TARTARUGA SAFARIS

Slow Down. See More.

12 Days Northern Tanzania Birdwatching and Serengeti Safari

From USD 5,381
Planning estimate; 2 adults sharing midrange accommodation.
Prices are subject to change depending on the number of travellers, accommodation selected, and season (low, high or peak).

OVERVIEW
Your private birdwatching journey
Take a slower northern Tanzania birdwatching and Serengeti safari, combining forest and wetland habitats with the open plains. Three nights in central Serengeti and extra highland time reduce the pressure to rush every sighting.
Route: Arusha - Tarangire - Lake Manyara - Ngorongoro - Serengeti - Karatu - Arusha
What makes this route different?
Travel at a patient pace with early starts, habitat stops and time to review your checklist. Larger wildlife remains part of the experience, but bird observation shapes the daily plan. We arrange the guiding level around your interests, including a specialist bird guide when requested and confirmed.
Accommodation and group size
Any group size is welcome, from one traveller to larger parties. We arrange additional vehicles when needed. The daily programme lists overnight areas; your quotation confirms property names, rooming and availability. Lodges, tented camps and upgraded options can be discussed before booking.
Plan your dates and budget
Ask for a tailored quotation based on your dates, party size, rooms and guiding needs. Park fees, activities and transfers are itemised before you book. Bird sightings are never guaranteed. Tell us about any target species so we can assess suitable habitats and timing rather than promise an encounter.
Birding season and practical preparation
Resident birds can be seen throughout the year. Migrants often add interest between November and April, while rains can affect access. Bring binoculars, a field guide, sun protection and a waterproof layer. Forest routes require sturdy shoes and walking comfort; contact us about access needs before committing.
Responsible observation
We follow authorised routes and wildlife rules. Keep away from nests, avoid playback and let your guide decide safe stopping points. Species identification benefits from patience, listening and repeated observation.
Explore our Tanzania safaris, safari FAQs and contact page. Official habitat information: Tanzania National Parks. Representative bird photograph reused from our credited website collection.
Where will you sleep?
Your overnight stays are part of the journey. Browse our accommodation styles and tell us which feels right for you.
High-End >Exceptional camps & exclusive lodgesLuxury >Comfort, character & personal serviceMidrange >Welcoming lodges & tented campsBudget >Simple stays & camping options
The day-by-day itinerary describes the proposed stays for this route. Alternative categories are available where suitable; upgrades change the quotation. Your final accommodation and meal plan will be confirmed before booking.

DAY-BY-DAY PROGRAMME

Day 1 Your day-by-day birding journey Arrive in Arusha
Meet your driver-guide at Kilimanjaro Airport or your agreed Arusha hotel. Settle in and discuss your birding experience, target habitats and camera equipment. A short garden session may be possible if your arrival time allows; no scheduled park visit is promised today.
Meals: Dinner | Overnight: Arusha hotel

Day 2 Arusha National Park: forest and Momella lakes
Start early for forest edges, open clearings and the Momella lake system. Explore by vehicle, pausing to identify calls and compare waterbirds. A ranger-led walk can be arranged in an authorised area if confirmed in your quotation. Lake levels and weather determine access; flamingos and individual species are not guaranteed.
Meals: Breakfast, lunch and dinner | Overnight: Arusha hotel

Day 3 Tarangire: river, baobabs and woodland
Drive from Arusha to Tarangire, allowing roughly three hours plus entry formalities. Bird along permitted roads through woodland, riverine habitat and open country. Look for rollers, hornbills, bee-eaters and raptors while also enjoying the larger wildlife. Take a picnic break and reach your accommodation before dark.
Meals: Breakfast, lunch and dinner | Overnight: Tarangire area lodge or tented camp

Day 4 A full birding day in Tarangire
Use the cooler morning for patient observation along the river corridor and woodland tracks. Rather than chasing a species total, revisit productive habitats and study behaviour. Pause through the hottest hours and continue in the afternoon when conditions allow. Vehicle-based viewing follows park rules; walks are not assumed.
Meals: Breakfast, lunch and dinner | Overnight: Tarangire area lodge or tented camp

Day 5 Lake Manyara: groundwater forest and wetland edges
Continue to Lake Manyara and explore its forest, woodland and accessible lakeshore routes. Listen for mixed feeding flocks, then look for waders and waterbirds where water levels permit. Your guide chooses accessible tracks and keeps a relaxed pace for photography. Finish in the Karatu area.
Meals: Breakfast, lunch and dinner | Overnight: Karatu lodge

Day 6 Karatu and the Ngorongoro highlands
Explore highland habitats on permitted routes with an agreed local guide where required. Cooler conditions offer a contrast to the lowland parks. Search forest edges for smaller birds and scan open slopes for raptors. Any walk depends on access permits, weather and your fitness; an alternative vehicle outing can be arranged.
Meals: Breakfast, lunch and dinner | Overnight: Karatu or Ngorongoro highlands lodge

Day 7 Ngorongoro Crater: grassland and marsh birds
Make an early descent to explore the crater floor by vehicle. Compare grassland birds, raptors and waterbirds with your previous woodland observations. Nature and lake conditions determine the sightings. Ascend after the permitted visit and return to your highland

accommodation rather than adding a long onward drive.
Meals: Breakfast, lunch and dinner | Overnight: Karatu or Ngorongoro highlands lodge

