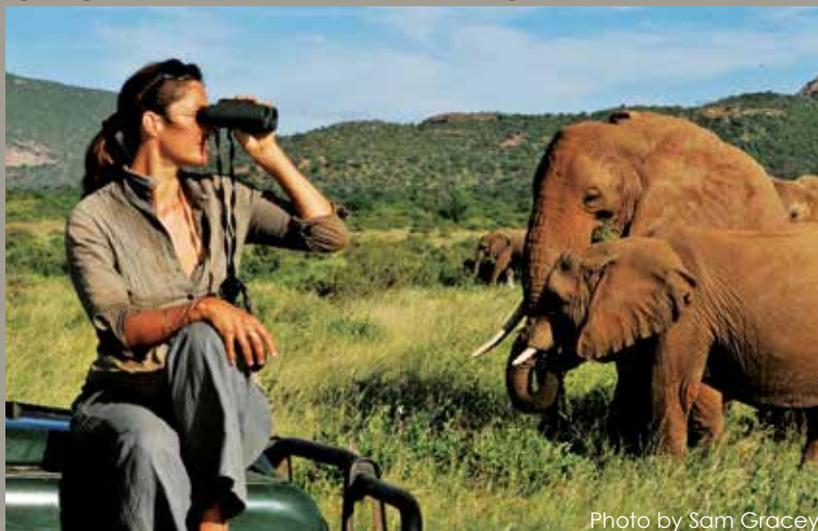


Photo by Sam Gracey

ACTIVITIES

- Game drives and elephant watching with a team of highly trained guides.
- Visit Iain Douglas-Hamilton's *Save the Elephants* research centre.
- Bush breakfasts, picnics and sundowners.
- Bush walks with Samburu warriors.
- Join in Samburu dances as the sun sets.
- Visit a Samburu village to learn about medicinal plants, or to be blessed.
- Hike up the sacred mountain - Ol Donyo Sapache - and picnic with eagles.
- Helicopter flight across wild north of Kenya.
- Visit local "singing" wells where dozens of warriors chant as they work (seasonal).
- Take home exquisite, handmade jewellery from the nomads' community shop.



Photo by Max Hug Williams



Photo by Michael Nichols

NEED TO KNOW

GETTING THERE

- Camp coordinates – N 00° 35.33', E 037° 28.794'
- Driving from Nairobi on good roads takes about six hours, stopping en route for a bite of lunch at Barney's Café or the Trout Tree near Nanyuki.
- Daily flights are available with Air Kenya from Wilson Airport to Samburu's Oryx airstrip, or private charters can be arranged. Flights from Nairobi take about one hour, and can connect on to the Maasai Mara.
- Guests are transferred from the airstrip in Elephant Watch Camp vehicles; they can be taken straight out to spend a day with elephants.

AIRSTRIp COORDINATES

- Oryx Airstrip (approx. 25 mins from EWC), north of the Ewaso Nyiro river - N 00° 36.564', E 037° 31.817'
- Kalama Airstrip (approx. 1 hour from EWC, extra transfer charge required) - N 00° 41.637', E 037° 36.679'

DAILY MANAGEMENT AND STAFF

Elephant Watch Camp has a manager on-site and is fully staffed with well-trained cooks and room stewards. Security guards are on duty day and night.

CLIMATE

- Weather: The days are generally hot and dry, and nights a bit cooler. Average maximum temperatures are around 30°C (85°F) with minimum temperatures of about 20°C.
- Rainfall: Most rainfall is in April (end of March – early May), with the short rains in November. Maximum rainfall being 350mm.
- Sunrise, sunsets, full moons or a sky glittering with stars are always awe-inspiring. This is Africa at its best, especially with mud-smearred elephants in fields of flowers during the cooler months.
- Altitude: 800 to 1230m above sea level.

SEASON AND ELEPHANT WATCHING

- During the drier months, January - March, August - October, elephants congregate daily by the river. It's also a great time to see big cats.
- After the rainy season, namely the months of May - June, and December, the Park is lush and covered in wild flowers with plenty of water holes for elephants to splash in - this is when bulls come into *musth* and elephants congregate in vast herds. But it's a lean time for big cats as the herbivores bounce back. Spectacular sights and sounds, with the scent of wild herbs dancing on the wind.
- July is the month of *sagaram* (acacia seed pods) when elephants gather under trees for hours to Hoover up seeds. They are often found in Camp where the forest is protected.

WHAT TO BRING

- Lightweight clothes, a hat, binoculars, sunglasses and mosquito repellent.
- Nice loose trousers, a kaftan or dress for the evening, and always a shawl or fleece.
- Sunscreen, creams, medi-kit, and a good flashlight.
- Comfortable walking shoes for hiking and lighter shoes or sandals for camp.
- Cameras and videos to capture the incredible scenes, or brushes and paint for artists.

MEALS AND FOOD

- The food is best described as Italian bush gourmet, using local produce from the foothills of Mt. Kenya, and spiced with fresh herbs from the camp's organic garden.
- Bread, pasta and ice creams are made on site.
- The camp has a seasonal menu.
- Please inform us of any dietary requirements or allergies prior to arrival.
- Any purely lunch bookings need to be confirmed and paid for 48 hours beforehand.

WATER

- Bottled water is available free of charge. Water is brought to Elephant Watch Camp in large recyclable containers. As a stand against pollution, we do not encourage the use of plastic bottles. Please re-use any water bottles you bring with you and take them away when you leave.
- Drinking water in glass bottles can be found in all bedrooms and is served at meals.

HEALTH

- Full medical and travel insurance is recommended.
- Samburu is a malaria area. Preventative malaria medication is recommended.
- Flying Doctor evacuation service is recommended. The office can sign up clients for a small fee.
- It is imperative for all travellers to have a yellow fever vaccination no less than 10 days prior to travel.

ELECTRICITY

- There is solar power with a small backup generator. The main power source for charging is in the mess tent.
- Guests are recommended to bring converters & universal plug adapters.

COMMUNICATION SERVICE

- Mobile phone network is available through Safaricom/Vodaphone and Airtel.
- Wi-Fi is available.

VEHICLES

- There are 3 vehicles for guests to use with driver/guide – all Toyota land cruisers, open-sided, shaded, and with low-impact colouration.

- Guests will share the vehicles unless 'Exclusive use of Vehicle' has been paid for.

LANGUAGES

- All guides speak English and Kiswahili.
- Samburu is spoken among the Camp team.

CURRENCY

- Hotel rates, internal flights, car-hire and park-entrance fees are quoted in US dollars (please note that all dollar notes printed before 1999 are not accepted in Kenya). All other prices are in Kenya shillings, and most major currencies are fully convertible.

PAYMENTS

- All payments for accommodation, travel and transfers should be arranged in advance with the Elephant Watch Portfolio head office in Nairobi. Extras can be paid in cash or by credit card directly at Olerai. There is a 3% charge on visa card payments. Travellers' cheques are not accepted.

TIPPING GUIDELINES

- Tipping staff is a custom in Kenya and very much appreciated. A lot of people you may not see are working hard to make your stay as agreeable as possible. We operate a communal tipping system, which is distributed to all staff at the end of the month. A recommended tip at camp is \$15-25 per guest per night.

CAMP CLOSURES

- Elephant Watch Camp is closed in both rainy seasons i.e. 1st April to 10th May, and 1st November to 10th December.

Photo by Kristian Schmidt





Photo by Kristian Schmidt

ACCOLADES AND GUEST COMMENTS

GUESTS AND PRESS COMMENTS

- "Our stay at Elephant Watch was pure magic. The staff and guides welcomed us with such friendliness and joy. To be so close to the elephants was a dream come true. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts."
- **L. Spader**
- "Never in my life could I have imagined such beauty, generosity, warmth, kindness and magnificent natural wonders. I will never forget my time here and it will stay in my heart always as one of the most amazing of my days on this earth. Thank you EWC family and friends for the single most amazing vacation of my life." - **E. Heald**

THE PRESS

- **YAO MING 2012 – visit to Elephant Watch Camp and Save the Elephants**
Former NBA basketball player, representative of *WildAid* and the tallest man in the world, Yao Ming's visit to Elephant Watch Camp coincided with his support for *Save the Elephants'* anti-ivory campaign. Yao said, "It's our responsibility to let people know where those animal products are from. Because China is 10,000 kms away, people think there is nothing they can do about it, but we are trying to bring a reality to them through awareness."
Bernard Lesirin, a wildlife guide at Elephant Watch Camp added "if he defends our elephants, he defends us as a people. We hope Yao is going to be a bridge between us."
- **Natalie Portman – Marie Claire, South Africa (issue April 2011)**
"I once stayed in an amazing place called Elephant Watch Camp. The buildings are made out of the trees that elephants had knocked over and your shower water was gathered from a well. It was lovely and felt like a part of the environment. It is probably the most special place I've ever been to."
- **Destination Magazine 2011**
"I'll Never Forget. As the Ewaso Nyiro resumes its sedate and gentle rhythm, guests can once again enjoy the peaceful pleasures of Elephant Watch Camp."
- **Travel Africa by Saba Douglas Hamilton**
Describing Saba's experiences and her meetings with Mzee Lekalaile in Samburu.
<http://www.travelafricamag.com/content/view/445/47/>
- **National Geographic, 2008**
Work on Save the Elephants and the various family ties.



Photo by Michael Nichols



BOUTIQUE SAFARIS

FACT FILE

TAILOR-MADE ADVENTURES

When one hears the word safari, the sound lingers in the mind to conjure up visions of the great outdoors - walking with long-limbed nomads draped in red, camel caravans, or dream-like flights over wide open plains. Then one lands on pencil-thin strips, cut out of the bush, to be met by open safari vehicles winding along dusty tracks.

A magic camp under ancient trees on the banks of a wide brown river is our starting point, where people with smiles so bright - like sunbeams in velvet brown faces - welcome you to our world. This is Elephant Watch Camp, where brightly coloured cloths cascade from the ceiling and cool sand soothes aching feet. Here one can forget about the cramped, competitive demands of city life and for a moment live close to nature. The song of Africa is everywhere, from the dawn-chorus of birds, to the frog cacophony heralding rain, or the midnight echo of distant chanting nomads. Days open and close with the rise and fall of the sun. This is safari, and in Africa, those who know go on safari Oriá's way!

Organising safaris for friends and others wishing to explore Oriá's Africa was an obvious extension to the exquisite experience of staying at Olerai House and Elephant Watch Camp. Working from her family home, Sirocco House, Oriá puts together "one-of-a-kind" safaris, plans menus, makes and bakes organic dishes and condiments, and designs and sews safari clothes. It is this personal touch that makes each safari so special, and from the moment one catches flight across the yawning volcanic expanse of the Great Rift Valley, to the first kiss of rust-coloured dust on the skin, one senses Oriá's guiding hand sprinkling a very special kind of magic.

Elephant Watch Portfolio safaris blend the soul of all that is best in Africa with unrivalled access to indigenous communities, profoundly moving encounters with Africa's most intelligent sentient creatures, and the opportunity to get involved in cutting-edge conservation. Each safari is a deeply immersive experience that lives on in one's dreams for years to come.



Photo by Saba Douglas-Hamilton



Photo by Minal Peshavaria



Photo by Herbert Kratky



Photo by Audrey Hall

BOUTIQUE SAFARIS

For each boutique-safari, Oria and her team weave together a unique selection of special places – to create tailor-made experiences for every guest. Overleaf are some examples of previous itineraries. Each carefully planned trip has been inspired by Oria's in-depth knowledge and passion for East Africa, with the aim of bringing visitors closer to nature to experience the rich abundance of animal life, to meet the people of the region, and to enjoy the best of bush living. And, one way or another, it all feeds back into elephant conservation.

There is nothing more exciting and fulfilling for our team than to share the magic of Africa with those of you who are inspired to visit this marvelous continent. We will ensure that you'll have a charming host or hostess to add a splash of colour and fun to your stay, and look after you every step of the way. You can trust in our vision and expertise 100%.

