

# msafiri

ENRICHING LIFE'S JOURNEYS

APRIL-MAY 2024 | ISSUE 184

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On the cover: Maasai bead bracelets by Sue Cunningham Photographic/ Alamy Stock Photo

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KENYA AIRWAYS – THE PRIDE OF AFRICA

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# karibu

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**ALLAN KILAVUKA** CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, KENYA AIRWAYS

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## NAIROBI GETAWAYS

OUR CONTRIBUTORS RECOMMEND  
THEIR FAVOURITE CITY ESCAPE



## NEW FLIGHTS TO MAPUTO

## BE AMAZED IN MOZAMBIQUE

Fly direct from Nairobi to Maputo on our new flights starting in June. The capital of Mozambique is your springboard to everything from national parks to glorious coastline...

**F**rom 14 June 2024, Kenya Airways will operate three flights per week to the vibrant capital of Mozambique. Taking off from Nairobi on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday, the new route will take you straight to the heart of one of Africa's most fascinating cities. Once you've booked your tickets, here are four things to add to your must-see list while you're there:

**1** IMMERSE YOURSELF...

...in Maputo's culture by visiting the bustling Central Market – a covered space in an old Portuguese colonial building dating from 1901 – where stalls are laden with everything from tropical fruits and cashew nuts to handmade batiks and wood carvings.

**2** VISIT THE...

...Fortaleza de Maputo (Maputo Fortress). From its early days as a Dutch trading post in the 1720s and an Austrian fort in the 1770s, the site was eventually occupied by the Portuguese. Today, the restored fort stands as a testament to the city's colonial past and contains exhibits on history, culture and art. Don't miss the sealed, carved wooden coffin of Ngungunhane – final ruler of the kingdom of Gaza.

**3** JUST A SHORT DRIVE ...

...from Maputo lies Ponta do Ouro, a coastal paradise renowned for its crystal-clear waters and pristine sandy beaches. Spend a day soaking up the sun, swimming, snorkelling, diving or deep-sea fishing. Ponta do Ouro is also a popular spot for dolphin watching.

**4** ESCAPE THE ...

...busy city and venture into the wild at Maputo National Park, about 100km southeast of the capital. Originally established to protect a small population of coast-dwelling elephants, the reserve has now been merged with the Ponta do Ouro Marine Reserve – so you could see anything from elephants and buffalo to dugongs and leatherback turtles.

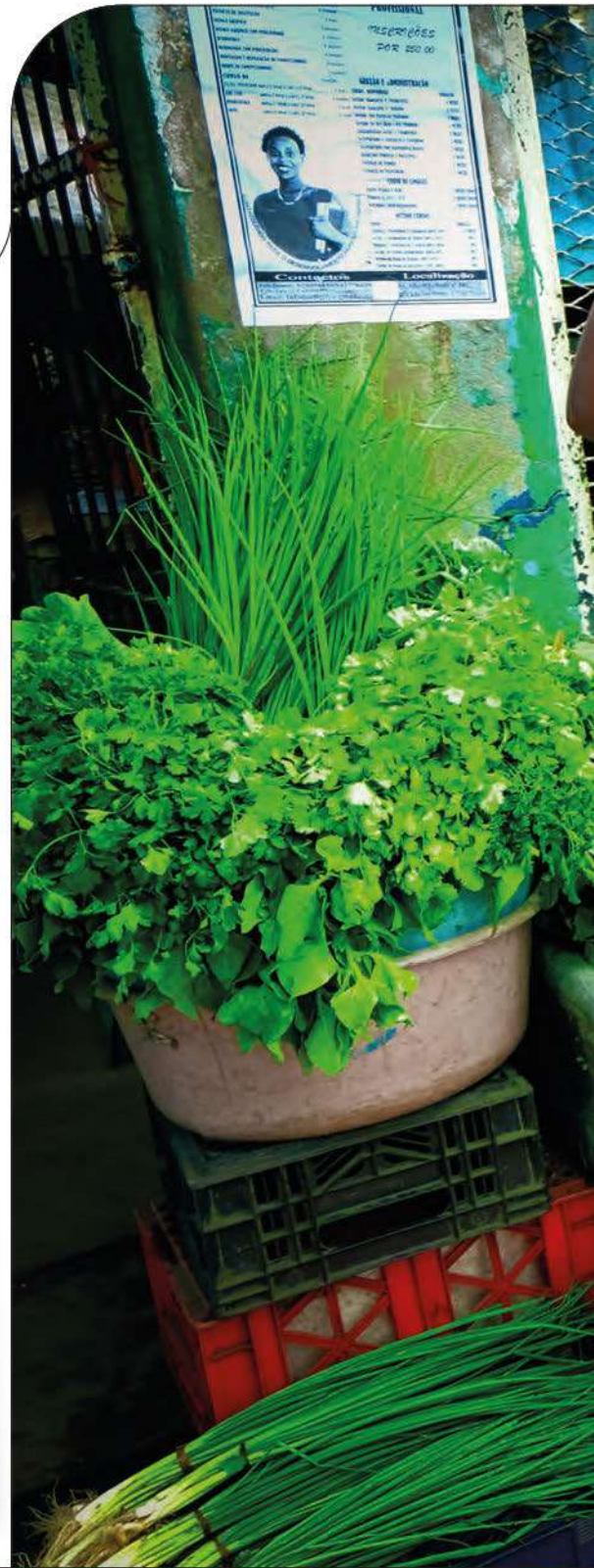


MARTINA ABBA/SHUTTERSTOCK

**Right:**  
Fresh veg with a smile at a Maputo market

**Below left:**  
Maputo Fortress

**Below right:**  
Ponta do Ouro







NOJADAPHOTO/SHUTTERS TOCK







SALIM BUSURU

ARTIST SPOTLIGHT

# COMIC BOOK HEROES

Our new columnist Imou Eparis talks to two of East Africa's leading cartoon artists on the rise of comic book culture in the region

As an introverted child, Brian Humura, now a well-known Ugandan comic artist, felt the world didn't understand him.

"Whenever I watched cartoons, something in me lit up," he says. "Watching animations triggered the artist in me. I started drawing sequences from movies and animations. With time, I came across comic books, and that was it. The real fun began when I started to create my own stories."

**Right: BEAST FROM VENUS** One day, Pkurui, a young warrior raised by his strict aunt and uncle, is sent into the woods to deliver meat to his uncle. Far out on the plains, his uncle is out grazing his animals. Pkurui travels through the woods and on his way there, he encounters animals behaving strangely and then suddenly he comes face to face with destiny. **DUNAMIS** follows the life of Kenny, an albino who, in addition to being a loner and a target for bullies at school (thanks to his hereditary lack of hair, skin and eye pigmentation and his desire to put his studies first), has to deal with a witch doctor who's obviously after his body parts for nefarious reasons.

Brian entered the world of comic books in 2013 – an industry he described as nearly non-existent in Uganda back then.

"I took a chance and published my first comic book. I tried reaching out to publishers but they didn't take the comic on so I decided to self-publish. I didn't do a market survey. I didn't do anything. I was just excited that I was publishing a comic. The comic was placed in stores, but it didn't sell out as I hoped. It also got some mean reviews

from die-hard readers."

Humura goes on to explain that anyone else would have counted their losses. "It was a humbling experience that taught me a lot," he says. "It taught me that you have to start from scratch if you're going to do this. You have to educate people and think of ways you can expose your work."

Now, a decade later, the comic scene in Uganda is blossoming.

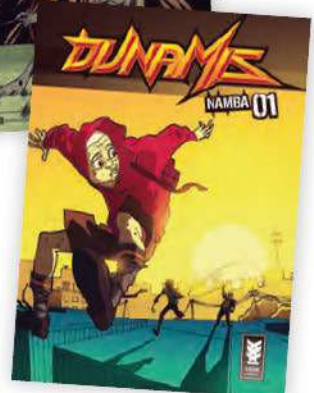
"The industry has grown," says Humura. "We have festivals. We have kids contacting us about joining the industry. I also lecture on the topic. I have published seven comics and



It's all in the imagination... a striking piece of comic book artwork by Salim Busuru



BOTH COVERS: SALIM BUSURU







10 GODZ POSTER  
Artwork by Salim Busuru

recently had my work exhibited in Europe. It's growing at a nice, steady rate."

In Kenya, comic artist Salim Busuru is also the founder and creative director of Avandu Vosi Studios. His journey into comics was fuelled by a childhood passion for cartoons. As he grew older, Salim had the desire to tell African stories. Some of his comics, like *Beasts from Venus* and *Wana Wa Magere*, touch on African mythology.

Salim began his career in 2004, creating comics that addressed prevalent issues in Kenya such as HIV awareness. After comparing the past and present, he says there are more comics now than in the mid-2000s. However, he describes the years between 2010 to 2015 as a lull.

"It's like the people who made

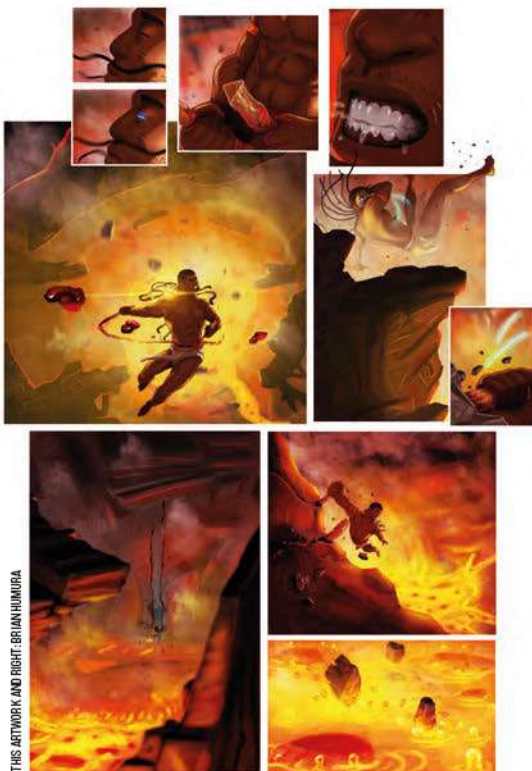


BRIAN HUMURA

comics earlier didn't see the returns and they stopped producing them. Then the Nairobi Comic Convention came about and that encouraged people. We made our first comic around

2013/2014. Then in 2015 we started releasing our comics and other guys were also releasing their comics. It was like a new generation of comic producers were emerging. That has been growing steadily up to now. The audience is yet to grow back to the level it was. It's not a hopeless scenario. It's like we are regrowing something that was stagnant," said Salim.

Looking ahead, Salim believes that comics hold significant potential for Africa's development. He emphasises the importance of cultivating systems, audiences and talent within the creative industry.



THIS ARTWORK AND RIGHT: BRIAN HUMURA



**Above:** NDAHURA recounts the life of a demi-god living in a modern world. He is forced back into a life he left behind when an ancient relic is stolen from a museum.

**Far left:** GUARDIAN: ONE OF UGANDA'S HEROES is about an elite secret team of teenage demi-god soldiers who help defend the Buryoro Kingdom during colonialism.

**Left:** THE COG is about a journalist who discovers a secret about one of Uganda's biggest tech giants.

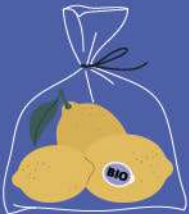




## NOTES TO MY FUTURE BETTER SELF

# 3 THINGS ABOUT DIET I WISH I KNEW EARLIER

Here's some food for thought when it comes to eating well and living a healthy life. Tempted? Then tuck in...



### DON'T JUST EAT, BE INTENTIONAL!

A good diet does more than keep your weight in check. It is vital to keeping you healthy, feeling good and it can protect you against illnesses like type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and cancer. The father of medicine,

Greek physician Hippocrates, understood the crucial function of our diet in keeping us healthy: 'Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food.'

### YES, YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT

A healthy diet and lifestyle results in a healthy body. An unhealthy one does the direct opposite. Garbage in, garbage out. Our diets are dictated by factors such as culture and income. Wherever life places us, though, a healthy diet contains a balance of the main food groups: carbohydrates, proteins and fats, vitamins and minerals. A diet rich in wholegrains, fruits, vegetables, beans and unsaturated fats (from nuts, olives, avocado, soybean and sunflower) is preferred to one rich in processed foods, excess salt, free sugars and saturated fats (from butter and fatty meat), trans fats (found in fried foods and pastries) and red meat.



### WHAT'S ON YOUR PLATE?

Half of it should be fruit and vegetables (the more variety and colour, the better), a quarter should be wholegrains or healthy carbohydrates (limit refined grains like bread and fried foods), and the remainder should be healthy protein (legumes, poultry or fish). Limit your red and processed meat intake. Restrict your daily total salt intake to less than one teaspoon. Finally, drink plenty of water and other fluids between meals (around 3.7 litres for men and 2.7 litres for women). Replace sugary, fatty snacks with fruit and nuts. Don't take life too seriously, though. Apply the 80:20 rule:

80% of the time is for eating healthy foods, while 20% is for cheat days, to allow you to indulge, within reason, in your favourite cake, ice cream or not-so-healthy drink.



### Ulivyoligema utalinywa

AS YOU SOW, SO SHALL YOU REAP

(SWAHILI PROVERB)

### FOCUS ON THE PROCESS AND SYSTEMS, NOT TEMPORARY GOALS

The overall goal on the diet journey is to remain well nourished and live a healthy life. We should aim to make short-term goals, like weight loss, less common. The reason many of us keep gaining weight after losing it is because once we achieve the set weight goal, we pat ourselves on the back, wear that hot outfit for that memorable occasion, then go back to old eating habits. Our focus should be on setting up processes that ensure we eat the healthiest accessible foods, prepared in the healthiest possible manner, for most of the time.

### Good health...

Your diet is like currency to your health bank account; healthy food choices are healthy investments.





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## LET'S TALK BUSINESS

# PLANNING THE BIG EVENT

Meet three entrepreneurs shaking up Africa's event management field

## Evidence John

THE REAL COMPANY EVENTS, ZIMBABWE

John remembers managing her first event, a wedding in February 2019 attended by 200 people. "I was nervous. I thought I wasn't going to succeed," she recalls. But the event went as planned and today, her company, founded only a year earlier, has broken into the tough field of event management.

But John, who grew up in Harare's Kuwadzana suburb, had not planned to go into events management while at school. "Nursing was my call," she says. "But working with an events company after school inspired me to get into the field."

Event management keeps evolving and John says it helps to go with current trends, rather than sticking to your own style. "Meet the clients' needs by giving them the services that meet their budget, rather than insisting on your plans cast in stone."

John cites several challenges, including high transportation costs and too much paperwork from authorities. In addition, the costs of hiring premises force her at times to work from home.



## Jas Hammond

HAMMOND AFRICA BRANDS, GHANA | HAMMONDAFRICA.COM

When Hammond began managing events in 2012, the market was craving experiential, hands-on interaction between brands and event managers. "Many event planners understood how to decorate a hall, fix lights and fancy fittings, but the orientation of creating concepts that answer corporate brand objectives was missing," he says. "We decided to become that solution."

For Hammond, it was about matching the unique objectives of each event with insights into clientele lifestyles, adding a spark to every brand he touched. Apart from managing key corporate brands such as banks, Hammond's portfolio includes high-profile funerals in Ghana.

"We managed the VIP and high-level events during the funeral of J.J. Rawlings, the former President of Ghana; the funeral for Theresa Kufuor, former First Lady of Ghana; and the funeral of the Ga King's father," says Hammond.

Hammond says good events can be expensive, while clients want an amazing idea at a quarter of the budget. "Become great at making that happen!" he says. "And be open to constant learning, quick to listen and holistic in your approach to each task. The devil is in the detail."

## Ummul Mustafa

CHIC LUXURY EVENTS, KENYA  
CHICLUXURYEVENTS.COM

When Ummul Mustafa was preparing for her wedding in 2009, she was stunned by the organisational skills of her wedding planner, who pulled out all the stops to create the perfect day. "I think I could do this," she told herself.

In 2013, Ummul and her business partner attended a wedding expo, and though overwhelmed by the industry giants participating, it furthered her quest to try event management.

"We quickly realised there was a gap in the market when it came to luxury event management. The industry was missing creativity and attention to detail, building and maintaining customer loyalty. Consumers in the luxury market are likely to switch brands if they feel a competitor offers a better product or service," she says.

Today, Chic Luxury Events creates



customised experiences in luxury and destination weddings, as well as various corporate events.

The key to success? Good networking and a well-executed social media presence increase online visibility, build brand awareness, drive engagement and generate leads.

"Luxury is about elegance, quality and customisation. It is a curation of different elements put together to create memories and experiences made with loved ones," says Mustafa. "Life is an event, make it memorable."





## SPEAKING MY LANGUAGE

# WHAT'S AN ENGLISH ACCENT GOT TO DO WITH IT?

Josaya Wasonga takes a break from his regular Fatherhood column to begin a new series reflecting on the topical, thought-provoking, sometimes edgy – but always humorous – issues that have caught his attention

*Kizungu ilikuja na melfi.* That's Swahili for: 'The English language came aboard a ship'. And that's what we say on this side of Africa whenever we develop an English pronunciation issue. That said, there are some people who are of the opinion that 'good English' – whatever that means – is a sign of better upbringing or academic superiority. These are the types who

**"ME?  
I THINK  
LANGUAGE  
SHOULD BE A  
MEDIUM OF  
COMMUNICATION,  
NOT A MODE  
OF PUBLIC  
HUMILIATION"**

will go to great lengths to adopt a twang. What's good English, though?

You know how you can have important guests in your living room and suddenly, of all times, an overfed, obese roach crawls from nowhere, stands on the coffee table, stares at y'all... and belches?

That's how our tribal accents rain on our parades. They have a habit of showing up when we least expect them. Like when we're trying to impress or – tut-tut – hustle folks with our sophisticated borrowed mastery of English.

### MEDIUM OF COMMUNICATION

While Kenyans boast of English proficiency, our Tanzanian neighbours are masters of Swahili sanifu; that's squeaky-clean Swahili. Recently, there was friendly fire between these two East African siblings, which jokingly got into the issue of English-versus-Swahili. Our neighbour's 10-trillion-shilling question was: can an English accent help y'all pay your national debt? Talk about a 'lo' blow. And so it goes.

