

Exploring the world's most exciting continent

# travel africa



C9.05



## KEEPING GOOD COMPANY

*Celebrating the people who bring your safari dreams to life*

**INSPIRATION:** FRESH IDEAS TO FUEL YOUR FUTURE ADVENTURES

**PLANNING:** PRACTICAL ADVICE TO HELP YOU CREATE THE BEST ITINERARY

**THE EXPERIENCE:** HOW DO OPERATORS ENSURE YOU HAVE AN EXTRAORDINARY TIME?

**EXPERT INSIGHT FROM TRUSTED AFRICA TRAVEL SPECIALISTS**

## THE EXPERIENCE



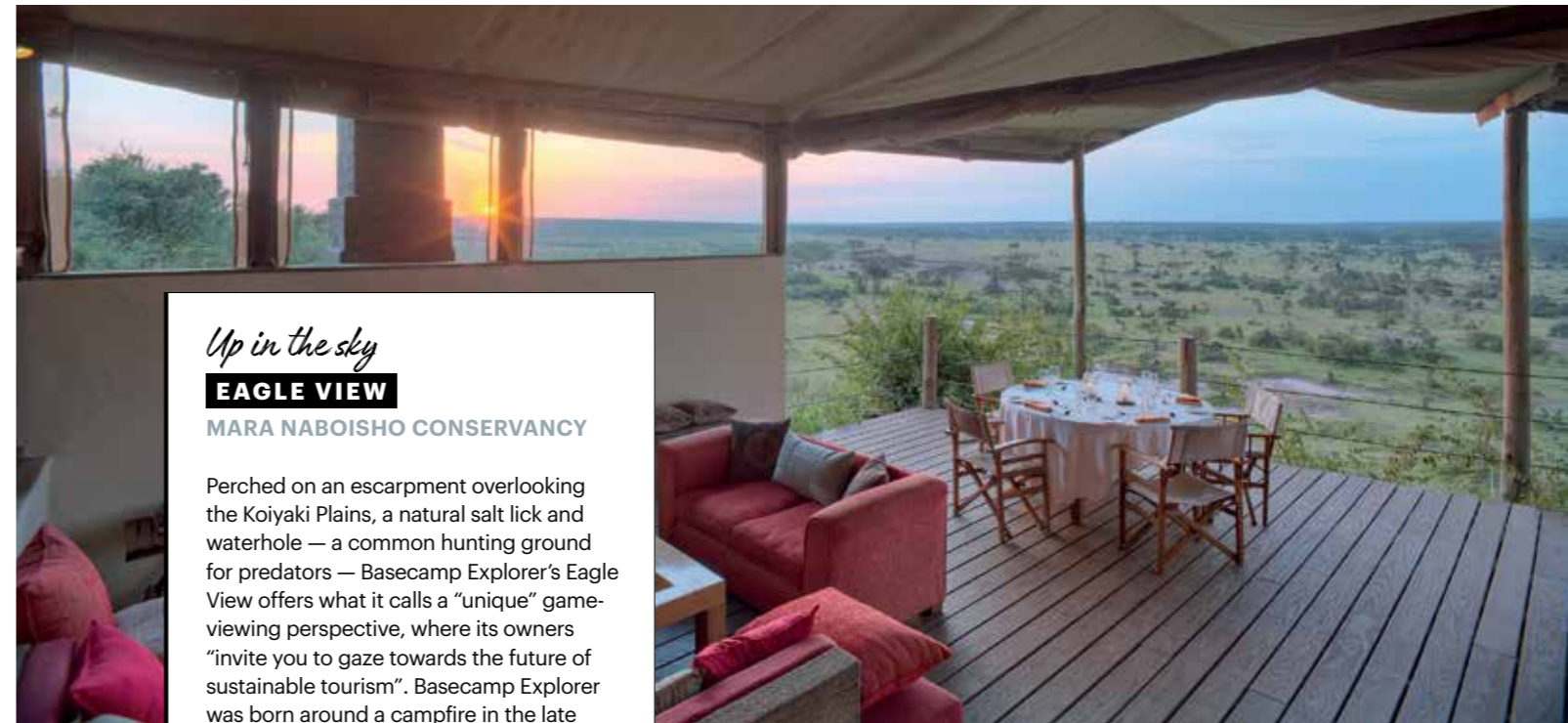
ALEX WALKER'S SERIAN

### *By the river*

#### **NGARE SERIAN**

MARA NORTH CONSERVANCY

This intimate four-tent camp, part of the Alex Walker's Serian stable, "transports the serenity of the original Serian camp to the water's edge". Only reachable on foot via a narrow rope bridge, Ngare (Maasai for 'by the river') hugs the banks of the Mara River. You can lie on a Zanzibar four-poster bed or in a bathtub built into the verandah and soak up views of the towering Oloololo Escarpment and pods of hippo in the water below. Serian's philosophy is the preservation of these wild lands, and it works with several conservation projects. It's an ethos born out of Walker's childhood, which he spent with his father's trackers, scouting the bush in Kenya, Tanzania and southern Sudan. Walking is, aptly, his thing, and he'll happily take you off the beaten track — preferably where there is no track at all.



BASECAMP EXPLORER

### *Up in the sky*

#### **EAGLE VIEW**

MARA NABOISHO CONSERVANCY

Perched on an escarpment overlooking the Koiyaki Plains, a natural salt lick and waterhole — a common hunting ground for predators — Basecamp Explorer's Eagle View offers what it calls a "unique" game-viewing perspective, where its owners "invite you to gaze towards the future of sustainable tourism". Basecamp Explorer was born around a campfire in the late 1990s, when Ole Taek, a Maasai chief, told Svein Wilhelmson about the threats facing his people. This inspired the Norwegian to found a company that would care and strive to leave only a positive footprint wherever it trod. Touting innovative architecture — that achieves "the impossible combination of perspective and proximity" — and minimal design that complement its surroundings, the nine-tent camp sits in an area with abundant year-round wildlife and, arguably, the best view in the Mara region.

### *Coastal vibes*

#### **HEMINGWAYS WATAMU**

WATAMU MARINE NATIONAL PARK

Sitting in the pristine Watamu Marine National Park, with its idyllic white-sand beach and turquoise waters, this hotel is an example of the finest coastal accommodation in Kenya. It boasts bright, airy rooms measuring a spacious 40 square metres, all with a private balcony offering views of the Indian Ocean, and a variety of one-to four-bedroom apartments. There's so much to do here: from kitesurfing to snorkelling over the coral reef, learning to dive, taking a cruise on a dhow, playing golf at the world-class Vipingo Ridge, or heading Hemingto Tsavo on safari. Alternatively, just stay poolside and relax.

HEMINGWAYS



### *Conservation at heart*

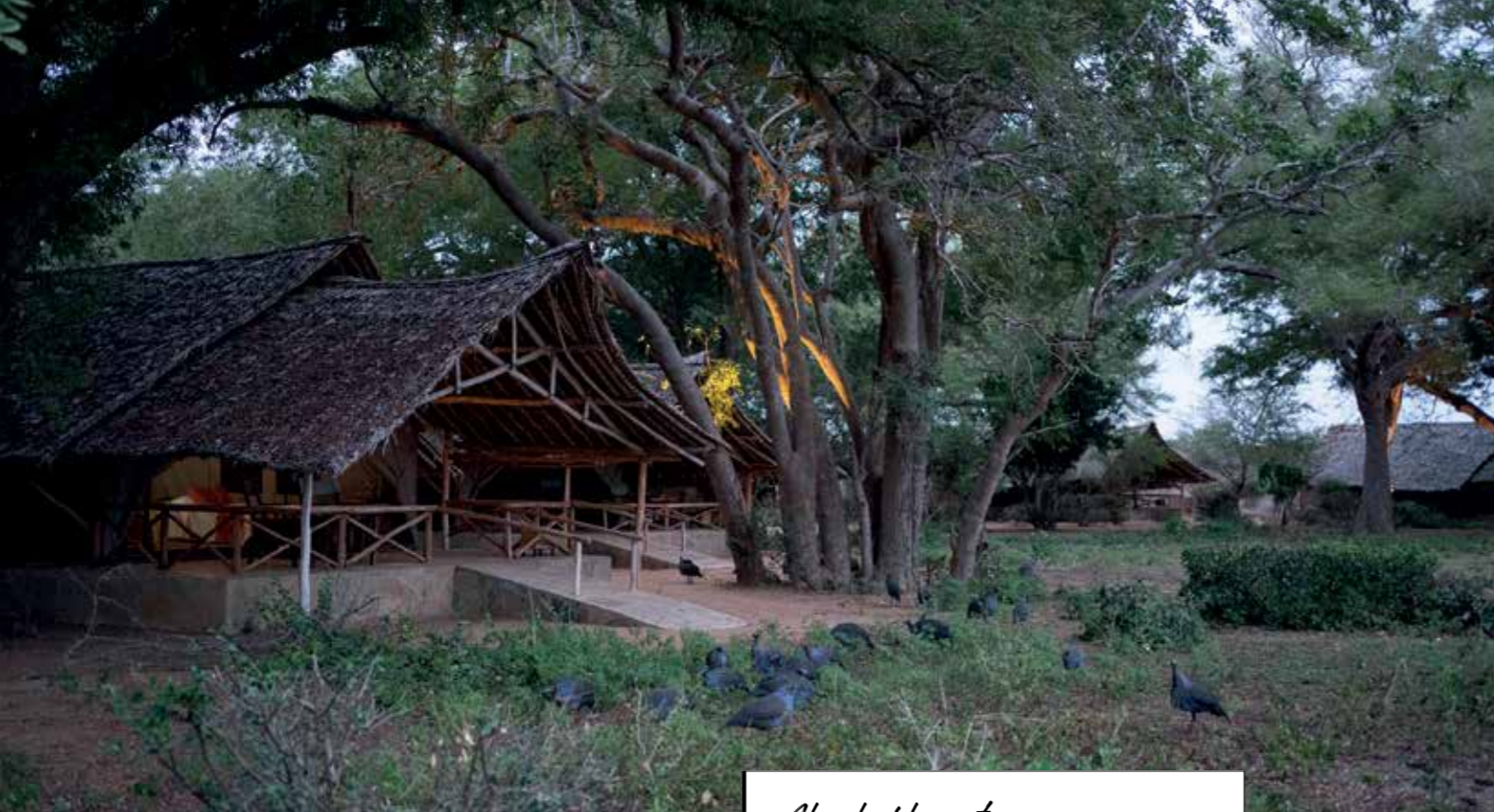
#### **PORINI AMBOSELI CAMP**

SELENKAY CONSERVANCY, AMBOSELI NATIONAL PARK

In keeping with the rest of its portfolio, Porini's eco-friendly Amboseli Camp comprises 10 spacious tents designed to give "the feel of the traditional mobile camp from years gone by". Simple yet comfortable, with a strong emphasis on the game-viewing experience (in particular Amboseli's big tuskers), it was here that Porini pioneered the 'conservancy concept' — the leasing of land to form community-owned wildlife conservancies adjacent to national parks; an approach that has transformed the areas adjoining Amboseli (and the Maasai Mara). As well as protecting wildlife, it generates income and employment for local communities, with some 1000 families directly benefitting.

PORINI





SATAO CAMP / WILL BURRARD-LUCAS

*Mountain views*

**OL PEJETA BUSH CAMP**

OL PEJETA CONSERVANCY, LAIKIPIA

Overlooked by Mt Kenya, Ol Pejeta Conservancy is home to the world's two remaining northern white rhinos, along with many other endangered animals — such as black and white rhino, Grevy's zebra, Jackson's hartebeest and wild dog — each protected around the clock by dedicated rangers. Ol Pejeta Bush Camp's seven tents sit along the narrow Ewaso Ngiro River, with the main area looking out over the plains. As with all Asilia Africa camps, staying at Ol Pejeta allows guests to contribute to conservation, with activities that include helping with the canine anti-poaching unit's training and recording lion sightings for the research team. You can also go horse riding among the rhinos.

*Absorbed by nature*

**SATAO CAMP**

TSAVO EAST NATIONAL PARK

There are not many camps in the vast Tsavo East, and Satao is arguably the most remote, deep in the park. Its 20 ensuite tents are located in the shade of tamarind trees overlooking a waterhole. An unpretentious classic safari camp; it's sense of isolation capped off with spectacular sunsets over the Sagala Hills.

ASILIA AFRICA



*Out on its own*

**SARUNI SAMBURU**

KALAMA CONSERVANCY, SAMBURU

Six eco-chic villas make up Saruni Samburu, the only lodge in over 200,000 acres of unspoilt wildlife-rich wilderness in the tribal lands in the north of the park. Architecturally one of the most innovative lodges in Kenya. Built on high, into and around a volcanic rock face, with unbelievable views, and Samburu warriors as your guides.



SARUNI



ELEWANA

*Forever free*

**ELSA'S KOPJE**

MERU NATIONAL PARK

Elsa's Kopje is sculpted into Mughwango Hill, above the site of legendary conservationist George Adamson's original camp, where, say owners Elewana, "he raised and released orphan lions, long before conservation became fashionable". Each of the camp's 12 secluded cottages is crafted around the rocks, offering views across Meru National Park. Recognised as having more diversity of animal species than any other park in East Africa, Meru boasts a thriving rhino sanctuary and is renowned for its large elephant herds, hippo and, of course, lion. Opened in 1999 by Virginia McKenna, who played Joy Adamson in the film *Born Free* and later set up the Born Free Foundation, the camp takes its name from Elsa, the orphaned lion immortalised in Adamson's book on which the film is based. Elsa's Kopje is credited with saving Meru: until the lodge's inception the park had suffered from a lack of visitors and there had even been talk of it being de-gazetted. 🦁