SAFARIS MAY INCLUDE:

- Magical days at Elephant Watch Camp for intimate encounters with elephants and rare arid-zone wildlife. Your guides are Samburu nomads from the local community, trained to the highest level by world-class researchers, and your host is often a member of Oria's extended family.
- Moonlit nights at Olerai House in the peace, tranquility and beauty of a wildlife sanctuary on the shores of Lake Naivasha, with lunch or dinner at Sirocco House to meet the Douglas-Hamiltons.
- A taste of the very best East Africa has to offer, specially selected by Oria to fulfil your dreams:
 - The excitement of the great wildebeest migration in the Serengeti or Maasai Mara, at our favourite eco-camps;
 - Walking on the wild side with camels or horses on the Laikipia plateau;
 - A taste of frontier family-run lodges in the Chyulu Hills and North Kenya;
 - An eagle's eye view of Mt Kenya - helicopter flights, hiking or skinny dipping in glacier-fed lakes;
 - Exploring the back of beyond in Kenya's remote deserts;
 - Meeting the last secretive big tuskers in Tsavo's unspoilt wilderness;
 - Iridescent dips in the deep blue sea - private houses along the East African coast - fishing, kite-surfing, kayaking;
 - Tanzania's finest - Kilimanjaro, Ngorongoro Crater, Serengeti, Selous;
 - Sailing and spices on the Swahili coast – Lamu, Zanzibar, Mnemba, Pemba, Mafia Island;
 - Uganda's great apes and Mountains of the Moon, Lake Victoria, Murchison Falls, the Nile;
 - Rwanda's volcanoes and magical encounters with gorillas in the mist;
 - Short hops to the Seychelles or Comoros for enchanting insights into island life and biogeography.



Photo by Pete McBride



Photo by Simon Niblett

SAMPLE SAFARIS

We tailor-make each safari to suit your wishes.

BOWING TO A WAXING MOON (MARLENE'S 6 DAY BREAK)

Overnight in a charming luxury tree house in Nairobi;

Star-spangled evenings, hikes in Eburru forest, dancing crested cranes, freshly dug aardvark burrows, walking with giraffes, handfuls of organic fraise-de-bois, swimming beneath colobus monkeys, endless sumptuous meals – at Olerai House;

Helicopter-flight to sacred mountain, champagne breakfast on cliff top with eagles, deep immersion in elephant families, wild-dog dens, honey-hunting with warriors, moon-bowing at sunset, sleeping elephants snoring by kitchen - at Elephant Watch Camp.

THE SCENT OF JASMINE ON THE WIND (SINGER'S 10 DAY SAFARI)

Charter flight across the Great Rift Valley to Olerai's private Eden – scone-stealing zebras, boat ride with flamingos, elegant dinner at Sirocco House, picnic with rhinos in Nakuru National Park;

Walking with camels in Karisia Hills, making crowns from wild jasmine, celebrating a nomadic family's wedding, scrubbing off sweat and dust in a fast-flowing river, sleeping out under the stars;

Rubbing shoulders with *musth* bull elephants, meditating to a frog chorus, finding newborn cubs in a leopard's lair, dancing at sunset with nomads, assisting *Save the Elephants* with radio collaring, watching lion hunt zebra – at Elephant Watch Camp;

Visiting orphaned pachyderms at the David Sheldrick orphanage, last minute shopping at a Maasai market, sharing carrots with Rothschild giraffe before bed at Giraffe Manor, early morning flight back to Europe.

A CLAN GATHERING OF PRIMATES

(ELLIOTS' 20TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY - 14 DAYS)

Overnight at a tented camp in Nairobi National Park – black rhino en route to airport;

Samburu elephant beach party, picnic by river, bat-eared foxes, leopard padding past mess tent, renewal of wedding vows on sunset hill, blessing by revered elders, elephants scratching bums on bedrooms, hot bucket-shower under stars - at Elephant Watch Camp;

Early flight via peaks of Mt Kenya to private camp in Maasai Mara, grassland thick with swirling wildebeest, 20-strong lion pride roaring at sunset, leopard hunt on river bank, walk up escarpment, sundowners out on acacia dotted plains, hot bath in olive grotto;

Chest-beating poka-pok of distant gorillas in Parc National des Volcans, Rwanda, energising hike through cloud forest, golden monkeys flickering through canopy, spellbinding encounter with mountain gorilla family - staring into eyes of an ancient primate relative, steaming hot bath and spiced red wine, coffee and croissants in Kigali to catch Nairobi flight;

Low level swoop over flamingo-filled lake on scenic flight to Suguta Valley, picnic breakfast boiling eggs in steaming geysers, lunch in Chalbi desert near Lake Turkana, sunset arrival at Olerai House, crackling log fire under acacias, crisp cotton sheets, early morning bird walk in papyrus forest, vivacious lunch at Sirocco, unwind by pool surrounded by zebra - at Olerai House.

HOW TO BOOK WITH US

Liaise directly with the Elephant Watch Portfolio booking office based in Nairobi either by email or phone. The team will help organize the trip of your dreams, and work within your budget. Our trips are 'one-of-a-kind' aimed at people with adventurous souls and curious minds, willing to explore the extraordinary world we know.

WHAT SETS US APART

- The personal touch - Afro-Italian flair, and a passion for organizing safaris that immerse you in the wild world we love; the animals, nomadic communities, fusion of cultures and conservation.
- Safaris are planned with you in mind - itineraries are only a guide. Each trip is tailored to your individual requirements, and prepared with immaculate attention to detail by a team of deeply committed tour operators that really care for the well-being and long-term sustainability of wild Africa.
- Making a difference - every safari goes that extra mile by contributing to elephant conservation. We like to blow your socks off while giving something back to the wilderness and community.

RESPONSIBLE TOURISM

Oria's deep green eco-philosophy is closely aligned to the 4 C's - Conservation, Culture, Community and Commerce - recently endorsed by the Long Run Initiative which represents a growing community of destinations, businesses and organisations, committed to human wellbeing through responsible enterprise on a healthy planet.

The Elephant Watch Portfolio is passionate about conservation and ensuring the long term sustainability and health of Kenya's wildlife and unique indigenous cultures. Ecosphere safety, which is the maintenance of our planet and all its life-sustaining regions in the healthiest possible state, lies at the very heart of our business ethic.

Up to 90% of our workforce is local, mainly from the nearby Samburu community or local village in Naivasha. We provide extensive training to help our staff gain new skill-sets to adapt to the modern world while retaining their vibrant traditions. Eco-tourism is an essential alternative livelihood for these extraordinary, stoic nomads who face hardships we can barely imagine. Oria's work with women across Kenya over the last 40 years, and through her community clinic in Naivasha, has vastly improved the lives of thousands of families through self-empowerment, education, family planning, HIV/Aids awareness, and zero tolerance of abuse.

At Elephant Watch Portfolio we lead by example to encourage sustainability as a way of life. We actively promote an anti-pollution lifestyle (recycling and reusing wherever possible), organic farming, and self-sufficiency in food, power and water. We use tourism and trade to promote wildlife conservation by providing jobs and sales outlets for the local communities, to educate nomadic children, and to train wildlife guides and chefs to the highest levels.

We support *Save the Elephants* by enchanting guests with the magical world of elephants, raising awareness of conservation issues, providing an interface for donors to meet field researchers, fund raising internationally, and expanding the global constituency of people who will vote in favour of elephants. Many of our guests have become passionate supporters of *Save the Elephants* or have sponsored students in our joint scholarship programme.

Photo by Daryl Balfour





Photo by Georgina Goodwin

NEED TO KNOW

GETTING TO KENYA

International airlines servicing Kenya's Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA) include:

- Kenya Airways and KLM
- British Airways
- Air France
- Swiss International Airlines
- Ethiopian Airlines
- Turkish Airlines
- Emirates
- Qatar
- Egypt Air
- Etihad Air
- SNV Brussels Airlines

Regional Airlines

- Air Seychelles
- Air Mauritius
- Rwanda Air
- Precision Air
- Air Tanzania

Local Airlines

- Air Kenya
- Safarilink

CLIMATE

The days in East Africa are generally hot and dry and nights are much cooler, with colder "winter" months from May through to August. All year round is beautiful weather.

Travel to Rwanda's Parc National des Volcans will be wetter and cooler than in Kenya. It's "Gorillas in the Mist" weather.