The champs who fly our flag high in athletics also make us proud

when it comes to being their real authentic selves. Some people make fun of our athletes' spoken English, especially when they're interviewed by international news outlets after smashing records. However, we give other – mostly Caucasian – nationalities a pass. In fact, we think they're exotic. Or sexy. Hypocrisy much, ah?

Me? I think language should be a medium of communication, not a mode of public humiliation.

### LAND OF CONTRASTS

In Kenya, different tribes have different accents. My lakeside folks, Luo, have a problem wrapping their tongues around 'sh'. If you ever visit Lake Victoria and fishermen proudly boast that "We caught many feaces last night", know that they mean fishes – not a whole load of number twos. And when they tell you it's time for a sip-off, don't get your tastebuds excited for a drinking competition. It's a ship-off time, sucker.

On the other hand, the tongues of many Kikuyus have a problem with pronouncing letters 'l' and 'r'. When a brother from the slopes of Mount Kenya confides in you thus: "I'm looking forward to the next big erection in three years," don't be too quick in surreptitiously sharing your blue pills, thinking bro has the mother of all EDs. He's talking about the General Elections.

Lighten up, folks. It's not that serious. These are not stereotypes, but variety. Which is the spice of life and lingo. We would indeed be a drab nation if we all spoke English with one accent, right? Even folks who shipped English to our shores have different accents.

And that reminds me. I jetted in from London just the other day. Kenyans, you know our MO. We spend an afternoon in the West, and we return with an accent. Now, if you'll allow, it's time to let my nasal drawl and stiff upper lip wow the natives of Nairobi.





## INTERVIEW: KWS DIRECTOR GENERAL

# HOW DO YOU ENSURE THE FUTURE OF KENYA'S WILDLIFE?

Following the recent change of guard in the leadership of the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), conservation faces new challenges and promising opportunities. We talked to KWS director general **Dr Erustus Kanga**, who reflects on his tenure as he outlines the national wildlife agency's future direction.

## Q WHAT MOTIVATES YOU IN YOUR WORK?

Every day, the weighty responsibility of safeguarding our priceless wildlife heritage serves as a profound source of inspiration. For me, leading the dedicated team at KWS is not just a matter of pride and honour, but a great privilege. That's what drives me.

## Q WITH SLIGHTLY MORE THAN A YEAR IN OFFICE, WHAT MILESTONES HAVE YOU ACHIEVED?

Upon assuming office, my primary focus was to motivate the diverse team at KWS and re-establish the chain of command. This effort has borne fruit, with the team now fully committed to our shared goal of wildlife protection and providing exceptional service to valued customers, communities and stakeholders. Additionally, efforts to enhance revenue collection and eliminate corruption in the Service have positioned us well. In fact, our revenue is steadily increasing, empowering us to fulfil our primary mandate of conserving and managing national parks. What's more, there is a noticeable shift in organisational culture, restoring the excellence for which KWS has been traditionally renowned internationally. Besides, we have recorded noteworthy achievements, including maintaining

the security of rhino sanctuaries, with numerous recorded births, successfully curbing elephant poaching, and fostering enhanced collaboration with communities while securing additional space for wildlife and establishing new partnerships.

## Q WHAT ARE THE KEY CHALLENGES FACING CONSERVATION?

Human-wildlife conflict stands out as a major challenge, exacerbated by shrinking space for wildlife and the impact of climate change on habitats. We also grapple daily with the search for sustainable solutions to safeguard people and their property on one hand, and wildlife on the other. Additionally, securing sufficient and sustainable funds for conservation is concerning as this poses a threat to achieving our broad mandate. In a nutshell, striving to meet the expectations of Kenyans and international visitors while simultaneously upgrading and modernising operations is a continuous struggle. But I am confident of steering KWS as we tackle these challenges.

## Q HOW ARE YOU ADDRESSING THESE CHALLENGES?

Many years ago, KWS initiated an innovative programme of community



**“THE CONSERVATION OF KENYA'S WILDLIFE HERITAGE IS NOT A TASK FOR KENYA ALONE. IT IS A GLOBAL HERITAGE THAT REQUIRES GLOBAL INVOLVEMENT. HUMANITY AT LARGE NEEDS TO JOIN HANDS IN SUPPORTING EFFORTS TO PRESERVE WILDLIFE FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS”**

and private wildlife conservancies. This has proven largely successful in reducing conflicts and increasing benefits to communities while winning more space for wildlife. We remain committed to improving and expanding this model, considering it a vital tool to mitigating conflict and incentivising communities to harmoniously coexist with wildlife. Sustained and intensive management of our national parks is also underway, ensuring wildlife has ample space, biomass, prey and water. We are fostering partnerships with diverse stakeholders, including other government agencies, community-based organisations, private enterprises and international organisations.





**Q YOU HAVE HIGHLIGHTED THE ROLE OF COMMUNITIES IN WILDLIFE CONSERVATION. HOW ARE YOU PRIORITISING OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT WITH THEM?**

Indeed, communities remain integral partners in wildlife conservation, playing a vital role in coexistence and active participation in conservation. At KWS, our approach prioritises building trust through continuous community outreach programmes, acknowledging their valuable insights and contributions. Through these initiatives, we empower communities with knowledge about biodiversity and the impact of their actions on ecosystems. To address human-wildlife conflict, we are implementing various collaborative solutions that seek to strike a balance between the needs of people and wildlife. We also recognise the economic link between conservation and community livelihoods, and that initiatives like sustainable eco-tourism and responsible resource management are essential. By fostering inclusive engagement, we aim to cultivate a

shared commitment to safeguarding our wildlife heritage.

**Q YOUR PARTING SHOT?**

The conservation of Kenya's wildlife heritage is not a task for Kenya alone. It is a global heritage that requires global involvement. Humanity at large needs to join hands in supporting efforts to preserve wildlife for present and future generations. KWS urgently needs heightened investment in wildlife protected areas, with a focus on maintaining ecosystem integrity, fostering community engagement, forming partnerships and developing eco-friendly facilities. These initiatives will not only benefit our visitors, but also uplift community livelihoods and contribute to the sustainable conservation of nature. Let us collectively rise to this onerous responsibility, ensuring a future where the splendour of Kenya's wildlife is not only preserved but celebrated with pride and joy.

These partnerships can unlock additional resources that help us to keep KWS operations upgraded. We are implementing innovative revenue-generating models, such as sustainable eco-tourism ventures with the private sector. These will ultimately contribute to the financial sustainability of KWS. A transparent and responsive communication strategy is vital to ensure that the public, both locally and globally, understands the significance of ongoing changes and investments in wildlife conservation. By building a collective understanding and support, we can overcome financial challenges and work towards fulfilling the conservation mandate more effectively.



Right: On the front line of conservation – Dr Erustus Kanga inspects KWS wardens





## WOMEN IN CONSERVATION

## LEADING THE WAY

Following International Women's Day in March, *msafiri* celebrates the increasing and inspiring contributions that women bring to the conservation effort.

At grassroots level across Africa, women are uniquely positioned to witness the pervasive environmental and conservation pressures caused by climate change, poaching and human encroachment. It is estimated that women constitute 70% of Africa's agricultural workforce and cultivate 90% of its food; they are usually the water carriers, seed sowers, land tillers and crop growers, encountering wildlife daily. Yet their voices are seldom heard. With the exception of a handful of well-known pioneers, including Jane Goodall, Dian Fossey and Wangari Maathai, conservation has hitherto been almost exclusively a male domain. That is slowly changing. More women are finally making their mark in the spheres of policy-making and management, in community leadership and conservation projects, blazing a trail for others to follow. Here's a selection of our women making a mark.

DOMINIQUE GONÇALVES  
MOZAMBIQUE

[www.gorongosa.org](http://www.gorongosa.org)

After her studies, Gonçalves worked as an intern for the elephant ecologist Joyce Poole in Gorongosa National Park, eventually becoming manager of its Elephant Ecology Project, focusing on human-elephant coexistence in the park's buffer zone. She works with Gorongosa's Girls' Club programmes on education, health and preventing early marriage.

DR GLADYS KALEMA-ZIKUSOKA  
UGANDA

[www.ctph.org](http://www.ctph.org)

Named in the BBC 100 Women list for 2023, showcasing inspiring women around the world, Dr Kalema-Zikusoka became Uganda's first Wildlife Veterinarian in 1996. She's since won multiple awards for her work on mountain gorilla conservation and its connection with communities through her NGO Conservation Through Public Health.



## DR PAULA KAHUMBU, KENYA

[www.drpaulakahumbu.com](http://www.drpaulakahumbu.com)

Ecologist, documentary-maker, educator and advocate, Dr Kahumbu is one of Africa's best-known conservationists. Growing up in Nairobi, her love of wildlife flourished after meeting her neighbour, the renowned paleoanthropologist Dr Richard Leakey, eventually becoming CEO of his NGO, WildlifeDirect. She started the impactful Hands Off Our Elephants campaign with Kenya's First Lady Margaret Kenyatta (aimed at ending the ivory trade) and produced *Wildlife Warriors*, the first wildlife documentary programmes to be made by Africans, featuring Kenyan conservationists. Passionate about linking Africa's people, particularly children, to conservation, she has won multiple awards and was named among 'The Most Influential Women of 2022' by the *Financial Times*.





EDWARD SELFE

**THANDIWE MWEETWA**

[fzs.org/en/projects/zambia/nsumbu-national-park/](https://www.fzs.org/en/projects/zambia/nsumbu-national-park/)

As a child, biologist Mweetwa attended Chipembele Wildlife Education Trust's conservation classes in Mfuwe, developing her love of wildlife. In 2009, she joined the **Zambian Carnivore Project** ([www.zambiacarnivores.org](http://www.zambiacarnivores.org)) as an intern, and by the time she left at the end of 2023 she was project manager for their Luangwa Valley team, focusing on lion research. Believing that local communities and women are vital to conservation, she also managed ZCP's Conservation Education and Women and Wildlife Conservation programmes to encourage more diversity in research. She is now the integrated landscape custodian manager at the Frankfurt Zoological Society's Nsumbu Tanganyika Conservation Programme, promoting co-existence between people and wildlife in and around Nsumbu National Park in northern Zambia.



**RACHEL MCROBB, ZAMBIA**

[www.cslzambia.org](http://www.cslzambia.org)

In 2000, when Zambian-born McRobb was working in a lodge in South Luangwa National Park, she set up a team of six scouts to combat poaching. That has morphed into the NGO Conservation South Luangwa (CSL), with herself as CEO and over 120 staff protecting 14,000sq km. In collaboration with Zambia's national parks authority, CSL has responsibility for anti-poaching, aerial surveillance, veterinary staff and K9 teams. They launched a dedicated community department in 2021 working on human-wildlife co-existence, reaching an estimated 100,000 people.

**Professor Amy Dickman, Tanzania, and Dr Alayne Cotterill, Kenya and Zambia**

[www.lionlandscapes.org](http://www.lionlandscapes.org)

Having worked in lion conservation over several years, with Dickman founding Ruaha Carnivore Project and Cotterill establishing Laikipia's innovative Lion Ranger teams, the pair joined forces in 2021 in a rare collaboration in the conservation world. Through their Lion Landscapes initiative, they ensure thousands of local people benefit from protecting lions and their habitat.

**Dr Moreangels Mbizah, Zimbabwe**

[www.wildlifeconservationaction.org](http://www.wildlifeconservationaction.org)

Zimbabwean zoologist Mbizah completed her doctorate at Oxford University before returning home to establish Wildlife Conservation Action, one of the few Black-founded conservation organisations in Zimbabwe. It aims to improve sustainable livelihoods for communities and encourage them to protect and co-exist with wildlife, particularly lions, providing predator-proof cattle bomas and training community guardians to respond to instances of human-wildlife conflict. Mbizah strongly believes local people are key to conservation and focuses on training and capacity building to inspire future African conservation leaders, especially women.







KAREN KIBIP

### FANNY MINESA DR CONGO

[www.bonobos.org](http://www.bonobos.org)

Winner of the 2023 Tusk Award for Conservation in Africa, Minesa became director of Friends of Bonobos of the Congo (ABC), founded by her mother Claudine André, in 2014. With 100 staff, ABC rescues and rewilds rare bonobos and protects their rainforest habitats, including the Ekolo ya Bonobo Community Reserve, which, thanks to her efforts, has expanded to four times its original footprint. Aiming to reduce the bushmeat trade in bonobos, ABC supports healthcare, schools, infrastructure and job creation for local communities and has delivered environmental education programmes to around 380,000 people across DRC.

### OLIVIA MUFUTE, ZIMBABWE

[www.awf.org](http://www.awf.org)

As Zimbabwe's country director for the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), ecologist Mufute is responsible for overseeing a range of projects from anti-poaching to community and conservancy developments, and from governance to transboundary collaboration. She brings 25 years of wildlife conservation experience to her role, including as chief ecologist for Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority, in policy development and implementing multi-lateral environmental agreements. A current focus is AWF's 10-year anti-poaching conservation programme with both Zimbabwean and Zambian park authorities.



### Lisa Hywood, Zimbabwe [www.tikkihywoodfoundation.org](http://www.tikkihywoodfoundation.org)

Hywood founded the non-profit Tikki Hywood Foundation in 1994, and it has become synonymous with pangolin rescue and conservation, working in Zimbabwe, Liberia and Cameroon. The foundation recently partnered with renowned NGO African Parks, sharing her expertise in their protected areas across the continent.



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## AUTHOR PROFILE

## MEJA MWANGI

Widely regarded as one of Kenya's finest writers, Meja Mwangi's gritty books about Nairobi include *Kill Me Quick* and *The Cockroach Dance*



### THE COCKROACH DANCE

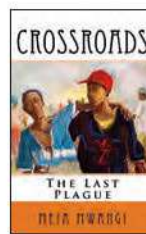
Though less well known than other East African writers of his generation,

Meja Mwangi's talent has been a key part of the literary history of the region. His novels are among the earliest books to feature the stories of urban Nairobi. *The Cockroach Dance*, first published in 1979, tells the story of Dusman Gonzaga, a young man employed by the Nairobi City Council as a meter reader. Gonzaga hates his work and has nightmares of transfigured meters. Living in poverty, he watches the cockroaches on his ceiling which he perceives as dancing, mocking him. Over the course of the novel, Mwangi presents an eclectic conveyor belt of characters, most of whom live in the same building as Gonzaga. There's his roommate Toto, who works in a bank; Magendo, a smuggler; a grocery seller and his wife; and The Bathroom Man, who, together with his wife and baby, lives in what was previously one of the building's bathrooms. *The Cockroach Dance* is a deeply hilarious book. One of the most amusing moments occurs when Gonzaga attempts to rally the building's occupants against their landlord, Tumbo, who has let their home descend into squalor. Gonzaga is a riveting narrator, and through his eyes we see a picture of post-independence Nairobi.



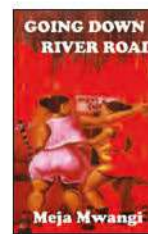
### KILL ME QUICK

Mwangi's best-known novel, *Kill Me Quick* revolves around Meja and Maina, two young men who move to Nairobi after high school, desperate to find jobs so they can support their families. When their attempts at employment fail, they are forced to live on the streets, sifting through dustbins for leftover food. In time, they get jobs at a rich family's farm – Maina working in the kitchen and Meja as a farm hand. However, whenever Maina makes mistakes in the kitchen, he blames them on his erstwhile friend. The novel, in examining the ways in which Meja and Maina attempt to construct a life for themselves, is also a critique of the post-independence Kenyan state.



### THE LAST PLAGUE

The AIDS crisis took a terrible toll in Kenya during the 1990s and 2000s – *The Last Plague* is one of the few Kenyan novels to confront this period. The fictional town of Crossroads is emptied by the disease, either by people dying of AIDS, or fleeing to other towns. Survivors gather at a bar to reflect on their troubles, and one of them, a health care worker called Janet, tries to teach them about condoms. Her attempts are futile until her husband, who abandoned her years ago, returns to the town, sick and waiting to die.



### GOING DOWN RIVER ROAD

The third of Mwangi's Nairobi books, *Going Down River Road* is the story of Ben, and his life as an ordinary person in Nairobi. There isn't a central plot, but the events of the book detail how members of the urban poor, like Ben, struggle to survive. Dismissed from the army, Ben is unable to find formal employment, and ends up working as a labourer at a construction site. He meets a sex worker called Wini at a bar, the two of them fall in love with each other, and Wini and her child move into Ben's hovel. There, the three of them continue to try to make a life for themselves.



### THE MZUNGU BOY

Set in central Kenya in the 1950s during British colonial rule, *The Mzungu Boy* tells the story of two friends who form a friendship in exceptional circumstances: Kariuki is a young boy whose family is dispossessed of their land and has to work for a white farmer; and Nigel is the farmer's son, in Kenya on holiday. The two of them bond, and often go hunting together. However, one day Nigel is kidnapped by the Mau Mau, and things start to unravel.

**Mwangi's novels are among the earliest books to feature the stories of urban Nairobi. *The Cockroach Dance*, first published in 1979, tells the story of Dusman Gonzaga, a young man employed by the Nairobi City Council as a meter reader**



WORDS: CAREY BARAKA



**Right:**  
Born in 1948, Kenyan  
novelist Meja  
Mwangi has worked  
as an assistant  
director on several  
films, including  
*Out of Africa*, while  
many of his books  
delve into the social  
conditions of Nairobi

31.05.2017 10:00 AM PHOTO/ALAMY STOCKPHOTO





## LET'S TALK ABOUT THE OCEAN

## LIGHT IN THE SEA

Underwater filmmaker Jahawi Bertolli shares insights and experiences from under the sea

**National Geographic Explorer, underwater cinematographer, photographer and music producer Jahawi Bertolli grew up in Kenya, where he nurtured a deep love for the natural world. He has since strived to portray the beauty and vulnerability of wild places through his work, mainly focusing on environmental, marine and shark conservation. We spoke to him about his work in underwater filmmaking, the challenges faced, his favourite filming locations and how aspiring videographers can perfect their craft.**

Jahawi Bertolli



JAHAWI BERTOLLI

“I’ve loved the ocean from a young age,” says Bertolli. “Growing up, my parents had a house on the South Coast of Kenya, between Diani and Mombasa, in a place called Waa. It was such a wild place. Some of my earliest memories there as a child were playing in rock pools and snorkelling. But as time went by, I started seeing changes in terms of what was happening off Kenya’s coast.”

It inspired him to make the film *Bahari Yetu*, revealing the marine biodiversity of Lamu and the threats it faces. “This was my calling. It got me started on my marine filmmaking journey. I wanted to capture what we have underwater, the conservation challenges, and communicate this to a wider Kenyan audience.”

## BEST SITE

Although Bertolli has filmed all over the world, his favourite dive site is a place near to home. “There is a little island called Kinyika (about a kilometre off the coast of Lamu) that we regularly go to when in Kenya. The conditions need to be just right for you to get out there and have really good visibility. We’ve seen whale sharks, dolphins and even Napoleon wrasse, which are endangered along the Kenyan coast. It’s a site that consistently wows you.”

## TRAINING

Filming underwater can be a challenging task. Even with modern waterproof video cameras, Bertolli says you need hours of training and practice before getting good footage.

“With experience, you start figuring out what equipment and settings work best. The most important thing underwater is to try and get close to your subject in the safest possible way, because then you have less water particles and debris in the water, which can affect your photo quality. When we’re working at depth, we lose light and we lose colour so we have to use video lights that can bring that back. There is a lot of gear that goes into it. It’s technical, and you need to know your cameras and how to switch gear easily.”

## ENCOUNTERS

Bertolli explains that diving has to be second nature. It’s crucial to be properly qualified and to be comfortable enough underwater to allow a creative state of mind when filming. This takes a lot of time to master, as you are juggling two very technical skills. You also need to understand your limits – and animal behaviour – to ensure you don’t put yourself or your team in danger. A good knowledge of the





ELKE BERTOLLI



**Above:** Jahawi and Elke Bertolli diving in Sodwana Bay in KwaZulu Natal, South Africa

ELKE BERTOLLI

**Left:** Bertolli diving alongside a shoal of ragged-tooth, or sand tiger, sharks in Sodwana Bay

**Above:** Close encounter with a whale shark off the coast of Lamu, Kenya

**Top:** Into the blue: Bertolli with his underwater filming rig

species you're filming will also give you the best chance to capture action shots.

"One time, when we were filming in the Galapagos Islands, there were quite a few sharks hunting a school of sardines. We were watching this happening and it was all pretty incredible. The sardines suddenly realised we weren't a threat to them and decided to crowd around us. The next thing you know is you are head-to-head with a 3m-long shark!"

During such encounters, Bertolli says you have to judge the situation. "Sometimes we put the camera

down and move away slowly – particularly with animals that are very sensitive to humans."

**ADVICE**

Aspiring underwater filmmakers need "passion and dedication first", Bertolli says. "You [also] need to be very comfortable in the water. In Kenya we have great spots like Kuruwitu where you don't have to go into deep waters to practise. Reach out to other underwater camera people to see if you can assist in projects – there is a lot to learn through mentorship."

**INTERESTED IN TAKING THE PLUNGE?**

JAHAWI BERTOLLI IS LOOKING TO EXPAND THE TRAINING HE DOES IN KENYA FOR ASPIRING UNDERWATER FILMMAKERS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS THROUGH EAST AFRICAN OCEAN EXPLORERS, IN COLLABORATION WITH NATURE, ENVIRONMENT AND WILDLIFE FILMMAKERS (NEWF). FIND OUT MORE AT NEWF.CO.ZA





KIT FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS

# SNAP HAPPY

Elevate your photography game with these picture-perfect camera gadgets...



02

### LUME CUBE 2.0 PORTABLE LED LIGHT

The Lume Cube 2.0 is a small yet extremely powerful LED light that enhances your photographs and videos in low-light conditions. With adjustable brightness levels and wireless control, it provides customisable lighting solutions on the go. It's even waterproof, so you can take it to the beach. [US\\$89](http://US$89) • [LUMECUBE.COM](http://LUMECUBE.COM)



06

### SONY ALPHA A6600 MIRRORLESS CAMERA

It's not cheap but the a6600 is one of Sony's best mirrorless cameras, designed for enthusiasts and professionals alike. The standout feature is the next-gen autofocus system and real-time tracking, which uses artificial intelligence to track fast-moving subjects such as wild animals. Other highlights include the pop-out LCD display (useful for selfie-takers and vloggers). If you want sharp and clear photos in any scenario, this high-end Sony snapper has everything you could possibly need – and much more. [US\\$1399](http://US$1399) • [SONY.COM](http://SONY.COM)



01

### RODE VIDEOMICRO ULTRACOMPACT ON-CAMERA MICROPHONE

With most photographers mixing stills and video, a lightweight mini microphone is a must. This model not only records sound, it actually improves audio quality. Its directional design reduces background noise, capturing clear and crisp sound, whether used with a proper camera or a smartphone. [US\\$59](http://US$59) • [RODE.COM](http://RODE.COM)

03

### DJI OSMO MOBILE 4 SMARTPHONE GIMBAL

The DJI Osmo Mobile 4 Smartphone Gimbal is the best-value 3-way camera gimbal around. It uses magnets to hold your phone rock-steady as you shoot smooth, cinematic 4K video from every angle. The 150-hour battery life should last you the whole day and more. [US\\$149](http://US$149) • [DJI.COM](http://DJI.COM)



04

### ADOBE CREATIVE CLOUD PHOTOGRAPHY PLAN

Didn't get the shot you were hoping for? No worries – you can always tweak your images with the Adobe Creative Cloud Photography Plan. It provides access to essential tools such as Adobe Photoshop for editing out photobombers and polishing up the lighting. You also get 20MB of cloud storage, so you can safely store your creative masterpieces. [US\\$9.99 A MONTH](http://US$9.99 A MONTH) • [ADOBE.COM](http://ADOBE.COM)



05

### PEAK DESIGN EVERYDAY SLING BAG

Most camera bags are 'functional' (or ugly). The Peak Design Everyday Sling Bag bucks the trend with its sleek design for photographers on the move. Features include customisable dividers and weatherproof construction, providing secure storage for your camera gear when the going gets tough. The non-scratch zip will help keep your pride and joy looking pristine. [FROM US\\$89](http://FROM US$89) • [PEAKDESIGN.COM](http://PEAKDESIGN.COM)



07

### SANDISK EXTREME PRO SDXC MEMORY CARD

Sandisk makes top-of-the-line memory cards that don't cost a fortune. This model offers high-speed performance and ample storage capacity, perfect for capturing and transferring large files seamlessly at speeds of up to 200MB per second. Its rugged design ensures reliability, even in harsh shooting conditions. [FROM US\\$35](http://FROM US$35) • [SANDISK.COM](http://SANDISK.COM)







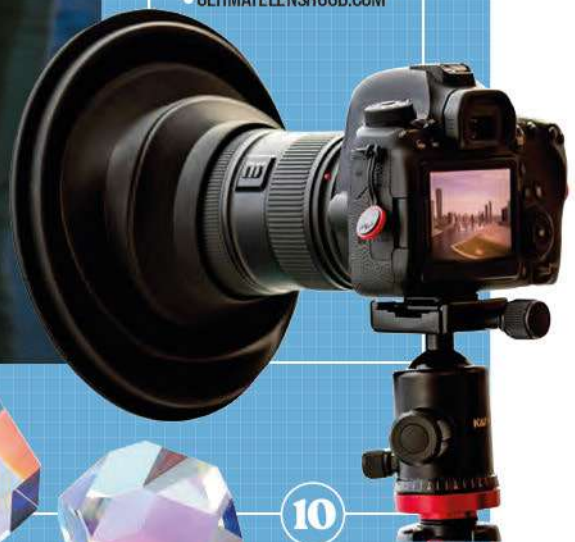
09

**ULTIMATE LENS HOOD**

It might look like a bit of rubber that's fallen off a Dalek, but this versatile lens hood can imbue your camera with super powers. It helps eliminate unwanted reflections and glare while protecting your camera lens from rain, snow and other elements, making it a must-have tool for outdoor photographers.

US\$30

• [ULTIMATELENSHOOD.COM](http://ULTIMATELENSHOOD.COM)



08

**JOBY GORILLAPOD 3K KIT**

This versatile mini tripod is built tougher than most – it can support cameras weighing up to 3kg.

Its bendy legs wrap around almost anything, making it ideal for capturing arty angles and stable shots in tricky environments.

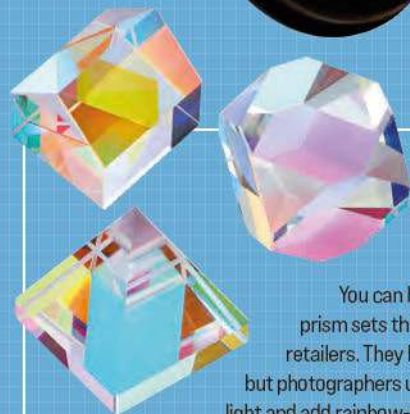
US\$80 • [JOBY.COM](http://JOBY.COM)



10

**OPTICAL CRYSTAL PRISM SET**

You can buy glass or crystal prism sets through lots of online retailers. They have multiple uses, but photographers use them to refract light and add rainbow-like effects to their images. You can also place them in front of your camera's lens and create incredible kaleidoscope effects. If you're looking for inspiration or an excuse to experiment, grab yourself a few and see what new elements you can add to your images. FROM US\$30 • [AMAZON.COM](http://AMAZON.COM)





## FIVE OF THE BEST

SOUTH AFRICAN  
HIKING TRAILS

With its highly varied terrain, temperate climate and extensive trail network (much of it through protected wilderness areas), South Africa ranks as one of the world's premier hiking destinations. A long tradition of backpackers' huts caters for hardier adventurers, while the well-developed infrastructure for guided, luxury hikes will appeal to slackpackers. Best of all, the country remains largely below the radar, so you won't have other hikers treading on your toes.

## WOLFBERG ARCH ►

CEDERBERG WILDERNESS AREA  
13KM, 6-7 HOURS  
MODERATE TO STRENUOUS  
[CEDERBERGWINE.COM](http://CEDERBERGWINE.COM)

The vast Cederberg Wilderness Area has few marked trails, but its rugged mountains, bizarrely sculpted rock formations, rock art sites and refreshing rockpools attract adventurous hikers. The Wolfberg Arch, standing proud atop striking sandstone cliffs, is one of South Africa's most iconic landmarks. Follow the rocky path up to Gaper Crack. The sheer-sided canyon is the easiest way to the top of the plateau, but ascending via the Narrow Crack is more exciting, involving some scrambling and squeezing under boulders. Midway, the crack opens out to reveal two awe-inspiring sandstone rock arches. Once on top, follow an undulating path marked by cairns through rock gardens to the Arch. Return via Gaper Crack for a swim in the river or wine tasting at South Africa's highest winery.

SHEN ADEY



SHEN ADEY

## WATERFALL TRAIL ▲►

TSITSIKAMMA, GARDEN ROUTE NATIONAL PARK | 6KM, 3 HOURS | EASY | [TSITSIKAMMA.INFO](http://TSITSIKAMMA.INFO)

The five-day Otter Trail along the rugged coast of Tsitsikamma sells out a year in advance, but hiking the first section to the Twee Riviere waterfall gives you a taste of the drama. Boulder-hop along orange, lichen-covered rocks, keeping watch for dolphins and whales, then cool off in the waterfall's deep pool as you take in the sounds and smells of the sea. The Tsitsikamma Trail, which starts at Nature's Valley (where the Otter Trail ends), traverses the magnificent indigenous forests and fynbos-covered mountains to Storms River and is a great alternative to the Otter Trail.







SHAENADEY

**SMUTS TRACK ▲**

TABLE MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK  
7KM, 5 HOURS | MODERATE  
[SUMMITTABLEMOUNTAIN.COM](http://SUMMITTABLEMOUNTAIN.COM)

Table Mountain has something for everyone. Smuts Track, which starts in Kirstenbosch Botanical Garden and climbs steeply up the forested Skeleton Gorge, is a classic. Ladders aid the way up rock bands before you leave the towering hardwoods, ferns, lichens and fungi behind and walk through colourful fynbos to Maclear's Beacon (1085m) – the mountain's true summit. Admire the panorama, then follow the dramatic Table Edge Path to the Upper Cable Station and ride down in the revolving aerial car. This hike is enchanting in mid-summer when king protea are in flower. During winter, spectacular waterfalls pour down the gorge. Taking a guide is recommended – the weather can change rapidly, closing the cableway and making navigation difficult.



**CATHEDRAL PEAK ▲**

MALOTI DRAKENSBERG PARK  
19KM, 8 HOURS | CHALLENGING  
[CATHEDRALPEAK.CO.ZA](http://CATHEDRALPEAK.CO.ZA)

The northern Drakensberg offers plenty of challenging trails. Cathedral Peak is one of the most accessible day hikes, with stunning wildflowers, soaring raptors and 360-degree views as a reward for the hard slog to the summit. After an exciting river crossing, you climb gradually past sandstone cliffs and across protea-studded grasslands before two steep, overgrown gullies test your endurance. The fun starts at the base of the summit pyramid. Short rock scrambles get the adrenalin pumping as you strive to reach the 3004m summit. Other nearby, must-do hikes include Eland's Cave, home to magnificent rock art, and the easy trail to Rainbow Gorge. Cathedral Peak Hotel runs free guided hikes.

SHAENADEY



**MADONNA AND CHILD WATERFALL TRAIL ▼**

HOGSBACK | 4KM ONE WAY, 1.5 HOURS | EASY | [HOGSBACK.COM](http://HOGSBACK.COM)

With numerous trails weaving through a range of environments, the highland village of Hogsback is a magnet to hikers. The Madonna and Child Waterfall hike encapsulates the region's attractions, meandering through Afro-montane forest alive with Cape parrots. On the way to the picturesque falls, you'll also past old saw pits and the Big Tree, the largest and oldest Real Yellowwood in the Eastern Cape. Until the 'Madonna' fell off about 50 years ago, the cascade apparently resembled a Rembrandt portrait of the Madonna and Child. If you're up for a challenge, climb the 1845m-tall Hogsback Mountain, named during the Frontier Wars by British soldiers who thought its rocky summit ridges resembled the bristles on a hog's back. The ultimate challenge in the region is the six-day Amatola Trail, arguably the toughest trail in South Africa.



SHAENADEY





*A voice for*

# ELEPHANT





# TS



**This pic:**  
A bull elephant  
dusted with red soil  
in Kenya's Tsavo  
National Park

## IN THE FIRST OF A NEW SERIES OF FEATURES ON ELEPHANT CONSERVATION IN ASSOCIATION WITH SAVE THE ELEPHANTS, THE CHARITY'S CEO FRANK POPE SHINES A LIGHT ON THE CHALLENGES BEING FACED BY THESE MAGNIFICENT CREATURES - AND WHAT'S BEING DONE TO PROTECT THEM

**T**ucked away in a secluded corner of Samburu National Reserve – one of Kenya's most spectacular protected parks – a group of dedicated Kenyan and international researchers is working tirelessly to give wild African elephants a voice.

For nearly three decades, Save the Elephants (STE), founded by the world's foremost expert on pachyderms Iain Douglas-Hamilton, has been at the forefront of ground-breaking research on Samburu's elephant population. Their research not only sheds light on the intricacies of elephants' lives, but also formulates strategies to safeguard the world's largest land mammals.

The Samburu elephant population is one of the best-studied in the world. Researchers can identify up to 700 individual elephants by sight, utilising distinctive features such as ear nicks and tusk patterns. These elephants are also given individual and family names like Anwar, Soutine, the Spice Girls and the Royals, for easy identification.

It's not uncommon for visitors to Samburu National Reserve to see Save the Elephants' vehicles – with their distinctive black and white elephant logos emblazoned on the side – following sizable herds of elephants and solitary bulls. Inside, researchers are diligently observing and documenting every step of these intelligent and sentient beings.

This on-the-ground data collection has contributed to more than 120 peer-reviewed papers by Save the Elephants' researchers. Their research not only deepens our understanding of elephants, but also highlights how much in common elephants have with humans. Surprisingly, elephants share striking

similarities with us: they possess complex brains, vast intelligence, engage in rituals to mourn their dead and celebrate birth, and form deep social bonds.

### TACKLING THREATS

Africa's wild elephant populations, including those in northern Kenya, face severe threats from ivory demand, habitat loss and human-elephant conflict.

Despite these challenges, conservation efforts led by organisations like Save the Elephants are making significant strides. Poaching has markedly declined in Kenya, with a focus on fostering harmonious coexistence between elephants and communities a top priority.

STE's holistic approach involves safeguarding elephant migratory routes, working with governments and other agencies to enact protective laws, deploying rapid response units for conflict resolution, and developing solutions to prevent elephants from raiding crops in rural areas.

### HARNESSING TECHNOLOGY

STE utilises satellite tracking collars to gain insights into elephants' perspectives, and currently tracks more than 450 elephants across Africa. This technology has unveiled some remarkable stories showcasing elephants' adaptive survival strategies. They include the purposeful journey of a bull elephant called Morgan, who was tracked from coastal Kenya to southern Somalia in 2016, making him the first elephant known to visit that country in over 20 years. In 2020, a collared female named Koya made a remarkable journey through former 'badlands' in northern Kenya – suggesting elephants are starting to feel safe again. ➔





DAVID LETIYA/SAVE THE ELEPHANTS

The STE WildTracks app and EarthRanger software revolutionise real-time monitoring, enabling researchers to protect elephants effectively. High-tech tracking complements low-tech solutions, like beehive fences, providing both protection and income for communities coexisting with elephants.

Tracking technology gives elephants a voice, revealing how they adapt to different locations, circumstances and threats. Aerial surveys and patrols also play a crucial role in assessing the well-being of elephant populations and can be utilised for strategic planning to safeguard elephant corridors.

**BUILDING A HARMONIOUS FUTURE**

As human populations grow, elephants face increasing pressure due to habitat loss. The charity's Human-Elephant Coexistence (HEC) teams continue to explore and implement sustainable solutions.

With the expansion of farmlands into elephant rangelands, and the fragmentation of habitats due to developments, elephants are running out of space to freely move, leading to conflict with people. This conflict is further exacerbated by the obstruction of elephant corridors and erratic weather patterns, such as the recent drought that affected several parts of the country.

Drawing on the success of Save the Elephants' award-winning beehive fence project – which has now been adopted in 90 sites in 23 countries across Africa and Asia – the organisation launched

the HEC Toolbox in 2022 to tackle such conflict with peaceful methods.

The Toolbox enables rural communities to protect their lives and livelihoods from elephants in conflict hotspots. Comprising more than 80 tried-and-tested elephant-friendly deterrents, it has been shared with hundreds of organisations across Africa. The STE team also conducts workshops in Kenya to equip community representatives with the knowledge and tools necessary to teach others how to live more in harmony with elephants.

**JOINING HANDS FOR JUMBOS**

Through its school outreach programme, STE provides bursaries and scholarships to children living in human-elephant conflict hotspots. In the last 30 years, more than 20,000 children in 27 schools have engaged with our educational activities in northern Kenya, with STE awarding more than 359 student scholarships. We hope this will inspire future ambassadors for elephants and their environment, as well as fostering coexistence between elephants and communities.

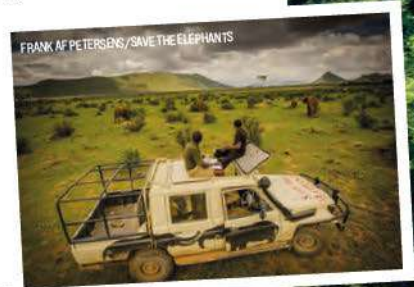
By merging collaboration, research, education and technology, Save the Elephants remains steadfast in its commitment to protect Africa's wild elephants, ensuring their survival for generations to come. 🐘

**Left:** Human-elephant conflict is one of the main threats to elephants today and increasing livestock numbers is a major cause of this conflict in northern Kenya

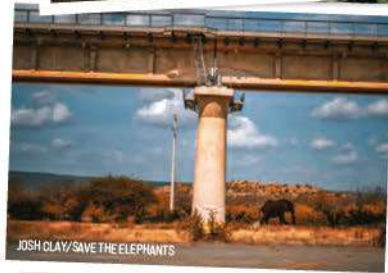
**Below, Top to bottom:** Save the Elephants' researchers monitor elephant behaviour on a daily basis to gain insight into their world

A bull elephant under the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR). The SGR cuts through the Tsavo Conservation Area and has split the natural habitat of the country's single largest elephant population

A wildlife corridor in northern Kenya identified using STE's tracking data. Protecting key passageways for elephants ensures they can freely roam



FRANK AF PETERSENS/SAVE THE ELEPHANTS



JOSH CLAY/SAVE THE ELEPHANTS



JANE WYNYARD/SAVE THE ELEPHANTS





*For more information...*

OR TO MAKE A  
DONATION TO SAVE  
THE ELEPHANTS, GO TO  
[SAVETHEELEPHANTS.ORG](http://SAVETHEELEPHANTS.ORG)  
OR SCAN THE QR CODE

Right: Koya (bottom right) and her family, seen here, made a 48-mile trek, traversing a danger zone once troubled by tribal conflict and ivory poaching

FRANK POPE/SAVE THE ELEPHANTS



# Get out of **TOWN**

**We all love Nairobi, but every now and then it's great to escape the urban hustle and bustle for a spot of peace and quiet. But where to go and what to do? Read on for our contributors' pick of the best Nairobi weekend escape plans...**



JEN WATSON/SHUTTERSTOCK





*Lutawo Ouma recommends:*

### TAKAWIRI ISLAND

**Why:** Mind, body and soul are instantly detoxified by the beauty and tranquillity of the palm-lined beaches overlooking the great lake. **How:** Takawiri Island is one of 19 habitable islands in Nam Lolwe (Lake Victoria). A hidden gem, this private property is tucked away from the noise and pollution of the world, yet still brimming with fun activities. Takawiri is an ideal getaway for long weekends. Get there by flight, or drive to Homa Bay or Kisumu before connecting to Mbita where a 30 to 45-minute boat ride will take you to Mfangano, then Takawiri. You can also reach the island by taking a 60-minute boat ride from Rusinga Island. Accommodation is available on Takawiri, but be sure to book in advance. Once there, as well as relaxing on the pristine, white-sand beaches, you can go snorkelling, sailing, surfing, fishing and birdwatching (species to look out for include pelicans, ibises, cormorants, Egyptian ducks, African fish eagles and ospreys). And don't miss Takawiri's magical sunrises and sunsets.

Find out more: [victoriasandslodge.com](http://victoriasandslodge.com) ➔

### Top tip:

To experience the vibrant lakeside culture, take a boat trip to the nearby Mfangano or Rusinga islands.







## Wendy Watta recommends: LAKE ELLIS, MT KENYA

**Why:** At 3500m above sea level, all three jagged peaks of Mt Kenya are on full display if it's clear, and with rocky escarpments and greenery framing the view, this glacial lake is a beauty!

**How:** Hop in your 4WD and escape the madding crowds of Nairobi, driving up Mt Kenya's scenic Chogoria Route on the eastern side all the way to Lake Ellis. Camp there if you can, but you need to be completely self-sufficient. Since you're driving rather than hiking, you won't have enough time to acclimatise, so mundane tasks like turning over in your bed at night might have you wheezing as though you just completed a 100m dash at the Olympics. Bring a fishing rod as Lake Ellis is full of rainbow trout which, as it turns out, is a perfectly acceptable meal for breakfast. You could also sleep at Chogoria Bandas – basic accommodation run by the Kenya Wildlife Service. Pre-booking is near-impossible since there are always network connection issues with the staff in the mountains, but you'll likely find rooms on arrival. There is no electricity, but your devices can be charged at the Chogoria gate which is a stroll away. If your goal is to catch the sunrise, get up as early as 5am to cover the 7km stretch to the lake (the road there is treacherous). There is also a 30m-high waterfall called Nithi in the area – definitely worth a detour on your way back. *Find out more: [kws.go.ke](http://kws.go.ke)*



Above: The pristine waters of Lake Ellis are full of rainbow trout  
Top: Gloriously clear skies reveal the triple peaks of Mt Kenya  
Below: Tent with a view – rooftop camping at Lake Ellis

### Top tip:

Remember that single-use plastics are banned in Kenya's national parks and game reserves. KWS doesn't accept cash at the gate, but staff will direct you to the exact spot to stand to get a network signal so you can pay with M-PESA.





**Top tip:**

A trip to the world-renowned prehistoric site of Olorgesailie can easily be arranged. It was discovered in the 1940s by world-famous Kenyan paleoanthropologists Louis and Mary Leakey. Olorgesailie holds the bragging rights as one of the few places in the world with large quantities of prehistoric tools and fossilised skeletons of extinct species.



ROSALIA RUPETTI@LUXURYINTERIORPHOTO

**Left:** Sundowners await at Olohero Onyoro

**Below:** Just over an hour's drive from the city, Champagne Ridge offers stunning Rift Valley views

**Right:** Olohero Onyoro accommodates just six people in three ensuite



**Josaya Wasonga recommends:**  
**OLOHERO ONYORO AT CHAMPAGNE RIDGE**



**Why:** Being a reclusive type of creative, I'm a sucker for secluded and intoxicating getaways (yup, the name Champagne gives it away) where my creative

juices can flow uninterrupted.

**How:** There is a busy colony of rock hyraxes in the cliffs below the house and plenty of colourful and lively birdlife. The steep and rocky landscapes mainly feature thorn and acacia trees. Fun fact: Olohero Onyoro is the name of a local thorn tree indigenous to the area. Champagne Ridge has no light pollution, which makes it ideal for stargazing. If you're an astronomy buff, carry your telescope – the starscape is to die for. Although this is a place for relaxing and savouring the enchanting vistas rather than viewing game, you may spot the occasional zebra or antelope. If you're lucky, you may spy a reclusive, elusive leopard. Other activities include steep and scenic hikes into the nearby valleys and hills. There are Maasai caves to discover. Olohero Onyoro has three double ensuite bedrooms, kitchen, lounge, wrap-around verandahs, barbecue, fire pit and pergola. Massages and beauty treatments can be arranged. Nearby there's the one-bedroom Olohero Onyoro Ndogo. It's a lovely romantic retreat which accommodates just two guests, and it comes with a plunge pool and an outdoor "bath with a view". *Find out more:* [eastaficanretreats.com](http://eastaficanretreats.com) ➔







*Peter Muiruri recommends:*  
**MUGIE CONSERVANCY, LAIKIPIA**



**Why:** This is the only wildlife conservancy in Kenya to combine golfing with game watching.

**How:** Laikipia has some of the highest wildlife densities in the country outside government protected areas. At the 200sq km Mugie Conservancy, grazers, browsers and big cats roam freely under the protection of dedicated rangers. But as my recent visit revealed, game viewing is just part of what makes Mugie tick. You see, I'm a golf enthusiast and will use any free time as an excuse to drive some balls on a range. Don't be misled. I'm not a scratch golfer, but the moment resident manager George Van Wyk mentioned the existence of a nine-hole course at Mugie, I needed little persuasion to hit the greens. In any case, golf is the only game you can lose by competing with yourself! I tried my hand at driving, but found the bush more than the fairway. On the open plains of Laikipia, the wind can spoil the party even for pros. Still, such setbacks have not stopped top honchos from the city combining business with leisure here.

In the evening, I retreated to an open log fire in the magnificent lounge of Governors' Mugie House, built on the spot where the owners' former home, Mutamaiyu, once stood. The modern architecture nuzzles into the African bush and was the perfect place to enjoy some grilled fillet served with zucchini and sweetcorn. As the last embers of the fire crackled, the Milky Way arched overhead and a shooting star streaked across the cosmos. Armed with a sky app, there was no place for Jupiter to hide. *Find out more: mugie.org*

*Top tip:*  
 Flights can be booked with Governors' Aviation which offers daily scheduled flights to Mugie Airstrip. For a road transfer, allow around six hours.



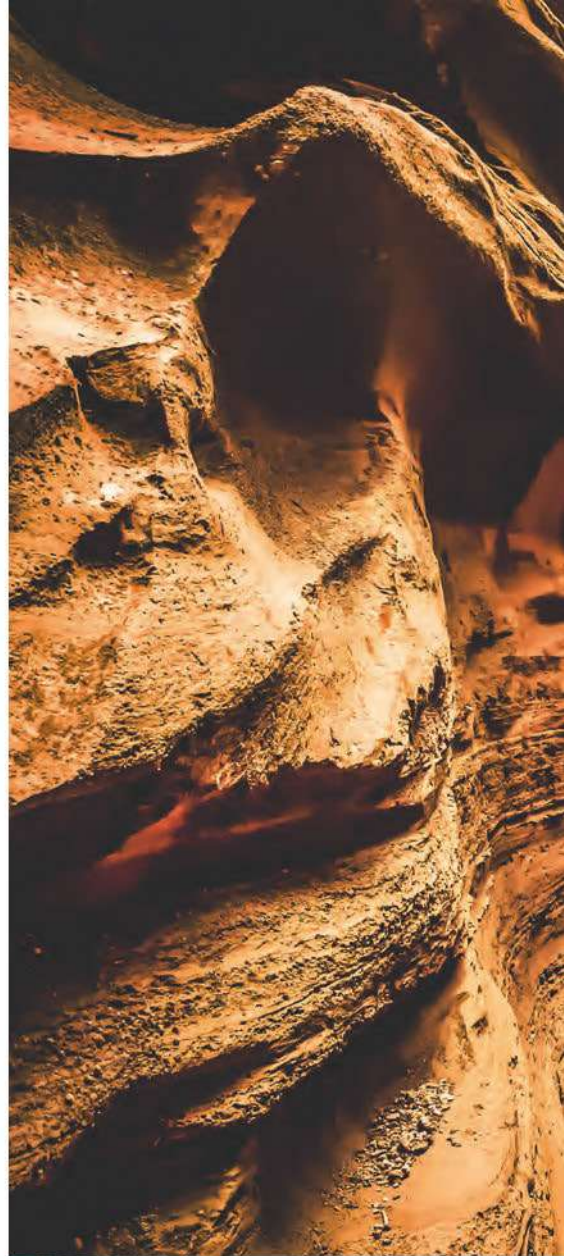
GOVERNORS CAMP COLLECTION



**Left:** Green lifestyle at Mugie Conservancy

**Above right:** The mysterious canyons of water-eroded sandstone at Hell's Gate Gorge

**Right:** Cycling is one of the most popular ways to explore Hell's Gate National Park







**Top tip:**  
 Wear light clothing, carry lots of water and snacks. You may bring your own bicycle, but they are also available for hire. Organise cycling and rock climbing ahead of your trip.



*Lutivini Majanja recommends*  
**HELLS GATE NATIONAL PARK**

**Why:** Cycling and walking through stunning landscapes.

**How:** Hell's National Gate Park is located in Naivasha, a two-hour drive from Nairobi. The park has walking and cycling trails catering to different levels of fitness. You can opt to spend a few hours or the whole day in the park. Start early, or in the late afternoon as it gets quite hot after midday. I enjoy the slowest walk, through this grassy park, pausing to enjoy the scenery. Although the scenery at Hell's Gate inspired *The Lion King*, you won't encounter any predators here – but you might spot giraffe, zebra, eland and over 100 species of birds, including raptors nesting on the cliffs. There's also rock climbing for anyone seeking more of a challenge. The views in the gorge are stunning and make the hike absolutely worth it! Take a break at the picnic site – just eat quickly as there are plenty of monkeys and baboons around that would like to share your meal.

Afterwards, head to Olkaria geothermal spa for some R&R. As well as the pools, there's a sauna and a restaurant offering a wide range of dishes. You'll find plenty of options for accommodation in Naivasha, from camping to large hotels. I recommend visiting Lake Naivasha for a boat ride, or climbing Mt Longonot – both of which are within reasonable distance of Hell's Gate National Park. *Find out more:* [kws.go.ke](http://kws.go.ke) ➔





This pic:  
Spot the giraffes...  
and the city skyline  
in the far distance

GAMEWATCHERS

*Top tip:*

Inform the camp management about any special dietary requirements when booking. A pair of binoculars and a fleece or jacket for chilly weather are recommended.



*Paul Udoto recommends:*  
**NAIROBI NATIONAL PARK**

**Why:** Rustic but charming, the nine-tent ensuite Nairobi Tented Camp is the first and only safari camp in the heart of Nairobi National Park, located barely 10km from the city's CBD.

**How:** Besides those classic views of wildlife juxtaposed against Nairobi's skyscrapers, no experience beats the convenience of transferring straight from Wilson domestic airport or JKIA to the 'canvas in the bush' – it's perfect as a first or last night in Kenya. The eco-luxury accommodation of Nairobi Tented Camp provides a unique start to a Kenyan safari. Sipping a drink around the campfire, chatting with fellow travellers while listening to the sounds of the night, it's easy to forget you're so close to a capital city. On game drives you can spot an impressive line-up of species, including black rhino, lion, leopard, cheetah, hyena, buffalo and giraffe. Over 400 species of birds have also been recorded in the park – take a guided birdwatching and nature walk from the camp, following the picturesque Kisembe stream. Don't miss a visit to the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust Elephant Orphanage and the historic Ivory Burning Site. Beyond the 117sq-km park, the AFEW Giraffe Centre, Karen Blixen Museum, Uhuru Gardens National Monument and Museum and Nairobi National Museum are easily accessible, and you can also visit local artisans, such as Marula Studios and Kazuri Beads. *Find out more: [kws.go.ke](http://kws.go.ke)*







### Wendy Watta recommends:

#### WASINI ISLAND, KWALE

**Why:** Sail around Wasini, one of the three islands in Kwale County, aboard a traditional shaded Arabic-style dhow and spend several hours dolphin spotting, snorkelling and island hopping.

**How:** The boat heads to Kisite Marine National Park where you often spot large pods of dolphins frolicking in the waves, bow-riding with you for a while, before disappearing and returning to put on a show like paid entertainers. It's exhilarating to watch. Scuba divers can gear up and explore the rich underwater world – the marine park has a reef where the water is crystal clear and a striking shade of green. Avid swimmers can dive right in with snorkelling gear, while novices can wear life jackets and follow an instructor. Having worked up an appetite, hop back on board and set sail for Wasini Island for lunch at an unassuming seaside restaurant where you will be welcomed by local women wrapped in vibrant kanga fabrics. A delicious feast of local Swahili seafood dishes awaits, and they will keep them coming until you lift up your napkin in surrender. Find out more: [wasini.net](http://wasini.net), [pillipipa.com](http://pillipipa.com)

**This pic:** Boat trips to Wasini Island offer the chance to spot dolphins as well as enjoy delicious Swahili cuisine

WYMAN/SHUTTERSTOCK

#### Top tip:

After lunch, find a nook to laze in and spend an hour flirting with the breeze, or head off on a walking tour of the island to learn about its history and culture.





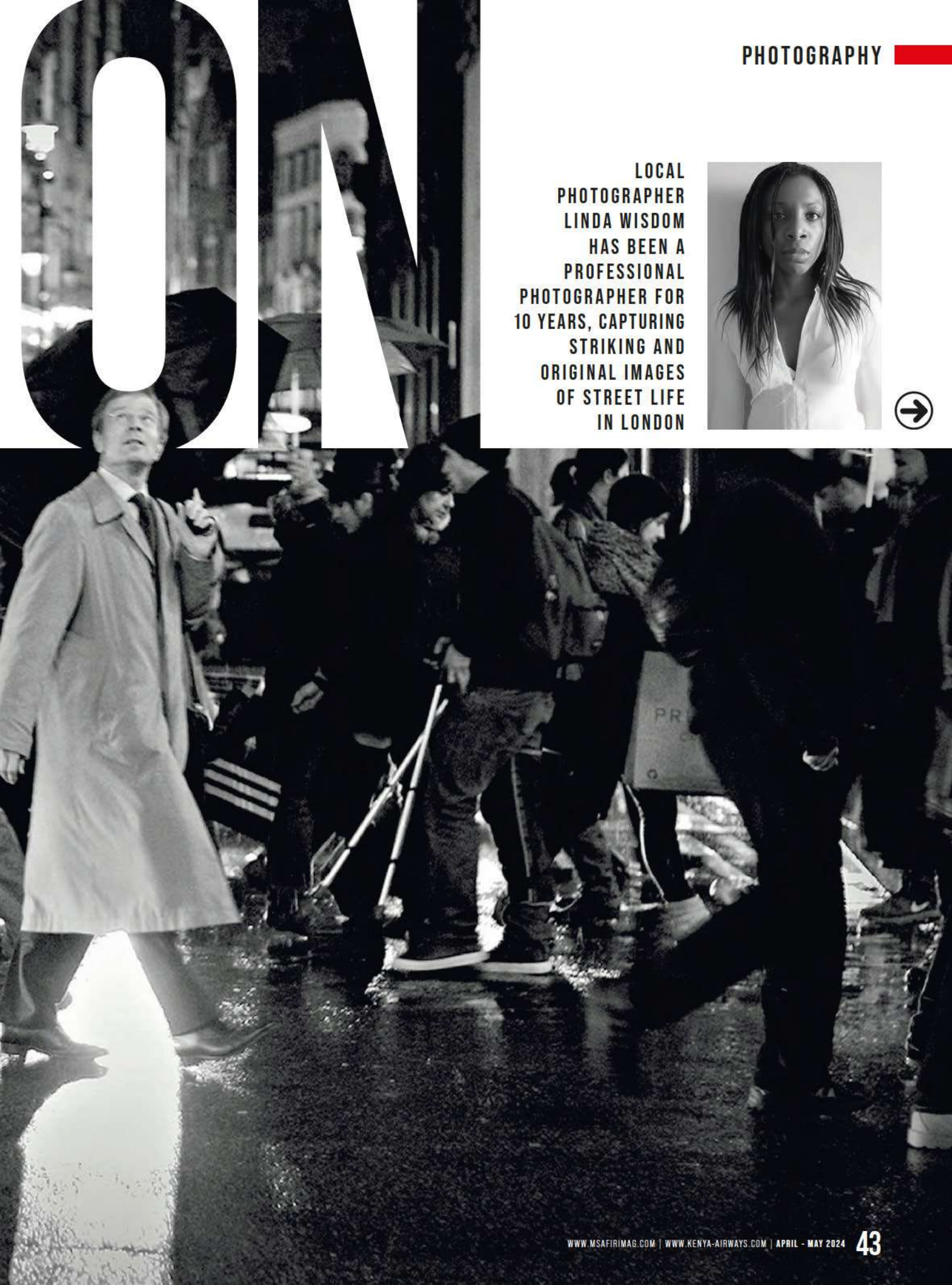


STREETS OF

# LONDON



LOCAL  
PHOTOGRAPHER  
LINDA WISDOM  
HAS BEEN A  
PROFESSIONAL  
PHOTOGRAPHER FOR  
10 YEARS, CAPTURING  
STRIKING AND  
ORIGINAL IMAGES  
OF STREET LIFE  
IN LONDON





## How long have you lived in London?

I was born and raised in Paddington, West London. It's very multicultural and full of interesting characters.

## What's your favourite part of the city?

Each area of the city has a different feel and look, so depending on what I want to photograph, this is where I will go. If I had to choose, I would say central London, as it is full of life. There is always something to photograph. Famous spots, such as Piccadilly and Soho, are all walkable and I enjoy taking the quieter back streets and finding new places, like quaint little alleyways that are off the beaten track.

**How did you become interested in street photography?** I didn't take up photography seriously until 2009 when, while working as an IT consultant, I taught myself how to use a professional DSLR camera. In the beginning, I would go out and just shoot anything that caught my eye as I walked around, but I noticed that most of my photos were of people. I started posting my images to photography sites like Flickr, and that is when I started getting good feedback from people online. It took off from there. I eventually changed careers to a professional photographer in 2014.

## What do you look for when taking pictures?

I try and capture candid moments in everyday life that are visually compelling in some way. A picture that you want to revisit and feel a certain way each time. Appealing subject(s), light and/or environmental elements are the key. All these things have to come together in the way of timing, composition and execution. It can be challenging but fun at the same time.

**What tips would you give amateur photographers looking to capture their own home towns?** I would say start with a small camera such as your smartphone, so you feel at ease with taking photos in public. Then just walk around a busy location and observe everyday life. When someone or something interesting captures your eye, try and capture the moment. Every town has interesting characters. Alternatively, try capturing stories, observe human emotion, body language and interactions. Also, study your environment. Look for strong geometric shapes and lines in the street. You can also experiment with the light, shadows and shade – these can work particularly well in black and white. ➔



### Top: ALDWYCH THEATRE

I shot this image outside the Aldwych Theatre, in the West End of London. During a stroll with my camera, I passed the theatre when it was showing the classic musical *Top Hat*. I thought to myself it would be funny if someone in a top hat walked past. Ironically, just a few moments later, a man in a bowler hat came by, which actually made the photo more humorous.

(Sony DSC-RX100, 14mm, f7.1, 1/400s, ISO 200)

### Above: COLUMBIA ROAD FLOWER MARKET, BETHNAL GREEN

Every weekend botanical lovers squish into this narrow market in the lively Brick Lane/Shoreditch area to buy a floral bargain. The crowded narrow space is a great opportunity for a street photographer to get up-close and personal candid shots like this one.

(Lumix G3, 16mm, f5.0, 1/60s, ISO 200)





**Right:**  
**ED'S EASY DINER, SOHO**  
Sadly this US-style diner closed two years ago, but it was always the highlight of a rainy night in Soho, as its neon lights illuminated the whole vicinity into a rainbow of colours. I had to stand in the rain to get the shot, but it was worth it.  
(Lumix G3, 20mm, f2, 1/40s, ISO 400)



**Right:**

**LOOK LEFT, BARBICAN**

This image was shot through a window on a rainy day in London. I love monochrome, geometric patterns and shapes, but I needed a human presence to enhance the frame, so I waited quite a long time for a suitable lone figure. It was worth it... the complementary umbrella matches the scene well.

(Panasonic Lumix DMC-G3, 29mm, f4.9, 1/200s)

**Top middle:**

**BRICK LANE, SHOREDITCH**

This area of East London is famous for its trendy 'hipster' fashion scene. I don't do colour street photography often, but when I do it's for a good reason, like this scene of matching yellows.

(Canon EOS 60D, 50mm, f8, 1/80s, ISO800)

**Below:**

**INTO THE LIGHT, CHARING CROSS**

I was admiring the sunlight streaming down this staircase at Charing Cross station, but didn't see anyone interesting, so turned off my camera and began to head home. Suddenly, I saw these three men running past me and I literally had seconds to turn my camera back on and just shoot. Luckily I captured this image with the light and the effects of the wind.

(Canon PowerShot G11, 13mm, f3.5, 1/125s, ISO 100)







**Above:**  
**BRITISH MUSEUM**

Shot from a viewing gallery inside the museum before the crowds arrived, the lone figure on this white staircase adds contrast to the minimalist scene.


(Canon EOS 60D, 41mm, f5.6, 1/40s, ISO400)

**Top:**  
**LONDON BRIDGE STATION**

I liked the geometry and lines of the staircases in this underground station. Taken using an iPhone.

**Left:**  
**BOND, JAMES BOND, WANDSWORTH**

Taken during a photo assignment at a gallery, the security guard wandered over and it reminded me of the intro to a James Bond movie.

(Lumix G3 camera, 15mm, f3.6, 1/80s, ISO 400) 



In April 2023, the National Football League (NFL), through the NFL Africa flagship, arrived at Kenya's Moi Sports Centre Kasarani Stadium with several renowned players in a bid to popularise American football not only in Kenya but throughout Africa. West African countries, in particular, have become hotbeds of emerging talent in the sport, with Ghana and Nigeria producing some of the finest players in the NFL. Kenya was next on the list...

The biggest Kenyan prospect to play in the NFL is Daniel Adongo, a former rugby player at Strathmore University, who moved to the USA where he played for the Indianapolis Colts as an outside linebacker until 2015.

The three-day camp in Kenya brought together 29 prospects aged 16-21, from African nations including Cameroon, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria and Senegal, to take part in an NFL Combine-style camp to showcase their skills. Participants competed for invites to the NFL International Combine, NFL International Player Pathway Program, or the opportunity to join the NFL Academy in the UK. During the Nairobi camp, there was also a showcase for NFL flag football (a high-octane, non-contact version of American football, where tackles are made by pulling off flags which all players wear on their hips), introducing the game to young people from 10 schools across Nairobi.

Alongside the showcase, the NFL hosted training clinics for local teachers and the Kenyan Federation of American Football (KFAF) to help develop coaching skills to deliver NFL flag football and expand participation across the country. The camp proved to be a catalyst for growing enthusiasm for the game in Kenya, a country that didn't have as much interest in the sport before.

"You would see young kids really excited about the game," says Kenya's national team head coach Chris Maina, who took part in the camp as a referee. "We have received so many requests from schools to help train their students. The camp really catapulted us to a whole new level and even the NFL guys themselves were really impressed. They saw so much potential and how much we understand the game, almost to their level."

The introduction of flag football has been rapidly growing in Africa, mainly because it is easier to introduce and cheaper to run – an important factor considering that resources for sports are often scarce across the continent.

George Alwanga, a former player and the president of KFAF, says they have witnessed increased demand and interest for the game. "We have intensified our recruitment efforts in more institutions. Flag football offers an easier setup with minimal initial investment, requiring smaller fields and fewer equipment needs." ➔

# TOUCH DOWN!

*Will American football be the next big thing in African sport? Timothy Olobulu*



**Right:**  
A friendly match  
between Kenya and  
Uganda played last  
year in Kampala





*meets Kenya's key players and movers in the game*



The sport kicked off in Kenya around 2013 at the University of Nairobi, with other learning institutions such as the Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT), Masinde Muliro University and the Multimedia University of Kenya taking its lead and embracing the sport. For most of the enthusiasts who have been drawn to the sport, it has been down to referral and curiosity to try it out.

"I used to play rugby at school," says Jason Ocholla, the current captain of the JKUAT team. "Randomly, I met the former American football school captain and he took me through some drills and I found the game more interesting and more engaging, so I decided to try it out."

The second-year student says he has no regrets switching to American football. "I love the drills and the thrills that come with it, and we are trying to pull more people in," he says.

It is the same story with Samuel Otieno, a former player at JKUAT who now plays for Simbas, a team comprised of alumni from the university.

"I have a friend who always talked about the sport and that is where some of the interest came from. I saw guys playing in school and I watched them for a while. I thought it was really interesting and I decided to try out and stuck till now," says Otieno.

KFAF boss Alwanga explains that the growth of the sport has been immense since they started and he believes that the visit by NFL's top brass affirms that they are headed in the right direction.

"With a focus on outreach to learning institutions, particularly through the Department of Sports, we have explained the game, its intricacies and its future," Alwanga says. "This outreach effort has resulted in successful demonstrations and the provision of start-up kits to interested universities.

"Currently, we have successfully implemented this approach in eight universities and five community-based teams, all actively participating in tournaments and leagues."

With flag football set to make its debut at the Olympic Games in 2028 in Los Angeles, interest in the



TIMOTHY OGBILLU



game has definitely grown, and this has served as a driving factor to inspire more youngsters to join in.

Edwin Otieno, one of the national team captains who is slowly transitioning to coaching, says the possibility of playing at the Olympic Games has encouraged more players to try out and, at the same time, inspired existing players to double their efforts.

“The NFL coming to Kenya gave us some spark and the expected debut at the Olympic Games has also built more interest. This is like a vision we are looking forward to, and going forward there is more hope for Kenya,” says Otieno. “We learnt a lot from the camp in Nairobi and it had a huge impact not just for new players, but some of us who have been here for a while.”

Ocholla, who will have finished university by the time the Olympic Games are here, says he is sticking with the sport.

“I am definitely not dropping American football once I am done with school. There are several clubs, like the Simbas, which have been formed by ex-students and my plan is to keep playing. Being at the Olympic Games is the ultimate dream and I want to keep working with the hope that I can be one of the record breakers for our country,” says the 21-year-old.

For the KFAF, as well as national team coaches, the ambition now is to grow the sport further and increase its reach across the country.

“The American Football Federation in Kenya is committed to fostering the growth of the sport, both in the traditional tackle format and the emerging flag football variant,” explains Alwanga. “We are actively working towards overcoming the challenges through strategic partnerships, targeted fundraising and collaborative efforts with the local and international sports community.”

His sentiments are shared by coach Maina: “The future is really bright, especially if we put things in order. We have tremendous talent and skill sets in Kenya that we can take advantage of. I believe that by the time we get to the Olympics in 2028, we will have made so many strides, especially with the involvement of the NFL with their camps.”

One of the biggest stumbling blocks faced is equipment, with many teams relying on donations from abroad.

“Securing resources for development purposes remains a primary concern,” says Alwanga. “As a new sport, we face the daunting task of establishing game education locally, including certification for coaching and refereeing, from scratch. The growing number of teams requires high-level coaching expertise, which is currently lacking.

“Additionally, for tackle football, the scarcity of locally available equipment is a significant hurdle, and



TIMOTHY OLOGBILI

we currently rely on donations from high schools and colleges in the USA.”

Ocholla says the challenge of equipment and training space has been huge, especially as they have to share their field with rugby compatriots.

“With growing interest, there will always be a need for more space to train in, and more equipment will also be needed. The university has promised to help,” he says.

For the wider national team, all eyes are pegged on competing in global competitions next year, as they await a framework that will include the pathway to qualification for Los Angeles 2028. Coach Maina says they hope to receive more international exposure to help the team improve. Last year, they participated in two friendly matches against Uganda and they hope to play more.

“More games means more experience and more exposure and, in this way, we can improve our national team,” Maina says. 📷

Left: Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) player Michael Odhiambo

Above: JKUAT American football players pose for a group photo during a training session

## WHO DOES WHAT?

A quick guide to American football positions

### OFFENCE

<b>Quarterback (QB):</b>	Passes or hands off the ball, leads the offence
<b>Running Back (RB):</b>	Carries the ball, catches passes, helps block
<b>Wide Receiver (WR):</b>	Catches passes from the quarterback
<b>Tight End (TE):</b>	Blocks and catches passes
<b>Offensive Line (OL):</b>	Blocks to protect the quarterback and create running lanes

### DEFENCE

<b>Defensive Line (DL):</b>	Stops the run and rushes the quarterback
<b>Linebacker (LB):</b>	Stops the run, blitzes, and covers receiver
<b>Defensive Back (DB):</b>	Covers receivers and defends against pass plays







# A business from beads

**Peter Muiruri reports on the Kenyan government's programme to support marginalised communities and small enterprises – a scheme that not only boosts the country's economy from the ground up, but also improves the living standards of local people and preserves Kenya's rich cultural heritage**



**W**hen President William Ruto's government came to power in 2022, it sought to stimulate economic growth from the ground up through the Bottom-up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA). Among other things, the programme is designed to create jobs in the lower echelons of society by supporting small enterprises.

The Ministry of Gender, Culture, Arts and Heritage has mapped about 10,000 social groups in some of Kenya's marginalised counties. The groups are engaged in income-generating activities, such as basket weaving, carving cultural artefacts and creating ornamental products.

"We register individuals and groups, giving them certificates of recognition and accreditation as bona fide cultural practitioners," says Ummi Bashir, Principal Secretary in charge of culture. "We also give them exposure, networking and marketing opportunities by writing introductory letters to diplomatic missions for assistance."

During Covid-19, the government distributed KSh100 million to qualifying artists as a stimulus package to jumpstart careers that were affected by the pandemic. The government plans to add these artisans to the online government platform e-Citizen where they can conveniently access all types of services.

"The initiatives are handy in eliminating middlemen who are exploiting the practitioners. We've put in place several policies and legislative bills to enhance the creative industry," says Bashir.

## USHANGA, THE MAASAI BEADS

At Kisamis shopping centre in Kajiado county, Jane

Naisimoi leads a group of women in making the well-known beaded Maasai ornaments. Passing the thin thread that holds the beads together through small holes is an intricate process. The intermittent breeze from the nearby Ngong Hills hardly makes it easier for these women. "Our backs ache. We strain our eyes. We prick our fingers with the needles," says Naisimoi. But they persevere, knowing their work will supplement their families' incomes.

"These women have been able to educate their children through beading," explains Naisimoi. "Our children have gone through high school and some to the university. We have single mothers who had no way of putting food on the table, were it not for this small business."

In 2008, the women in the region came together to form a self-help group, Friends of Community, now an affiliate of the umbrella beading organisation Ushanga Kenya. *Ushanga* is Swahili for 'beads' and, according to UNESCO, Ushanga "seeks to transform the traditional ornamental beadmaking by women among the [Maasai and related indigenous communities] into viable enterprises". Through skills transfer, the younger generation of Maasai women will ensure the trade remains the community focal point for years to come.

Group members have travelled to countries such as the United Arab Emirates and Serbia to boost their sales. "It is all about building the capacity of the women by exposing them to the global market. We are happy that the men in the Maasai community have embraced such business enterprises run by women, some of them lending money to them. With climate change, cattle keeping for these men is being affected and the new



**Left:** Beadwork is a striking feature of Kenyan cultural heritage – from the Maasai to the Samburu and Turkana – and supports numerous small enterprises

**Above:** Kenya's Culture and Heritage Principal Secretary Ummi Bashir





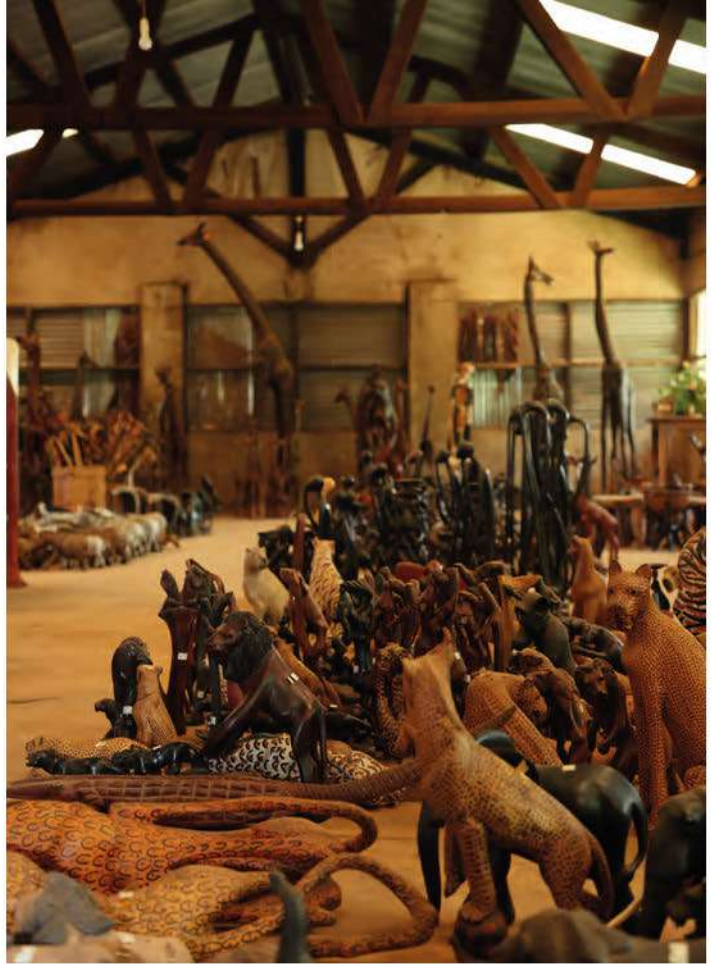




**Left:**  
As well as animals, Kamba carving frequently depicts human subjects and ceremonial masks

**Above:**  
Mined from quarries in the Tabaka Hills, Kisii soapstone is one of the softest known minerals

**Right:**  
A menagerie in wood at a Kenyan curio market



normal is where Maasai women work to boost family income,” says Naisimoi.

Joseph Ole Saoli, the deputy programme director in charge of marketing at the Ministry of Culture, says the government is putting in place measures to expose the women to a wider market by creating a production centre in the Maasai Mara and establishing digital cafés where they can upload their products to tap the online market.

“The app will not only link them to similar groups for a learning experience, but payments can be paid directly to their bank account from any location on earth. Beadwork is part of the rich Maasai culture that we must promote and safeguard,” says Saoli.

## KISII SOAPSTONE

The hilly terrain of Kisii in western Kenya is breathtaking... farmlands lined with banana trees, corn and sugarcane dot the landscape. It is one of Kenya’s bread baskets, with the agricultural produce here feeding millions, including those living in Nairobi.

In the midst of the food production business, however, another local industry thrives. At Tabaka, a small outpost a few kilometres from the region’s administrative capital Kisii, men and women toil to mine and carve soapstone into statues and animals of various sizes and shapes that are then shipped to other urban centres and even abroad.

The soapstone industry has changed the livelihoods of thousands in the region with successive generations learning the skills from elders. Jomo Arungo is the

chairman of Kisii Soapstone Carvers Cooperative Society, a group that helps local traders pool their resources. The society started in the early 1980s and has grown from 60 members to more than 400. This includes about 70 women who smooth, decorate, oil and pack the carvings for onward shipment. A few of them have also learnt how to carve the stones.

Arungo came to Tabaka 42 years ago, at the age of 20, eager to make a living in the labour-intensive industry. He has educated his children, some up to university level, from the proceeds of carving.

“I come from this area so it was only natural that I joined the soapstone carving business,” says Arungo. “You inherit the craft from your parents or from those who know it. Actually, my father was in this business before I was born.”

During peak periods, the group exports some of the most popular carvings, such as wildlife, flower vases, dishes and toys, to Japan, Australia, the United States and some European countries. A trader can earn KSh5000 from the combined shipment.

Since Arungo and his fellow artisans live in rural areas with little access to marketing strategies, they would like the government to help them access more of the local and international markets.

“They can facilitate some of our members to travel and scout for business, both in Kenya’s major towns and abroad. We also need help to deal with the middlemen who distort the prices leading to lower earnings,” he says. ➔





ALL IMAGES: STATE DEPARTMENT FOR CULTURE, THE ARTS & HERITAGE

**Left:** A Swahili woman embroidering a Lamu hat  
**Above:** The art of making jewelled hats in Lamu dates back to the 1730s  
**Right:** Local woods used for Kamba carving include ebony and rosewood

### LAMU'S JEWELLED HATS

Each year, thousands of tourists flock to East Africa's beaches for 'sun, sea and sand'. But the coastal region also boasts a cultural heritage spanning centuries. In Lamu, the oldest surviving town in East Africa, men have long donned a special hat known in Swahili as *Kofia ya vito* (jewelled hat). An embroidered head covering popular with Muslim men, it is now spreading beyond the confines of Islam.

"It is a status symbol among local men, especially those going to prayers or other special occasions. For Muslim men, it can also be a sign of submission. It represents a custom that has been here for ages," says Mwenje Ali Mohammed, who has been the curator at Lamu Museum for 25 years.

The popularity of the hat has spurred yet another grassroots industry where local men and women produce customised hats for their clients. Currently, there are plans to organise them into a formal group so that they can get government sponsorship and connect with other markets.

Each hat, according to Mohammed, involves a personal touch from the artisan. Some use a sharp object, such as a porcupine quill, to perforate the hat with small holes that allow it to 'breathe'. Others smooth the hat using a seashell to make it flat.

A well-finished hat can take up to three months to make and can fetch KSh20,000, with some selling for as much as Ksh50,000. Good quality hats can last for around 15 to 20 years.

"Producing the hats has become a source of livelihood for local tailors who cut the cloth that

makes the base of the hat. Another artisan creates the patterns, while women do the fine job of embroidering the hats with coloured thread to give them their unique appearance. Then the original tailor joins the pieces together," says Mohammed.


Despite the enormous potential for the business, locals are up against an influx of cheap, imported, machine-made hats. "Some foreigners are making cheap replicas of the hats with locals buying them after confusing them with the more durable ones from local artisans," says Mohammed.

### AKAMBA HANDICRAFTS

For more than 50 years, the Kamba carvings have cut a niche among Kenya's famous cultural artefacts. Like the Kisii soapstone, carvings from the Kamba community come in various sizes and shapes – from life-size giraffes to miniature elephants.

Made mostly from rosewood and ebony, the carvings are found in almost every tourist shop in Kenya and, over the years, have supported a large cast of artisans and their families.

Esther Gakonyo, the manager at Akamba Handicraft Industry Cooperative Society in Mombasa, says the organisation has been safeguarding members' interests since the 1970s with current membership of over 600.

"The cooperative has helped them in marketing the carvings rather than each individual selling on his own. I ensure members get their dues on time," says Gakonyo. "The operations may look small, but this is their main source of livelihood." 





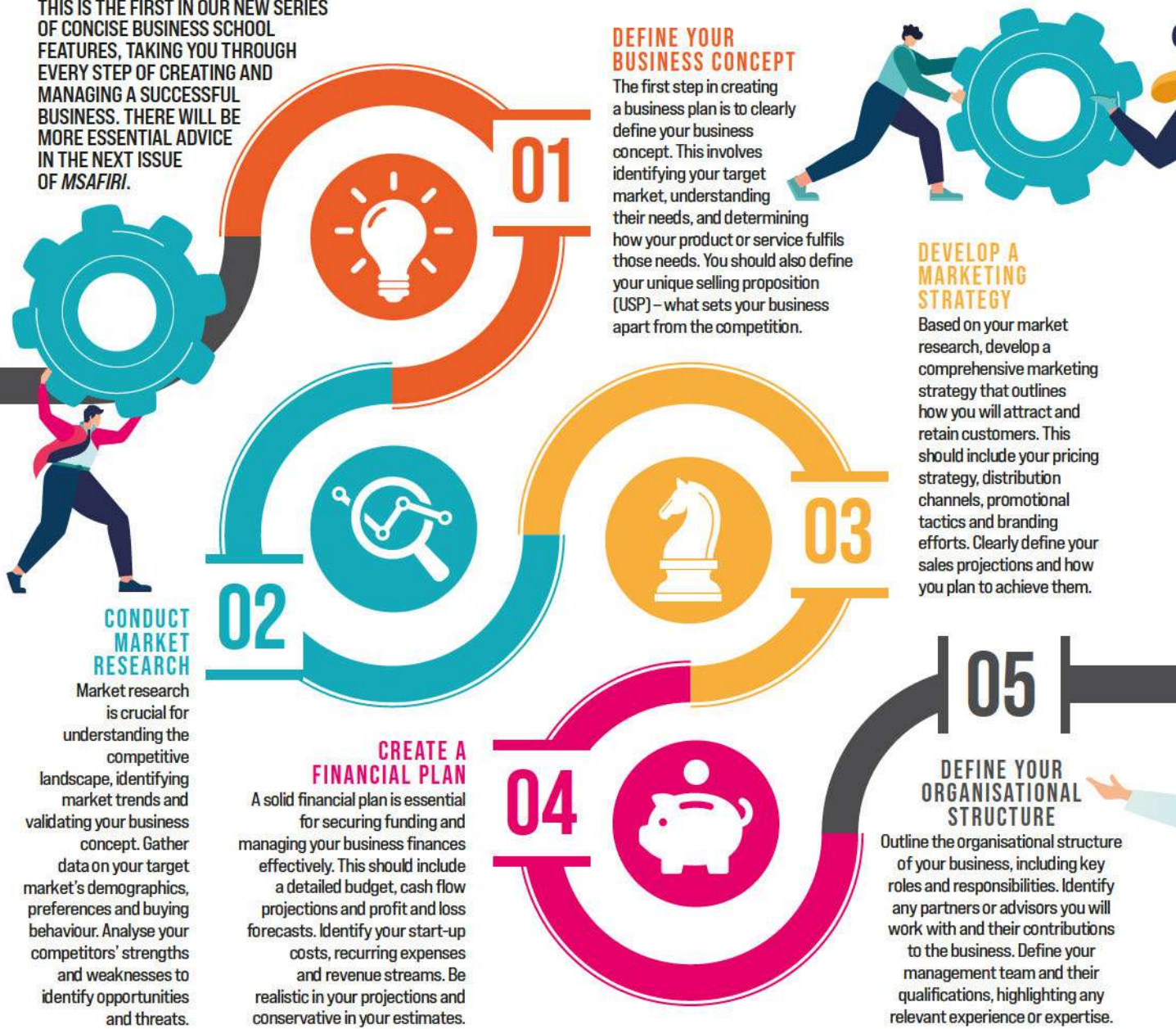
192



# How to write an effective

A well-crafted business plan serves as a roadmap for entrepreneurs, guiding them through the objectives and strategies but also demonstrates its viability to potential investors, partners

THIS IS THE FIRST IN OUR NEW SERIES OF CONCISE BUSINESS SCHOOL FEATURES, TAKING YOU THROUGH EVERY STEP OF CREATING AND MANAGING A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS. THERE WILL BE MORE ESSENTIAL ADVICE IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF *MSAFIRI*.



## DEFINE YOUR BUSINESS CONCEPT

The first step in creating a business plan is to clearly define your business concept. This involves identifying your target market, understanding their needs, and determining how your product or service fulfils those needs. You should also define your unique selling proposition (USP) – what sets your business apart from the competition.

## DEVELOP A MARKETING STRATEGY

Based on your market research, develop a comprehensive marketing strategy that outlines how you will attract and retain customers. This should include your pricing strategy, distribution channels, promotional tactics and branding efforts. Clearly define your sales projections and how you plan to achieve them.

## 02

### CONDUCT MARKET RESEARCH

Market research is crucial for understanding the competitive landscape, identifying market trends and validating your business concept. Gather data on your target market's demographics, preferences and buying behaviour. Analyse your competitors' strengths and weaknesses to identify opportunities and threats.

## 04

### CREATE A FINANCIAL PLAN

A solid financial plan is essential for securing funding and managing your business finances effectively. This should include a detailed budget, cash flow projections and profit and loss forecasts. Identify your start-up costs, recurring expenses and revenue streams. Be realistic in your projections and conservative in your estimates.

## 03

## 05

### DEFINE YOUR ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Outline the organisational structure of your business, including key roles and responsibilities. Identify any partners or advisors you will work with and their contributions to the business. Define your management team and their qualifications, highlighting any relevant experience or expertise.



# BUSINESS PLAN

complexities of starting and managing a successful venture. It not only outlines the company's and stakeholders. Read on for 10 essential steps to create a plan for business success.



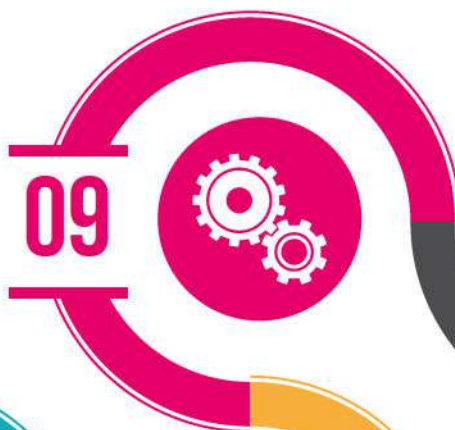
## OUTLINE YOUR PRODUCTS OR SERVICES

Provide detailed information about your products or services, including their features, benefits and unique selling points. Describe how your offerings meet the needs of your target market and address any pain points or challenges they may have. Include photos, prototypes or samples if applicable to showcase your offerings.



## INCLUDE AN OPERATIONS PLAN

Outline the operational aspects of your business, including your production process, supply chain management and logistics. Describe your facilities, equipment and technology requirements, as well as any regulatory or compliance considerations. Detail your staffing plan, including hiring timelines and training programmes.



## PROVIDE A RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

Identify potential risks and challenges that could impact your business, such as market volatility, competition or regulatory changes. Develop a risk management plan that outlines how you will mitigate these risks and protect your business interests. This may include contingency plans and insurance coverage.



## DETAIL YOUR SALES AND MARKETING STRATEGY

Expand on the marketing strategy outlined earlier, detailing how you will reach and engage your target audience. Identify your sales channels, such as direct sales, online sales, or partnerships with retailers. Outline your advertising, PR and digital marketing efforts, including any specific campaigns or initiatives you plan to launch.



## WRITE YOUR EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The executive summary is a concise overview of your entire business plan, summarising the key points and highlighting the most important aspects of your business. It should provide a compelling overview of your business concept, market opportunity, competitive advantage and financial projections. Keep it clear, concise and compelling to grab the reader's attention.





Executive summary for a fictional company:

# GREENTECH SOLUTIONS

## INTRODUCTION:

GreenTech Solutions is a pioneering renewable energy company dedicated to revolutionising the way we power our world. Our innovative approach combines cutting-edge technology with a commitment to sustainability, offering clean energy solutions that are both environmentally friendly and economically viable.

## MARKET OPPORTUNITY:

With increasing global concerns about climate change and the push for cleaner, more sustainable energy sources, the renewable energy market is experiencing rapid growth. GreenTech Solutions is uniquely positioned to capitalise on this opportunity by delivering innovative renewable energy solutions to meet the growing demand.

## UNIQUE SELLING PROPOSITION (USP):

What sets GreenTech Solutions apart is our proprietary technology that maximises energy efficiency and harnesses renewable resources such as solar, wind

and hydroelectric power. Our solutions are not only environmentally friendly but also cost-effective, offering significant savings for our clients while reducing their carbon footprint.

## KEY OBJECTIVES:

Our primary objectives are to:

- Establish ourselves as a leader in the renewable energy industry.
- Expand our market presence and reach new customers.
- Drive innovation through ongoing research and development initiatives.
- Achieve profitability while maintaining a commitment to sustainability.

## MARKETING STRATEGY:

Our marketing strategy focuses on targeted outreach to key stakeholders, including government agencies, businesses and consumers. We will leverage digital marketing channels, industry partnerships and participation in trade shows and conferences to raise awareness of our brand and showcase our innovative solutions.

## FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS:

Based on conservative estimates and market research, we project steady revenue growth over the next three years, reaching US\$10 million in annual revenue by the end of Year 3. Our financial projections are supported by a detailed analysis of costs, pricing strategies and sales forecasts.

## TEAM:

Our leadership team brings together decades of experience in renewable energy, technology development and business management. With a proven track record of success, we are confident in our ability to execute our business plan and deliver results for our stakeholders.

## CONCLUSION:

GreenTech Solutions is poised to capitalise on the tremendous opportunities in the renewable energy market. With our innovative technology, strategic marketing approach and experienced team, we are well positioned to become a leader in the industry and drive positive change for the planet.

## 4 COMMON MISTAKES WHEN WRITING A BUSINESS PLAN

### 1 LACK OF RESEARCH

One of the most common mistakes is failing to conduct thorough market research. Without a solid understanding of the market landscape, including customer demographics, competitors and industry trends, the business plan may lack credibility and fail to address potential challenges.


### 2 UNREALISTIC FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS

While it's natural to be optimistic about the potential success of your business, investors and lenders expect to see conservative and well-supported financial forecasts. Failing to provide realistic projections can erode trust and credibility.

### 3 LACK OF CLARITY AND CONCISENESS

A business plan should be clear, concise and easy to understand. Unfortunately, many people make the mistake of including unnecessary details, jargon or technical language that can confuse readers. It's important to communicate your ideas effectively and avoid unnecessary complexity.

### 4 LACK OF FOCUS ON THE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The executive summary is often the first section of the business plan that readers will see. Unfortunately, many people make the mistake of treating it as an afterthought or failing to make it compelling and engaging. A strong executive summary should succinctly summarise the key points of the business plan and capture the reader's attention from the start. 



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\*ATIDI, previously known as the African Trade Insurance Agency (ATI), was founded in 2001 by African states to cover trade and investment risks of companies doing business in Africa.





This pic: A shore thing... approaching Entebbe from Lake Victoria

# 48 HOURS IN ENTEBBE



FROM BOTANIC GARDENS TO BUSTLING MARKETS AND WILDLIFE SANCTUARIES, DISCOVER HOW TO SPEND TWO DAYS IN AND AROUND ENTEBBE

WORDS: WENDY WATTA

Spread along the shores of Lake Victoria and home to Uganda's international airport, Entebbe is a vibrant city where the fronds of banana trees contrast with the red-roofed brick houses. During weekends, Kampalans drive here to enjoy the beaches and encounter wildlife. Here's our guide to help you make the most of two days here...



Fly Nairobi to Entebbe. Check out the latest deals at: [kenya-airways.com](http://kenya-airways.com)

This pic: Reeds from the shores of Lake Victoria are used in everything from roof thatching to basket weaving

DENNIS DIATEL / SHUTTERSTOCK







TOP TIP



DAY ONE

Accommodation is available on **Ngamba Island** in simple adobe huts overlooking the water where you can spend the night. Otherwise, it's at least a half-day excursion.

## Island-hopping MORNING

After breakfast at your hotel, head to Nakiwogo Ferry Dock for the 50-minute boat trip to Ngamba Island Chimpanzee Sanctuary ([ngambaisland.org](http://ngambaisland.org)). Home to around 50 orphaned and rescued chimpanzees, the sanctuary is a great opportunity to learn about their behaviour and social life, as well as the circumstances that led them to the island. By visiting, you support their ongoing protection. Feeding sessions take place at 11am and 2:30pm, when you can enjoy an excellent view of the chimps from a raised platform. They emerge from the trees in response to calls from the carer. Scooping a handful of chopped-up pineapple, she hurls them over the fence – some of the chimps catch the juicy chunks in mid-air; others stand upright waving their hands

in the air, hoping to be noticed like students in a classroom. There's a hierarchy of who should be served first, which leads to a lot of politicking... some chimps, lower down the pecking order, are bullied into handing over their food, but all eventually get fed. Chimps are meant to be living in large areas of tropical forest with plenty of room to roam, so the Chimpanzee Sanctuary & Wildlife Conservation Trust run campaigns to raise awareness of the plight of these endangered apes.



## AFTERNOON

An archipelago of 84 islands, the Ssesse Islands are a mixture of uninhabited islets, fishing communities and private island hideaways with romantic luxury resorts, such as Brovad Sands Lodge ([brovadsandslodge.com](http://brovadsandslodge.com)). Named after the tsetse flies that used to infest the area, the islands' pristine palm-fringed shores and clear blue waters are now more reminiscent of the Indian Ocean. Rent a bicycle or quad bike to explore the villages, meeting the



DEINIS DATIEL / SHUTTERSTOCK

locals and tucking into freshly caught Nile perch grilled on an open fire. You might spot vervet monkeys and, if you're extremely lucky, the shy, aquatic antelope known as the sitatunga antelope.



SCHUSTERRAUER.COM / SHUTTERSTOCK

**Above:** Relaxing at a restaurant by the lakeside

**Top:** Ngamba Island Chimpanzee Sanctuary

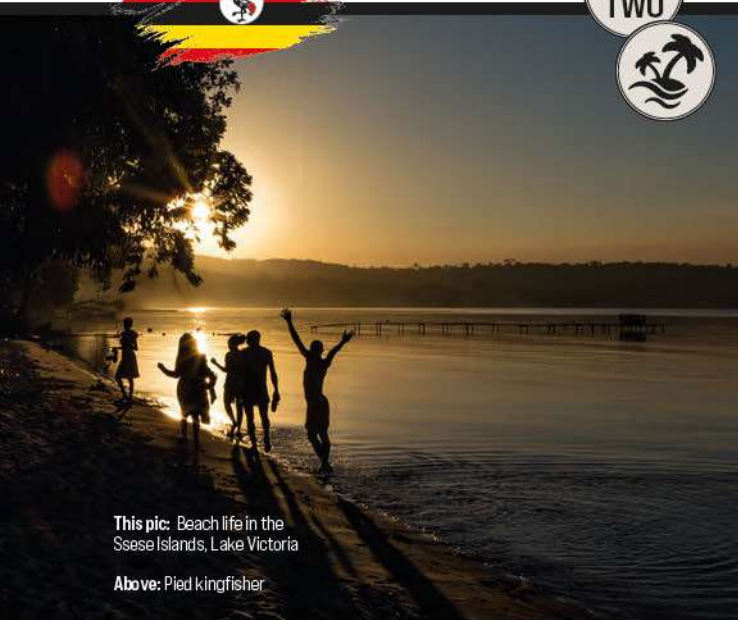
**Right:** Wildlife and culture are everywhere you look in and around Entebbe

TOP TIP

**Brovad Sands** has its own boat, so you can call ahead to arrange for pick-up and excursions. If travelling from Entebbe, you can also catch the ferry at the dock in Nakiwogo, but it takes three hours to sail to Kalangala in the Ssesse Islands, so this would ideally be a day or overnight trip.







This pic: Beach life in the Sese Islands, Lake Victoria

Above: Pied kingfisher

### Wildlife and beaches MORNING

For breakfast, head to Nakiwogo Market for local street food. If you'd prefer a more laid-back spot, check out Cafe Phileo at the Calvary Chapel – it was opened in 2007 by Pastor Craig and his wife Loren, and the staff are always really friendly. They serve excellent coffee and Rolex (see right for 8 tasty treats to try).

Spend the rest of your morning strolling around Entebbe Botanical Garden – used as a backdrop in the original 1940s *Tarzan* film. Nestled along the shores of Lake Victoria, the

40-hectare gardens were established in 1898 and showcase the rich biodiversity of Uganda's flora, including a rainforest zone where you may well spot black and white colobus monkeys. The gardens are also home to numerous bird species, from Verreaux's eagle owl to tiny, jewel-like sunbirds.

Alternatively, head to the Uganda Wildlife Conservation Education Centre ([uwec.org](http://uwec.org)), also known as Entebbe Zoo, where you can become a keeper for the day for behind-the-scenes encounters with elephants, giraffes and rhinos. Originally founded in the 1950s to care for injured and orphaned wildlife, the centre has grown to



This pic: Shades of green at Entebbe's exuberant botanical gardens



become a showcase for African wildlife and its conservation. Large enclosures are home to a wide range of species from chimpanzee and Patas monkey to serval, giant forest hog and Nile crocodile.



African jacana, or lily-trotter



Red-chested sunbird

## AFTERNOON

A popular hangout is 2 Friends Beach Hotel ([2friendshotel.com](http://2friendshotel.com)) located right on the shoreline of Lake Victoria, just a 10-minute drive from the airport. It's the perfect spot to while away your afternoon on a deckchair with an ice-cold Nile Special beer, watching the fishermen drift past in their wooden dugouts, and the pied kingfishers hovering above the surface, before they dive into the lake headfirst to catch fish. On weekends, revellers from Kampala flock here to drink and dance on the sandy beach. The sunsets alone are worth the trip.



Adding the finishing touches to a hand-woven basket lid



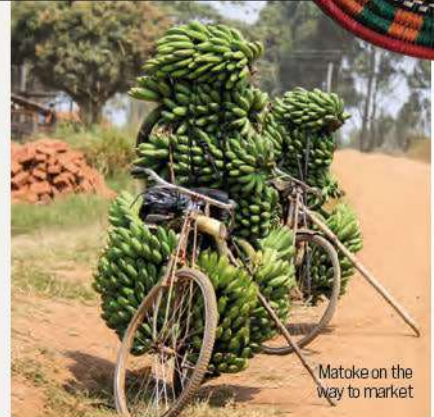
Squeeze in a shopping spree at **Entebbe Craft Village**, which is right across from Victoria Mall. Here, you'll find souvenirs like soapstone and wood carvings, jewellery, colourful clothing, paintings and more.



## 8 TASTY TREATS TO TRY



- **Rolex**: an omelette rolled inside a chapati, best straight off the pan.
- **Groundnut sauce (or G-nut sauce)**: Served with many local dishes.
- **Luwombo**: A stew with chicken, beef or fish and vegetables wrapped in a banana leaf then steamed for hours. Often served with groundnut sauce.
- **Matoke**: Green banana served either in a stew or mashed into a ball. A variant dish is Katogo, with beef or beans added to the stew.
- **Nsenene**: A seasonal snack of fried grasshopper.



Matoke on the way to market



Rolex – must try street food

- **Muchomo**: Roasted meat on a skewer.
- **Kikomando**: Sliced chapati and bean stew, sometimes topped with avocado.
- **Tilapia or Nile Perch**: Fresh fish straight from the lake and typically served either deep-fried or in a thick tomato gravy.



Crispy-skinned fried tilapia



## Getting there and around

Entebbe is reasonably compact, so if you can brave the heat, you can walk to some of the suggested attractions. Otherwise, hail a boda boda (motorbike taxi) for a cheap and convenient way of getting around. If you know the exact route you're taking, you can also hop on a matatu (public minivan). The safest, but most expensive, option is to hire a private taxi. 🚗



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## Guess where...

At 1.36km long with a mammoth 90m-high pylon in the middle, this cable-stayed bridge – the first of its kind in this region – connects two districts of one of Africa’s most populous cities. Built in 2013 at the cost of US\$190m, the bridge is one of the most photographed landmarks in the city, while its wide walkways make it popular with joggers. But in which Kenya Airways destination is it?

 TURN TO PAGE 80 FOR THE ANSWER

## KQ contents

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Head to Luangwa, Zambia





## KQ CARGO EXPANDS ROUTE NETWORK

AIRLINE LAUNCHES FREIGHTER SERVICE BETWEEN NAIROBI, UAE AND SOMALIA



KQ Cargo has launched direct flights between Nairobi and Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates. The four-times-a-week service is designed to strengthen trade relations between the UAE and Africa, tapping into the significant demand for cargo services within the region.

Allan Kilavuka, group managing director and CEO of KQ, said: "The United Arab Emirates is ranked among

the top exports and imports trading partner for Kenya and other African countries. This trade constitutes around 10 per cent of UAE's total trade.

"The launch of KQ Cargo flights from Sharjah to African cities is therefore significant in tapping into this growing demand that will catalyse business growth within the Middle East and Africa."

To commemorate the route expansion, Sharjah Airport Authority

(SAA) hosted a reception at Sharjah Airport, graced by HE Ali Salim Al Midfa, chair of SAA; Juliet Wambui Kabeu, chargé d'affaires, Dubai; Kilavuka and key directors and representatives from KQ and SAA.

Additionally, Kenya Airways has launched a weekly direct cargo flight between Sharjah and Mogadishu in Somalia. KQ expects the service, launched in February, to grow to twice weekly in April.

The airline recently increased its freighter capacities with the entry into service of a B737-800F aircraft, which offers an extended range, connecting vital cargo hubs and opening up new opportunities for cargo services in an ever-evolving market. The freighter will operate both routes.

"Our new Boeing 737-800 freighter offers increased cargo capacity, a range of up to seven hours out of Sharjah to destinations across Africa and is available for charters," added Kilavuka.

According to KQ Cargo director Dick Muriangi, the new route aligns with the airline's mission of propelling Africa's prosperity by connecting its people, cultures and markets and strengthening its position as Africa's preferred freight carrier.

"We are delighted to expand our world-class logistics service to underserved markets



## PASSENGER FLIGHTS TO MOGADISHU RESUME

The cargo route expansion news comes on the back of the resumption of direct passenger flights between Nairobi and Mogadishu. KQ now flies three times a week between the two destinations. The route was temporarily halted due to the Covid-19 pandemic. "The [re-]introduction of three-times-weekly flights will undoubtedly enhance trade and economic opportunities between our connected regions, stimulate tourism, and strengthen cultural and social ties, said KQ's CEO Allan Kilavuka.





with a solid product, and we believe in having a direct service complemented by Dubai's trader, transit, humanitarian and project-driven traffic," he said.

"The direct route between UAE and Somalia [services the] huge demand for air freight transportation, particularly high-tech consumer goods, automotive parts, project cargo and clothing, which are the most frequently flown goods on the route.

"Kenya Airways has the expertise in the region, and our B737-800F's apt capacity would be the ideal mix over the long term."

KQ Cargo has partnered with Global GSA Cargo, a global cargo sales and service agent based out of the UAE, to service the Sharjah–Mogadishu route.

Kannan Nachiappan, CEO of Global GSA Cargo, said the direct connection between UAE, a primary gateway to Africa, and Somalia offers customers more capacity, cuts transit times and reduces costs.

**Opposite, top:** Kenya Airways top leadership, alongside UAE Civil Aviation and Sharjah airport officials, officiate the launch

**Opposite, bottom:** KQ CEO Allan Kilavuka (left) greets Kenya's CS for Roads and Transport, Hon. Kipchumba Murkomen

**Below:** Kilavuka leads government officials as they prepare to flag off the aircraft; Passengers board the inaugural flight



## CODESHARE NEWS

### KQ EXTENDS REACH IN EUROPE, THE US AND VIETNAM

Kenya Airways has signed a codeshare agreement with Air Europa, the third-largest Spanish carrier, to extend its reach in Europe and the US. The agreement will allow Kenya Airways guests to connect via Amsterdam with Air Europa flights to Madrid and on to Palma de Mallorca, New York and Miami.

Martin Gitonga, Kenya Airways' head of Network Planning and Alliances, said: "We are excited about this partnership as it will provide our guests with more convenient travel options to Europe and the US. Air Europa has been our partner under the SkyTeam Alliance, and this agreement allows us to collaborate more for the mutual benefit of our guests giving them more access and connectivity."

Additionally, KQ has renewed its codeshare partnership with Vietnam Airlines, following the resumption of its service to Bangkok last November. The agreement enables guests to connect to Hanoi and Saigon in Vietnam via Kenya Airways' thrice-weekly service to Thailand's capital.

**Above, right (top to bottom):** Gran Via, Madrid; Miami Beach, Florida; Old Quarter, Vietnam

**Below:** Vietnam Airlines and KQ tailfins







## FLIGHT NEWS

### KQ ADDS TWO NEW DESTINATIONS AND INCREASES CAPACITY TO FIVE MORE

As of 25 March, Kenya Airways now flies five times a week – on Monday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday – to **Eldoret** in west Kenya.

From 14 June, KQ will commence flying to **Maputo**, Mozambique. The service will operate three times a week, on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday.

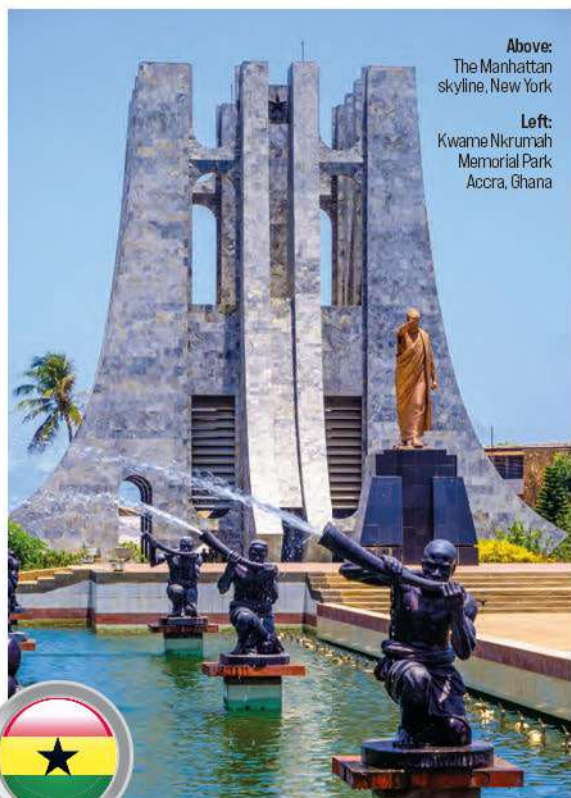
Starting on 15 June, KQ's **New York** service will increase from seven flights per week to nine. The new flights will operate on Thursday and Saturday.

From 5 July, the number of weekly flights to **Paris** will also increase by two to nine, to cater for the expected extra demand during the Olympics. The

additional frequencies will run on Friday and Sunday.

On the Africa front, **Lagos**, Nigeria, will receive an additional weekly flight (on Saturday) starting 1 April, with a further two frequencies (Monday and Thursday) commencing 3 June. Meanwhile, capacity on the four weekly flights to **Accra**, Ghana, and onward to **Freetown**, Sierra Leone, will increase thanks to the deployment of the B787-8 Dreamliner on this route, effective 2 June.

Julius Thairu, chief commercial and customer officer at KQ, said the moves were “in response to the steady recovery and demand for air travel”.



**Above:**  
The Manhattan skyline, New York

**Left:**  
Kwame Nkrumah Memorial Park, Accra, Ghana





## Getting in the swing

### KQ SPONSORS MAGICAL KENYA OPEN AND GOLF FOR THE DISABLED

Kenya Airways partnered with Kenya Open Golf (KOG) as the official airline partner for the recent Magical Kenya Open, hosted at Muthaiga Golf Club in Nairobi. Preceding the Open itself, KOG held Africa's first Golf for the Disabled (G4D) tournament, part of Kenya's commitment to embracing and promoting inclusivity in golf, which was also sponsored by KQ.

Commenting on the partnership, Kenya Airways' group managing director and CEO Allan Kilavuka said the airline is committed to supporting people with disabilities.

"Programmes like G4D are vital for offering athletes with disabilities the opportunity to showcase their talent and sports fans a chance to experience the joy of golf and sports," he said.

"Our in-kind sponsorship will provide seamless travel experiences for G4D golfers, their caddies, event participants, tourists and spectators."



KQ provided the G4D golfers and their caddies with five return tickets and free carriage of their golf bags. The airline also flew European Tour Group officials and offered discounted tickets to the over 200 players and caddies participating at the DP World Tour destinations, of which Magical Kenya Open is a part.

As well as supporting golf in Kenya, the tournament benefits local businesses and gives the country international visibility.

**Above:** Staff and guests capture the fly-past by a KQ freighter aircraft; Kenya's CS for Youth Affairs, Creative Economy and Sports, Hon. Ababu Namwamba, operates a Fahari Aviation drone

## Booking platform upgrade

Kenya Airways has upgraded its travel booking platform to provide a more advanced and comprehensive experience for its corporate travel buyers and travel agencies.

Guests will now be able to get real-time updates, personalised itineraries and improved ancillary services, while it enables Kenya Airways to offer richer content and detailed information through its booking platforms.

The move has seen the airline partner with ARC, a leading air travel intelligence and omnichannel distribution company, to enhance its new distribution capability (NDC). NDC allows airlines to seamlessly generate and share offers with customers across various channels.

"As our distribution strategy evolves, we recognise the imperative of an NDC solution that aligns with the dynamic needs of our customers," said Julius Thairu, chief commercial and customer officer at Kenya Airways. "This collaboration with ARC is a pivotal step forward in our journey towards customer centricity."

# News IN BRIEF



### ON-TIME PERFORMANCE:

During February, KQ achieved its best-ever week for on-time performance, achieving 98% of arrivals and departures within 15 minutes of the scheduled arrival/departure time.



### SAFARI DATA:

Kenya Airways has introduced Safari Data, an eSim data roaming solution to enable you to stay in touch more easily and for less when travelling overseas. Go to [kqsafaridata.com](http://kqsafaridata.com) to find out more.



### JETSETTER:

Kenya Airways' entertaining monthly customer newsletter, *Jetsetter*, has reached 100,000 subscribers, just two years after its launch. If you haven't already signed up, head to KQ Jetsetter's LinkedIn page.



### KQ CHAT:

Don't forget to tune into the *Chat with KQ Jetsetter* podcast, available via Kenya Airways' YouTube channel and Spotify page, for news and insights.



### KAYAK:

As part of ongoing efforts to improve the digital customer experience, Kenya Airways flights are now available on [Kayak.com](http://Kayak.com), allowing consumers to search for and book flights directly through the platform.



# CELEBRATING AFRICAN MUSIC AND CULTURE

## SAUTI ZA BUSARA MUSIC FESTIVAL 2024 REVIEW

The 21st edition of the Sauti za Busara Music Festival, recently held at the historic Old Fort in Zanzibar, left an indelible mark on both attendees and participants alike.

Under the stewardship of festival director Journey Ramadhan, managing director Lorenz Herrmann and the team at Busara Promotions, this year's festival showcased the vibrancy and diversity of African music and cultural heritage, setting the stage for an even more spectacular event in 2025.

This year's lineup featured 25 bands from across Africa, including renowned artists such as Mádé Kuti, Selmor Mtukudzi, Zoë Modiga, Sholo Mwamba, Stewart Sukuma & Banda Nkhuvu, Siti & the Band and many more, whose performances captivated the audience.



Beyond the music, the festival offered panel discussions and networking opportunities via its Movers & Shakers platform, providing a space for artists and music enthusiasts to exchange ideas and collaborate. These sessions covered various aspects of the music industry, from production and marketing to preserving cultural identity and fostering sustainability.

Two panel discussions, in particular, sparked meaningful debate. The first addressed the advancement of East African music while preserving identity, featuring esteemed panellists such as Isack Abeneko, Yusuf Mahmoud and Kema Oyih. The second panel explored the path to a financially independent and sustainable arts sector in East Africa, engaging experts including Chiara Guidetti,

Gregory Mwendwa and Girum Mezmur.

Looking ahead to 2025, Herrmann expressed optimism about the festival's future. He emphasised the growing prominence of African music on the global stage and reaffirmed Busara Promotions' commitment to strengthening East Africa's music scene. With the continued support of stakeholders such as Fumba Town, a project involving CPS, Kenya Airways and many more, the stage is set for an even more dynamic and colourful festival.


As anticipation builds for the 22nd running of the festival, music lovers can expect an unforgettable celebration of culture, creativity and collaboration. Save the date – 14-16 February 2025 – for an experience that promises to inspire, unite and uplift spirits.

Above and top: Mádé Kuti and The Movement from Nigeria

Above, left: Selmor Mtukudzi from Zimbabwe

Right: The crowd finds their groove at the main stage

PHOTOS: MARIUS MEISSEL

PLANE SIGHT		No. OF PLANES	SEATS	SEAT PITCH	CRUISING SPEED	RANGE	MAX. TAKE-OFF WEIGHT
	Boeing 787 Dreamliner	9	Premier: 30 Economy: 204	Premier: 75" Economy: 32"	Mach 0.85 (1050kmh)	14,500km	227,930kg
	Boeing 737-800	8	Premier: 16 Economy: 129	Premier: 47" Economy: 32"	Mach 0.78 (963kmh)	5665km	79,015kg
	Embraer 190	13	Premier: 12 Economy: 84	Premier: 38" Economy: 31"	Mach 0.82 (1013kmh)	2935km	51,800kg
	Boeing 737-300F	2	N/A	N/A	Mach 0.745 (920kmh)	2200km	62,822kg
	Boeing 737-800F	2	N/A	N/A	Mach 0.789 (974kmh)	3695km	79,000





FUEL CAPACITY (LITRES)	THRUST PER ENGINE	WING SPAN	LENGTH	HEIGHT
126,903	69,800lb	60.1m	56.7m	16.9m
26,020	26,300lb	34.3m	39.5m	12.5m
16,153	18,820lb	28.72m	36.24m	10.57m
20,124	22,000lb	28.9m	32.2m	11.1m
26,025	24,000-27,000lb	35.8m	38m	12.54m

**DID YOU KNOW?** Aeroplane oxygen masks only last for 10-15 minutes. But, there's no need to worry, the duration is chosen for a reason: it gives the pilots enough time to descend the aircraft to a lower altitude where the air is naturally breathable again.

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Kenya Airways routes



JOURNEY TIME FROM NAIROBI TO:

Abidjan	5hrs 54min	Kilimanjaro	46min
Accra	5hrs 26min	Kinshasa	3hrs 20min
Addis Ababa	1hr 51min	Kisumu	49min
Amsterdam	8hrs 20min	Lagos	5hrs 0min
Antananarivo	3hrs 8min	Lilongwe	2hrs 10min
Bangui	3hrs 1min	Livingstone	3hrs 4min
Bangkok	8hrs 59min	London	8hrs 31min
Bujumbura	1hr 31min	Lubumbashi	2hrs 18min
Cape Town	5hrs 18min	Lusaka	2hrs 37min
Dakar	7hrs 47min	Mauritius	4hrs 8min
Dar es Salaam	1hr 16min	Mogadishu	1hr 41min
Douala	4hrs 7min	Mombasa	59min
Dubai	4hrs 40min	Monrovia	6hrs 45min
Dzaoudzi	2hrs 20min	Moroni	2hrs 4min
Eldoret	48min	Mumbai	5hrs 49min
Entebbe	1hr 6min	Nampula	2hrs 19min
Freetown	7hrs 10min	Ndola	2hrs 21min
Guangzhou	10hrs 43min	New York	14hrs 26min
Harare	2hrs 47min	Paris	8hrs 7min
Johannesburg	3hrs 54min	Seychelles	2hrs 58min
Juba	1hr 33min	Victoria Falls	3hrs 6min
Kigali	1hr 23min	Zanzibar	1hr 12min

SOURCE: AIRMILES CALCULATOR.COM; DESTINATIONS AS AT 31 MARCH 2024



## The KQ top 5

We celebrate the tallest, smallest, fastest, slowest and more across the Kenya Airways network...

### This issue: City parks

#### 1 NAIROBI NATIONAL PARK

Billed as 'the world's wildlife capital', this 117sq km park is the perfect escape from the bustling city. Take a guided game drive to discover lion, rhino, buffalo, giraffe, zebra and more, with Nairobi's skyline providing the backdrop. If you fancy a more relaxed view, head for a sundowner in the rooftop bar at Ole Sereni Hotel.

#### 2 BANCO NATIONAL PARK, ABIDJAN

Known as the city's 'green lung', Banco teems with a diversity of flora. Spread over 34sq km, it is home to some 800 species of plant, as well as antelope, giant catfish, birds and chimps. There's several walking trails, boat rides and waterfalls to enjoy.

#### 3 CENTRAL PARK, NEW YORK CITY

The park measures 3.4sq km, or 16 billion New York apartments. Highlights include the Bethesda Fountain, walking its 93km of pedestrian routes, taking a horse-and-carriage ride, ice skating

and celebrity spotting. There's even a castle and a zoo. Central Park has appeared in more than 500 movies, making it the most filmed public park in the world.

#### 4 HYDE PARK, LONDON

Created in 1536 by Henry VIII, 'The People's Park' has welcomed Nelson Mandela; hosted rock concerts; and was the scene of Suffragette rallies. At its heart is the Serpentine, with its panoramic lakeside paths, cafes, wildlife and the oldest swimming club in Britain. Check out Speaker's Corner – a public spot devoted to free speech – and the Princess Diana memorial fountain.

#### 5 LUMPINI PARK, BANGKOK

The first public park in Bangkok, Lumpini is great for people watching. Find a bench and take in folks jogging, practising Tai Chi, and even ballroom dancing. Also worth a look is the King Rama VI statue, or explore the lake in a swan-shaped paddle boat.



FLIPPIDE FELICI/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO



International routes

Domestic routes

Regional routes



## THE BOLD AND THE BEAUTIFUL

A SELECTION OF THE BEST PRODUCTS ON BOARD YOUR KQ FLIGHT



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### LADIES' FRAGRANCES

#### YVES SAINT LAURENT LIBRE

Eau de Parfum 50ml

The freedom to live everything with excess. The perfume of a strong, bold and liberated woman boldly experimenting with her freedom. The first floral lavender, with a tension between the burning sensuality of an orange blossom from Morocco and the boldness of lavender from France with a feminine twist. A singular trail like a breath of freedom.

**FRAGRANCE NOTES:**

Spicy - Floral



\$75

### MEN'S FRAGRANCES

#### MONTBLANC LEGEND RED

Eau de Parfum 100ml

An eau de parfum that is bolder and more determined than ever to make you feel confident, strong and powerful. The iconic and outstanding design of the bottle reveals the intensity of a red lacquered finish contrasting with a silver top to create a sleek, chic and modern look. The new olfactory experience starts with the freshness of blood orange, intensified by aromatic notes of clary sage to finish with a magnetic woody accord.

**FRAGRANCE NOTES:** Woody - Fruity



\$299

### WATCHES

#### CITIZEN ECO DRIVE GENTS' VINTAGE ANALOGUE WATCH

Bring new elegance to your day with this Citizen timepiece. Featuring a gold-tone stainless steel case and silver dial with day and date indicator, and a brown embossed leather strap with buckle closure. This stylish men's watch is the essential piece to complement your dress wardrobe, while adding versatile style to your day-to-evening looks. Featuring Eco-Drive technology - powered by light, any light. Never needs a battery. Five-year international warranty.

#### SEKONDA GLITTER FACE WATCH SET

This elegant Sekonda ladies' gift set features a watch with an ion-plated, gold alloy case and semi-bangle bracelet with a silver glitter dial. The watch is paired with a gold-coloured bangle and stone-set bracelet to complete your look.

Two-year guarantee.

**FREE GIFT:** Two bracelets



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**ON BOARD IN MAY**

**GIORGIO ARMANI  
SI INTENSE**

Si is the most powerful word. Feel the power of Si with this new eau de parfum intense, and embrace the infinite possibilities of life. The new contrasting and hyper-sensory fragrance is wrapped in an ambery structure. It's a blend of the signature blackcurrant nectar empowered by a velvety floral heart and a sensual vanilla bouquet. Crafted with a unique glassmaking savoir-faire, the new jewel bottle is adorned by the golden Si logo, embossed in the glass. It is a powerful statement to invite every woman to say Si. The precious bottle is designed to last, refillable and recyclable.



**CAROLINA HERRERA  
GOOD GIRL BLUSH ELIXIR**

Good Girl Blush Elixir is a sensual, more intense interpretation of Good Girl Blush, housed in an alluring dégradé bottle. This new addition to the Good Girl family reveals the multifaceted nature of modern femininity with a seductive blend of rose, vanilla and patchouli.



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ESSENCE FOR MEN**

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## KQ Cinema

Choose from a host of new on-board content – there's some 80 movies, 55 TV programmes and 1000 music tracks for you to enjoy

### OPPENHEIMER

#### BIOGRAPHY-DRAMA

Directed by Christopher Nolan and starring Cillian Murphy, Emily Blunt and Matt Damon, *Oppenheimer* is a gripping psychological thriller that delves into the complex life of Robert Oppenheimer and his work during World War II.

The scientific mind behind the development of the atomic bomb, Oppenheimer (Murphy) finds himself torn between duty to his country and the devastating consequences of his creation. The movie navigates his inner turmoil, exploring the ethical dilemmas and the personal sacrifices he faces as he grapples with the destructive power he unleashed.

#### DID YOU KNOW?

- Matt Damon was on a break from acting because he made a promise to his wife. However, there was one condition – he could return to the screen if Christopher Nolan called...
- For the black-and-white sections of the film to be shot in the same quality as the rest, Kodak produced a limited supply of their Double-X black-and-white film stock in 70mm.



**TV** Enjoy our huge selection of TV programmes from comedy shows **Powerless**, **Living Biblically** and **Call Me Kat**, to drama hits **All American: Homecoming** and **Lucifer**. If reality and lifestyle is more your thing, catch up on **The World's Most Extraordinary Homes**, or follow Paris Hilton as she plans her own wedding in **Paris in Love**. **Nadiya's American Adventure** is great if you are interested in vibrant American cuisines. Or perhaps you are curious about designs that shaped our lives? If so, tune into **The Genius of Design**.







## THE CREATOR

**ACTION-ADVENTURE**

Directed by Gareth Edwards, *The Creator* stars John David Washington, Gemma Chan and Madeline Yuna Voyles. Washington plays Joshua, a former special forces agent mourning the disappearance of his wife (Chan), who is enlisted to pursue and eliminate the Creator, the mastermind behind cutting-edge AI. This brilliant mind has crafted a cryptic weapon capable of concluding both the war and threatening all of humanity. Joshua and his team must embark on a mission beyond enemy lines, venturing into the ominous heart of AI territory. However, their quest takes an unexpected turn when they realise the apocalyptic AI they must neutralise appears in the innocent guise of a young child.

### DID YOU KNOW?

- *The Creator* was shot on the Sony FX3, an entry-level full-frame cinema camera.
- After witnessing John David Washington's compelling performance in *Monsters and Men*, director Gareth Edwards penned the protagonist in the film with him in mind.

## NEXT GOAL WINS

**SPORTS-COMEDY**

Directed by Taika Waititi and co-written with Iain Morris, *Next Goal Wins* revolves around the American Samoa soccer team, which endured a notorious 31-0 defeat against Australia in 2001. With the 2014 World Cup on the horizon, the team embarks on a journey to redeem itself by enlisting the expertise of an unconventional coach down on his luck, Dutch-American Thomas Rongen. But will he be able to turn the team's fortunes around?



## BLUE BEETLE

**ACTION-ADVENTURE**

The storyline revolves around the DC character Jaime Reyes, portrayed by Xolo Maridueña. Jaime's life takes an unexpected turn when he stumbles upon an ancient relic of alien biotechnology known as the Scarab. The Scarab, with a mind of its own, selects Jaime as its symbiotic host, granting him a remarkable suit of armour with extraordinary and unpredictable powers. This unforeseen connection alters Jaime's destiny, propelling him into the role of the superhero Blue Beetle.



### DID YOU KNOW?

- The movie was originally to be exclusive to HBO Max, but it was granted a theatrical release.
- James Gunn, chair and CEO of DC Studios, has clarified that although the movie is situated within the DC Extended Universe it is disconnected from the broader universe.





# SUSTAINABLE FLIGHTS READY FOR TAKEOFF

## SKYTEAM COMPETITION DRIVES A MORE RESPONSIBLE FUTURE FOR AVIATION

Sustainability is a top priority for SkyTeam and its members. That's why we launched the SkyTeam Sustainable Flight Challenge (TSFC) in 2022 to help drive changes across aviation. Now in its third year, here's how this industry-first sustainability challenge is helping chart a path to a more responsible future for air travel.

### INSPIRED BY HISTORY

TSFC was inspired by the London to Melbourne air race of 1934. This revolutionised air travel and TSFC aims to transform it further by driving the changes needed to reduce its impact on the environment.

### A FRIENDLY COMPETITION...

Later this year, participating airlines will operate flights in their existing networks, using ideas, technology and innovations to make them as sustainable as

possible. Results are measured against baselines for the same flights on the same routes operated in previous months and assessed by research experts.

### ...WHERE IDEAS ARE SHARED

All participants share their findings, enabling workable solutions to be scaled and more widely adopted across the industry. Already, hundreds of new ideas have been shared and this year we'll take these bright ideas to new heights.

### SCALING UP

As TSFC's true impact will only be realised when airlines scale innovations across their entire operations, the focus of this year's challenge is adoption. We will measure and award progress as well as efforts on the flight itself. Award categories will recognise airlines with a strong approach to scaling sustainable aviation fuel which excel in collaborative efforts and those that focus on embedding sustainability in broader business practices.

### COMMITMENT

SkyTeam and its members are committed to delivering the most integrated, seamless and responsible travel experience of any airline alliance. We know aviation still has a lot of progress to make, and while we work towards making air travel sustainable, we are pleased to take you with us on our journey.



SkyTeam is the 19-member airline alliance. Find out more about news, services and upcoming events on [skyteam.com](http://skyteam.com)



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### Guess where answer (from page 67): **Lagos, Nigeria**

The first-of-its-kind bridge in West Africa spans Five Cowries Creek, connecting the Lekki with Ikoyi. Lagos means 'lakes' in Portuguese, the city getting its name from Portuguese explorers who visited the area in the 15th century, reflecting its numerous lagoons and waterways. Nigeria's major financial centre, Lagos is renowned for its vibrant music scene, a thriving film industry – known as Nollywood – and is home to a number of pristine beaches. For more information about flights to Lagos, go to [www.kenya-airways.com](http://www.kenya-airways.com)



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## SPOT A LEOPARD IN LUANGWA

Despite being shy, elusive and largely nocturnal, leopards are one of the most sought-after sightings on a safari. Boost your chances by heading to South Luangwa National Park in Zambia – home to one of the highest concentrations of this beautiful big cat anywhere in Africa. Not only do many of the park’s camps and lodges offer night drives, but their guides are experts at tracking down the secretive feline. And even if you’re unlucky, you’ll still get a chance to encounter other night-time critters, such as bushbabies, civets and porcupines.

📌 Visit our website – [kenya-airways.com](http://kenya-airways.com) – to plan your trip to Zambia.

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