



CONSERVATION, COMMUNITIES AND CAMERAS: A TRIP WITH A DIFFERENCE WITH GEORGE BENJAMIN AND LARA JACKSON — 7 DAYS, 6 NIGHTS

AVAILABLE: 15–21 NOVEMBER 2021 (Scheduled Departure — Minimum 4 people, Maximum 10 people)

- START: Naboisho Camp END: Naboisho Camp
- FITNESS LEVEL: Low
- AGE LIMIT: The adventure is designed for adults, please enquire if you are looking to travel with a child.

ACTIVITIES:



GAME
DRIVES



NIGHT
DRIVES



PHOTOGRAPHY



CULTURAL
VISIT



WALKING
SAFARI

INTRO

Our trip with a difference is a collaboration between wildlife photographer George Benjamin, conservation biologist Lara Jackson and Asilia Africa, and was created to add a deeper dimension to a classic photographic safari. Spend a week combining the joy of safari, an education in photography and a series of insightful and meaningful Positive Impact experiences in the Mara Naboisho Conservancy in Kenya. This conservancy, bordering the Masai Mara National Reserve, beautifully showcases how wildlife conservation and community empowerment can go hand in hand with tourism and, over the course of the week, you will visit various initiatives to learn about this first-hand. Lara says “We are so excited to share the magic of Naboisho with you, and to shine a light on the incredible conservation projects that are making a difference to both the wildlife and members of local communities in the Mara.” This trip ensures each traveller’s

participation truly gives back. As well as the Naboisho Conservancy fees and Asilia’s conservation fee, which goes towards preserving wildlife and supporting communities, we have also included a group donation of US\$3,000 to the featured Positive Impact partners. Your hosts, George Benjamin and Lara Jackson are passionate about wildlife and will offer guests their expertise, guidance and endless enthusiasm for the natural world. As part of the Asilia family, please enjoy some of their past trips through our blogs and socials, as well follow their own channels and read their full biographies below. In George’s words: “I’m so excited to be co-leading this one-of-a-kind trip, incorporating the best of East Africa’s wildlife alongside experiencing its leading conservation programmes. Naboisho is my favourite place on Earth, offering stunning landscapes and incredible encounters; I truly couldn’t think of a better place for this adventure.”



Asilia

ADVENTURES

DAY 1

In order to offer you as much itinerary flexibility as we can, we have not included any flights to and from Naboisho or any transfers in Nairobi. Asilia can help you plan any travel and accommodation before and after the trip as you need. Plan to arrive at Naboisho for lunch or early afternoon to

settle into your tents and meet your hosts and fellow Asilia Adventurers. After afternoon tea and armed with your camera, you will head out for your first game drive in an open-sided four-wheel drive vehicle before returning for a welcome dinner. **Overnight: Naboisho**

DAY 2

Tuck into a hearty breakfast in camp before traversing the Mara to Lemek Conservancy to visit the Mara Elephant Project (MEP) headquarters. Your morning will be spent with real-life conservation heroes, learning about their anti-poaching units, mitigating human-wildlife conflict in villages and their research and collaring of the Greater Mara's elephants. This is a humbling and fascinating insight into the challenging and never-ending work to conserve one of Africa's iconic species. After a camp-packed picnic lunch, the group will travel to the OI Chorro Rhino Sanctuary, where you will have the rare

treat of walking with their two resident white rhinos. These endangered modern-day dinosaurs are kept safe by rangers and you will gain an awareness of the challenges they face in protecting them and hear the concerns they have for the future of this precious species. On returning to camp, freshen up and then with an ice cold beverage in hand, the focus on rhinos continues with an engaging talk from Lara on her speciality, the black rhino. Before dinner is served, George will also take the team through camera trap deployment in preparation for the following day's activity. **Overnight: Naboisho**



DAY 3

Today the photographic safari begins in earnest. Set off early from camp to have the benefit of the glorious dawn light and throughout the morning, locations will be selected and marked for the camera traps, in the hopes of capturing some exciting species caught unaware. Naboisho is known for its big cats in big numbers and is believed to have one of the highest lion densities in Africa, strong numbers of cheetah and is home to more than 220 recorded bird species — so there will be plenty to photograph. After lunch back in

camp, guests are free to use the camp classroom to start editing images or they can relax by the pool and catch forty-winks. The game drive in the afternoon will remain focused on photography, however, threaded through the drive, Lara will tease some of the information you would have learned the day before, at the Mara Elephant Project, to help you identify the elephants you meet on your safari. **Overnight: Naboisho**

Asilia

ADVENTURES

DAY 4

Wake up to the dawn chorus and your tea or coffee brought to your tent before setting out for another day of adventures. The game drive in the morning will continue with a photographic aim before returning to camp for a quick lunch and then heading to The Maa Trust, a thriving nonprofit organisation working toward a harmonious balance between conservation and sustainable human development in the Masai Mara. The first Mara Conservancy was established in 2005 and now forms part of a collection of 15 separate conservancies that surround the Reserve. This land is owned by over 14,500 Maasai, who lease concessions to tourism partners, which offers the local community consistent income while conserving the land and wildlife. The revenue generated is believed to support 100,000 people within the Greater Mara Region, however, The Maa Trust goes one step further in engaging the local communities to ensure they receive the benefits of tourism while entrenching their passion for preserving the land. One of their most successful projects to date is Maa Beadwork, which employs 579 local Maasai women, who in 2019 earned US\$34,000, allowing