Day 8 Travel to central Serengeti
Travel through the conservation landscape towards central Serengeti. Allow most of the day for rough roads, formalities and sensible rest stops. Birding takes place at permitted stopping points and along the drive; this is a transfer day rather than a full-day birding session. Settle into camp before dark.
Meals: Breakfast, lunch and dinner | Overnight: Central Serengeti lodge or tented camp

Day 9 Serengeti plains and acacia habitats
Follow permitted roads through open plains and acacia habitat, allowing time for bustards, rollers, weavers and birds of prey. Your driver-guide balances patient stops with wildlife safety. A picnic outing offers flexibility, or return to camp when distances allow. No particular bird, migration event or predator sighting is promised.
Meals: Breakfast, lunch and dinner | Overnight: Central Serengeti lodge or tented camp

Day 10 Serengeti riverine and rocky habitats
Explore a different local circuit to compare riverine vegetation, rocky outcrops and open grassland. Scan for raptors and watch for smaller birds at safe stopping points. Keep your checklist with your guide and revisit uncertain identifications. Route choices reflect recent observations, road conditions and the permit area.
Meals: Breakfast, lunch and dinner | Overnight: Central Serengeti lodge or tented camp

Day 11 Serengeti to Karatu
Take a final morning drive along your exit route, then travel back through the Ngorongoro highlands. Allow much of the day for the journey and entry or exit procedures. Stop for a picnic and comfort breaks as practical. Spend the night in Karatu so the final day has a less demanding schedule.
Meals: Breakfast, lunch and dinner | Overnight: Karatu lodge

Day 12 Return to Arusha and onward travel
After breakfast, return to Arusha with time for an agreed garden or roadside birding stop where safe and permitted. Finish at your hotel or continue to the airport if included in the confirmed transfer plan. Allow a generous flight buffer; additional hotel nights and domestic flights can be quoted separately.
Meals: Breakfast and lunch | Overnight: No overnight included; ends in Arusha

INCLUDED
- 11 nights in the accommodation arrangement confirmed in your quotation
- Private safari vehicle and driver-guide for the stated programme
- Park entry and scheduled birding drives for the stated route
- Required park guide or ranger for listed and confirmed forest walks
- Meals shown day by day and drinking water during safari transfers
- Pickup and drop-off at the agreed start and end points

EXCLUDED
- International and domestic flights unless specifically added

- Visas, travel insurance and personal medical expenses
- Binoculars, telescope hire and a dedicated specialist bird guide unless itemised
- Tips, alcoholic drinks and personal purchases
- Hotel nights and meals outside the stated programme
- Optional activities and services not listed in the written quotation

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Is this a private safari, and how many travellers can join?
Yes. We arrange a private vehicle and guide for your party, from one traveller to larger groups. Larger parties use additional vehicles and guides. Tell us the number of guests, ages, dates and interests so we can confirm suitable arrangements.

Do I need birdwatching experience?
No. Beginners are welcome, and experienced birders can share target habitats and a checklist. Tell us if you require a dedicated specialist bird guide; we confirm their availability and any additional cost before booking.

Are particular birds or species totals guaranteed?
No. Birds move freely, and sightings depend on weather, season, water levels and patience. The route explores suitable habitats but does not promise a species, endemic, photographic result or minimum total.

When is the best time for this birdwatching safari?
Birding is possible through the year. Migrants can add interest in the greener months, often November to April. Rain affects roads and forest trails, while drier months can make access easier. We recommend dates around your target habitats and current conditions.

How much walking is involved?
Park birding is mainly vehicle-based unless a guided walk is listed and confirmed. Udzungwa birding is on foot on forest trails that can be steep or muddy. Tell us about mobility needs so we can choose a realistic route; universal accessibility is not assumed.

Which accommodation and meals are included?
The itinerary shows each overnight area and meal plan. We name the exact lodges, camps, room types and dietary arrangements in your written quotation. Properties and room availability must be confirmed for your dates.

Are binoculars, a telescope and a specialist guide included?
Bring your own binoculars and camera. Loan equipment, a telescope or a dedicated specialist bird guide must be requested and itemised in your quotation. Your standard driver-guide supports bird identification, with specialist expertise arranged according to your needs.

How is the safari priced?
From USD 5,381. Prices are subject to change depending on the number of travellers, accommodation selected, and season (low, high or peak). Contact our team to plan this itinerary.

Are flights and extra hotel nights included?

International and domestic flights are excluded unless expressly added to your quotation. Prior or final city hotel nights outside the daily programme are also separate. We check flight times before agreeing airport drop-offs after long road transfers.

Can I combine this with Zanzibar or another safari?
Yes. Ask us to add a beach stay, additional birding days or a wildlife extension. We will explain the extra travel time and provide a revised quotation before booking.

How do we bird responsibly?
Keep to authorised routes, follow your guide, keep a respectful distance and never disturb nests. Avoid playback, feeding or pursuing a bird for a photograph. Your guide may stop an activity if it risks disturbing wildlife.

How do I enquire?
Use the Enquiry tab or contact info@tartarugasafaris.com / WhatsApp +255 667 767 553. Share your dates, group size, target habitats, walking comfort and equipment needs. We confirm availability and send a written proposal.

Plan your journey:
https://tartarugasafaris.com/tour/12-days-northern-tanzania-birdwatching-serengeti-safari/