WHAT TO BRING

- Lightweight clothes, a hat, binoculars, sunglasses and a good flashlight.
- Nice loose trousers, a kaftan or dress for the

evening, and always a shawl or fleece.

- Sunscreen, creams, medi-kits, and mosquito repellent.
- Comfortable walking shoes for hiking, lighter shoes or sandals for camp, slipper-socks.
- Raincoats, hiking boots and warm clothes if visiting the gorillas.
- If riding or walking, bring the appropriate gear.
- Cameras and videos to capture the incredible scenes, paints and brushes for artists.

MEALS AND FOOD

- The food in either Elephant Watch Camp or Olerai is best described as Italian bush gourmet, often made with Ora's organic farm produce from Naivasha and spiced with fresh herbs. Bread, pasta and ice creams are made on site.
- Food at the special camps we've selected is also delicious and will match up to the location and adventure.
- Please inform us of any dietary requirements or allergies prior to arrival.

WATER

- Bottled water is available free of charge in all camps and lodges.
- Clients will be issued with re-fillable bottles by Elephant Watch Portfolio on arrival. This is important for us to reduce the impact of plastic bottle waste.

HEALTH

- Full medical and travel insurance is recommended.
- Samburu is a malaria area. Preventative malaria medication is recommended.
- Flying Doctors evacuation service is recommended. The office can sign up clients for a small fee.
- It is imperative for all travellers to have a yellow fever vaccination no less than 10 days prior to travel.



Photo by Audrey Hall

GUEST COMMENTS

"We had an incredible safari in Kenya in 2014. We connected to the people & wildlife in ways that few of us could have imagined." – **S. Rankin, USA**

"Dream trip for me and could not have been better. Each day a new experience, and being able to sit with the elephants while sipping on a glass of wine - priceless! Thanks to everyone for helping make my dreams come true." - **S. McKelly, USA**

"Your lifestyle and commitment to your work and the people here is humbling." - **S. Ratkovitch, USA**

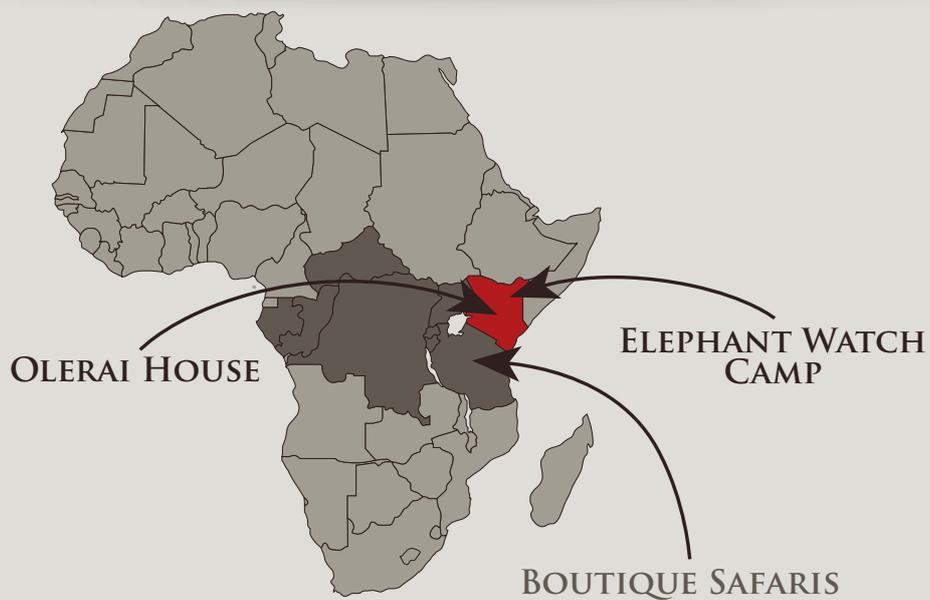
"It is not possible to describe the experience we've had. I will take time to try when I return home because my gratitude and heart are so full. "People don't take trips, trips take people", John Steinbeck said that, but this is the first trip of my life that I can actually totally agree. Meeting you was a gift. Thank you for all that you are doing for the elephants. My hand is raised to help in anyway. Until we meet again." - **J. Cummings, USA**

Photo by Bruce





Photo by Thomas Gruber



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