them financial independence. This afternoon, you will have the great pleasure to sit down with these ladies and learn the traditional craft of beading. While designing and threading your own beaded camera strap, you will learn about the meaning of the beads, hear the personal narratives of these incredible women and the other fantastic projects the Trust implements such as youth empowerment programs, vocational training, beekeeping and honey production, brickmaking, Female Genital Mutilations (FGM) education, healthcare, water and sanitation. If that wasn't enough, you will return to Naboisho and the warmth of the campfire to meet a member of the Kenyan Wildlife Trust (KWT) to learn about their flagship project the Mara Predator Conservation Program (MPCP). Over snacks and drinks, gain an understanding of the challenges and successes of their conservation and community projects; including how to identify big cats, understanding the purposes of collaring lions, how they use the data as well as the success in engaging primary schools with Wildlife Clubs alongside Asilia's own Twende Porini. **Overnight: Naboisho**



Asilia

ADVENTURES

DAY 5

To put what you have learnt into practice, this morning you will set out early to meet the Lion Ambassadors of the Mara. With approximately 500 lions concentrated in a relatively small area covering 2,572 km² of protected lands, the Mara has high human and livestock densities residing in the surrounding unprotected community lands. A central challenge is ensuring coexistence between lions and people while implementing impactful conservation strategies at a meaningful scale. MPCP chose a brigade of 10 lion ambassadors to provide a crucial link to the communities and ensure human-lion conflict and the resulting retaliatory killings and persecution of lions is halted in its tracks. This morning you will join an ambassador on their daily patrol, walking for approximately 3 hours you will learn first-hand what it's like to be on the frontline of

conservation and understand their personal motivations for living and breathing such a sensitive and dangerous job. After an exhilarating morning, no one will blame you for that extra beer at lunch and a snooze on your daybed but of course, you are also welcome to spend time in the classroom editing images and preparing your memory cards for the next activity. Leaving later in the afternoon will ensure you have plenty of time to capture the long shadows and the cats coming out to play, using your newly honed lion identification skills. After a classic Mara sundowner under a flat-topped acacia, the torches will come out and, with eyes peeled for nocturnal animals, your night drive will begin, before a late dinner back at camp.

Overnight: Naboisho

DAY 6

After a full itinerary, the last day is an easy one, allowing the group to head out on a fun game drive, putting into practice everything you've learned over the last five days, as well as collecting the camera traps deployed earlier in the week. Following lunch back at camp, there will be a final editing

session including looking through what the traps have captured and no doubt having a laugh or two! Returning from the final game drive, a farewell BBQ will be enjoyed by the candlelit pool with a chance to share stories, the best shots of the week and look up at a sky full of stars. **Overnight: Naboisho**

DAY 7

A relaxed morning and breakfast at camp before you say your goodbyes to the camp team, George and Lara and head off to your next adventure.



Asilia

ADVENTURES

PHOTOGRAPHY

This trip is designed for photographers of all abilities, whether you're just starting out or are an avid wildlife photographer. With two professional wildlife photographers on hand, you'll receive the education and learning experience suited for your level. Whether that's getting to grip with manual on your DSLR, or practising more advanced photography techniques, George and Lara will mould the photography portion of the trip to your needs. The same applies to the post-production and/or editing sessions as the pair will also host one-to-ones

tailored to your level, regardless of your experience. In terms of equipment, you will need a DSLR and half-decent long lens — 300 mm and above is perfect. Alongside that, some wider-angle lenses such as the 70-200 mm and 24-70 mm. If you don't already own the kit, not to worry; there are plenty of reputable lens shops that rent out photography equipment for just such occasion and George and Lara are happy to recommend a local outfitter in your country of residence.

BIOGRAPHIES

LARA JACKSON (Instagram: [@lara_wildlife](#))

Lara is a zoologist and conservation biologist whose research has taken her around the world. Although she specialises in black rhino feeding ecology, she has also been fortunate enough to study mouse lemurs in Madagascar and dolphins off the coast of Zanzibar. Lara is extremely passionate about preserving our world and is determined to ensure that there is a future for all species. She strongly believes that raising awareness, education and working closely with the local communities is the key to successful conservation efforts.

GEORGE BENJAMIN (Instagram: [@georgetheexplorer](#))

George is a UK-based wildlife photographer and photographic guide, spending most of his time in East Africa and beyond. His work has taken him from the rainforests of the Congo Basin, through to the northern climes of Canada photographing polar bears on foot. Following a brief stint as a creative in advertising, he has won a number of wildlife photography awards, as well as being widely published both nationally and internationally.



Asilia

ADVENTURES

INCLUDED

Tour leaders George Benjamin and Lara Jackson and all planned excursions, US\$3,000 group donation split between MEP, The Maa Trust and MPCP and US\$120 donation to Ol Chorro Rhino Sanctuary, full board accommodation at Naboisho from lunch on day one to breakfast on day seven, all house drinks (except premium wines and champagne), transfers to/from Mara Ol Seki airstrip and Naboisho, limited laundry service, conservancy bednight fee, conservancy fee, Asilia conservation fee, and Emergency Support Cover.

Please note: *Light aircraft flights from Nairobi to the Mara Naboisho Conservancy and Nairobi transfers between international and domestic airport are not included in the price, to allow flexibility in pre- or post-arrangements, so this cost will need to be added.*

If you would like to read more on our Positive Impact Partners, please click on their link below:

