



EAST AFRICA

A once-in-a-lifetime Safari Extravaganza

For this exclusive journey Brown + Hudson teams up with the legendary wildlife documentary film maker and Academy award nominee Alan Root. Travelling for 14 days exclusively by helicopter we will show you some of the most untouched, wildest and iconic sights in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. You will see incredible landscapes including colourful lakes, active volcanoes, Africa's highest mountains and largest glaciers, blistering deserts and dripping jungles. You will track not only the famous Big 5 but also pursue some the rarest creatures, including mountain gorillas and chimpanzees. Go behind the scenes with a leading elephant conservationist, accompanying him on a collaring and de-tusking mission. Encounter tribal cultures virtually untouched by civilization and meet the world famous scientists who study them. Best of all, Alan will not only be your personal expert guide, but also shoot and produce a bespoke documentary of your journey. Submitting it to the Academy is of course entirely at your discretion.

Arriving in Nairobi you will be met by Alan and introduced to your pilot. He has not only flown various BBC documentary crews on their ground-breaking projects, but also a vast variety of the world's most famous travellers. A discrete type, he won't go into detail, but rest assured you will be in experienced hands, and in good company among his illustrious clients. His comfortable and air conditioned Eurocopter will be your 'mothership' for the next 2 weeks.

Take off and enjoy your first scenic flight north, circling Mount Kenya, before landing at Sirikoi in the Lewa Wildlife Conservancy. It's a very comfortable start to your journey. Take it easy if you like and find your safari feet on game drives to see the reserve's abundant game. If you are ready to dial it up a notch, fly to the slopes of Mount Kenya and go fly-fishing for huge rainbow trout. We recommend you conserve some energy, for the next day you will accompany Dr. Max Graham, the director of a revolutionary concept creating spaces for elephants to live in harmony with humans. He



Alan Root

“Alan Root sets the standard.” That was how David Attenborough encapsulated Alan’s career when presenting this great pioneer wildlife film-maker with a Lifetime Achievement Award in 1996. Alan’s films are widely considered to be the most influential of the television era, and have won him Lifetime Awards from the Wildscreen, Jackson Hole and Explorer’s Club Film Festivals as well as Emmy’s and an Oscar nomination among some sixty others. Aged twenty, he was cameraman for the Oscar winning documentary ‘Serengeti shall not Die.’

He grew up in Kenya and in his long and varied career, apart from all his films, he has captured numbers of the rare and endangered Bongo antelope to establish breeding groups in captivity, pioneered hot-air ballooning in Africa and ballooned over Kilimanjaro, rafted the Omo River, taken an amphibious car on the Nile, and dived in a crystal clear spring with hippos and crocodiles. In his younger days he operated a safari company in partnership with Richard Leakey, and has walked the Serengeti with Robert Redford and ballooned with Jacqueline Kennedy. In the course of his adventures he has been bitten by a leopard, a silverback gorilla, a hippo, and lost a finger to the venom of a deadly puff-adder.

He has worked in every corner of East Africa, and spent ten years in the rain-forests and savannahs of the Congo. He is familiar with almost every species of wildlife, large and small, and his knowledge of natural history is encyclopaedic. He has known and worked with many of the great wildlife characters in East Africa, the Adamsons, Leakeys, Raymond Hook, David Sheldrick and more. Alan showed Dian Fossey her first gorilla and set her up in camp for her study. He flies balloons, aeroplanes and helicopters, has crashed several of each, and his stories are epic, amusing, and true!

will take you on a collaring and de-tusking mission, while explaining to you the latest thinking in wildlife conservation.

The next day we fly west to Lake Baringo. The beauty of the lake and its surroundings is legendary: spectacular sunsets, a dazzling array of colourful birdlife, Njemps fishermen continuing traditions little changed for 100s of years as they paddle their reed boats across the lake. Take a trip around the lake’s islands, home to a multitude of birds, lizards, hippos and crocodiles. In the evening take a majestic sunset flight over Lake Bogoria and marvel at the thousands of pink flamingos lining the shore.

We journey north into Kenya’s last great frontier at Lake Turkana where lush tropical forests crown remote mountain ranges amid vast, ever changing arid lowlands and deserts. Colourful tribesmen, maintaining traditions of antiquity, are the only human inhabitants of this unique and wild landscape. Animals adapted to desert living abound with Grants Gazelles, Kudu, Gerenuk, Oryx and the rare Golden Jackal among them.

Your helicopter gives you unique access to this strikingly beautiful part of Kenya – a region far off the beaten track defined by inaccessible ravines, spectacular rock formations, volcanic craters and saline water pools heaving with crocodiles and water birds. We stay in the charming and romantic Desert Rose, nestled into the slopes of Mt. Nyiru.

On the way we drop by the Turkana Basin Institute, founded by Richard Leakey. Here we learn about the Leakey’s famous paleontological studies and ongoing research. With a little luck we might even run into his daughter Louise, who in 1977 (aged 6) became the youngest person to find hominid fossils. She has since developed into one of the world’s leading experts on the subject and continues her research on the shores of Lake Turkana. Alan knows the family well and will tell you more about their important work.

The next day we bid farewell to Kenya and cross the border into Uganda. Don’t worry about the formalities, we will take of everything, bringing the officials to us, and avoiding lengthy immigration procedures that can take up valuable safari time.

Uganda constitutes a cornucopia for the discerning safari aficionado. Simply put, it has it all: remote tribal cultures, incredibly friendly locals, wide open plains teeming with game, dense and impenetrable jungles, tall mountains crowned by glaciers and some of the rarest primates on earth. Given its troubled past, huge distances and bad roads, discovering Uganda can be daunting for travellers - which makes it all the more attractive to us. Carried through the air by our Eurocopter, we overcome these obstacles with ease and fly straight into Kidepo Valley National Park in the very north of the country.



Kidepo is incredibly remote, and isolated from the rest of the country by the sparsely populated, arid badlands of the Karamoja region. Expansive grassy plains are dotted with big rocky outcrops and flanked by steep jagged mountains. In the distance to the north, perfect triangular conical mountains rise out of Sudanese soil, to the east is the sudden drop of the Great Rift. Apoka Safari Lodge lies at the western edge of this rift, looking back down into Kenya's Turkana country.

Dry river beds zig-zag across the park, fringed with borassus and sausage trees. Tracts of forest also feature in this park, many have yet to be explored. Wildlife in Kidepo is abundant. Lion, leopard, cheetah, elephant, giraffe, zebra, possibly Africa's largest herds of buffalo, hartebeest, waterbuck, bushbuck, warthog... the list is endless. Much of it can be seen from the privacy of your veranda or your outdoor bathtub. Better, however, is to see it up close and personal, on a walking safari. This is a must do experience that Alan will capture on film, documenting your courage and bravery for posterity. We do recommend you listen closely to his instructions on when and when not to run. Easy enough to confuse the two.



Flanking the Victoria Nile some 300km northwest of Kampala, Murchison Falls National Park is the largest protected area in Uganda. The waterfall for which it is named is the most electrifying sight of its type in East Africa. The Victoria Nile, flowing in a westerly direction between Lake Kyoga and Lake Albert, divides the park into two halves. North of the river, the vegetation broadly consists of tall, green grassland interspersed with isolated borassus palms, acacia trees and riverine woodland. South of the river the vegetation becomes thicker as it turns into Budongo Forest.

We stay in a mobile tented camp that has been prepared specially for us. There won't be any undue hardship; the large airy tents have en-suite flushing toilets and warm bush showers. Later, when visiting the Falls by boat we try not to get too drenched. On the way back we spot game along the banks of the river and try our luck fishing for giant Nile Perch. At the camp a wonderful bush dinner awaits. Then we take our seats around the camp fire and boast about the size of our catch.

The next day brings a dramatic change of scenery: the Rwenzori Mountains are located on the border between Uganda and the DRC and stand at a height of up 16,761 ft. The highest Rwenzoris are permanently snow-capped, and they, along with Kilimanjaro and Mount Kenya are the only such mountains in Africa. Ndali Lodge near Fort Portal will be the base for exploration of this unique terrain. Ndali Lodge is perched on the rim of an extinct volcano, which, since its demise, has filled with water to become the breathtaking Lake Nyinambuga. The Lodge offers panoramic views of the spectacular 'Mountains of the Moon' (Rwenzori Mountains).



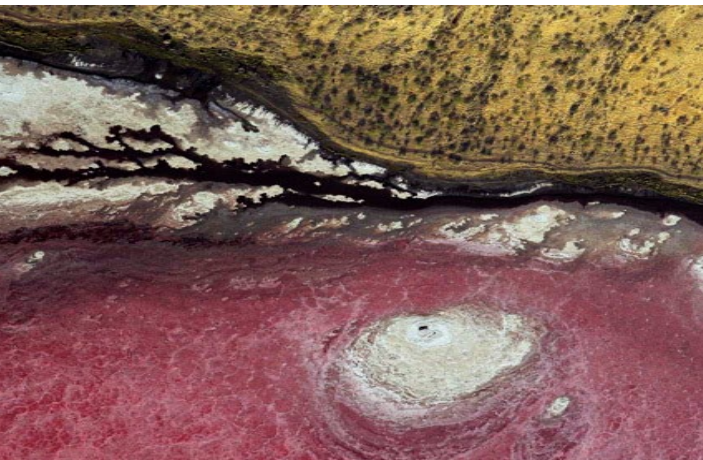
The next morning we get up early to pay a visit to nearby Kibale Forest National Park. After a reasonably short trek, we should encounter some of its famed residents, the Chimpanzees. If we find a group (there are no guarantees!) we spend an hour with them, watching them play and forage for food. Later we take advantage of the Eurocopter's incredible performance at high altitude: the pilot takes us on a scenic flight over the mountains, showing us Africa's largest glaciers. If possible he may touch down on some of the slopes, so we can get a closer look.

Journeying onwards, we fly south passing over Chambura Gorge - a veritable land that time forgot. Arriving at the stunning Clouds Mountain Gorilla Lodge we relish the incredible views from the terrace with a chilled sun-downer in hand. The horizon stretches from Rwanda's Virungas all the way to Goma in the Congo.

Early the next morning we set out for our rendezvous with some of our closest relatives. We trek through Bwindi Impenetrable Forest, one of the most biologically diverse tracts in all of Africa. This is a true rainforest, spread over a series of steep ridges and valleys that form the eastern edge of the Albertine Rift Valley. There are approximately 330 Mountain Gorillas in Bwindi (half of the World's population) but it is also home to a number of other primate species: chimpanzees, black-and-white colobus monkey, L'Hoest's monkey, red-tailed, blue, and vervet monkey. In addition there are over 79 mammal and 350 bird species recorded. We are reminded of the old Botswanan saying that 'if you see even a tiny fraction of what sees you here, you have had an incredibly good day.'

Depending on where our family of gorillas have spent their night, our trek could take from a few hours to the whole day. Regardless how long it takes, nothing can prepare you for the moment you meet these wonderful creatures for the first time. This is without doubt a life-changing moment; entirely different from any wildlife experience you've had before or are likely to have again. Imagine stepping back in time and holding up a mirror to find a reflection that's at once totally alien and eerily similar to your own. Later, once you have recovered your composure, don't forget to ask Alan about the time he introduced Dian Fossey to her first gorilla.

We cross the border into Tanzania, flying along the shores of Lake Victoria into the vast wilderness of the Serengeti. This phenomenal National Park was created to preserve the path of the world's largest migration circuit, and covers nearly 15,000 square kilometres. The name Serengeti comes from the Maasai name meaning 'endless plains'. Viewed from the Eurocopter, we can see why: the rolling distances of short grass plains provide an exceptional landscape for wildlife viewing; it is the ultimate safari country.



Alan of course has a unique connection to the Serengeti; this is where he made his name as a cameraman, shooting the Oscar-winning 'The Serengeti shall not die' with Professor Bernard Grzimek and his son Michael. The film not only became the benchmark for wildlife documentaries that followed, but also put the Serengeti on the map as a precious natural resource to protect, and made it a household name the world over.

To enjoy this wonderful environment in-style we stay in a custom built mobile tented camp close to the action. It will serve as a classic safari base for fantastic scenic flights over the game-filled plains of the Serengeti. The highlight, however, will be a spectacular flight over the desolate, yet hauntingly beautiful lands around Lake Natron, one of the most alkaline lakes in the world, and haven for thousands of colourful flamingos. The final, glorious touch is a visit to Ol Donyo Lengai (The Mountain of God), an impressive volcano in a remote area of Northeast Tanzania, followed by an aerial nod to Kilimanjaro poking through the clouds in the distance. It seems like a rather fitting end to this incredible journey.

Facts about this Brown + Hudson journey

Size of group: 2-6 travellers

Lead time from initial enquiry: 6-8 weeks

Length of journey: 2 weeks

Seasonality: Best in January and February, June, or September.

If this travel experiences has inspired you, please call our team on +44 203 358 0110, or write us at enquiries@brownandhudson.com.