

msafiri

ENRICHING LIFE'S JOURNEYS

FEBRUARY-MARCH 2024 | ISSUE 183

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Inflight Magazine

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WILDLIFE WITH WOW FACTOR

AFRICAN GAMES

WHO TO WATCH IN GHANA

SOUTH AFRICA

10 BUCKET LIST EXPERIENCES

SPOTLIGHT ON NAIROBI

Best in Travel 2024!

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On the cover:
Nairobi city
landscape by
Peter Irungu

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MSAFIRI IS THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF
KENYA AIRWAYS – THE PRIDE OF AFRICA

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PLEASE NOTE: Information on events and opening times in this issue is particularly susceptible to change. Readers are advised to contact outlets to check availability before planning visits or booking travel.

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karibu

DEAR READER

Making air travel more sustainable remains one of our greatest challenges and I'm delighted that Kenya Airways received the Best Innovation and Most Impactful Breakthrough awards for being the first African carrier to pioneer the use of Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) from Africa to Europe.

Some 22 airlines from SkyTeam (including 'friends and family' airlines) participated in The Sustainable Flight Challenge 2023, operating 72 flights that led to an average 19% reduction in CO₂ intensity compared to the same flights in the previous month. The challenge generated hundreds of ideas to help drive a more responsible future for aviation – solutions that can be shared across the industry.

We're also aiming to minimise carbon footprints through a new codeshare with South African Airways, in which you can now enjoy the shortest route connecting Africa to South America – a seamless journey to São Paulo in Brazil, via Johannesburg, on one ticket that avoids the need for long flights and lengthy layovers in Europe or the Middle East.

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



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WORLD TRAVEL AWARDS 2023

Kenya Airways won Africa's Leading Airline – Economy Class and Africa's Leading Inflight Magazine for *msafiri* at the 2023 World Travel Awards. The awards recognise travel excellence across the tourism industry.





KIRSTENBOSCH
WESTERN CAPE

THERE'S *so much*

Celebrate the new year with these music festivals.

As the New Year unfolds, South Africa bursts into new life, offering a symphony of events that promise to keep you moving to the spirit of discovery. January sees the return of the iconic Kirstenbosch Garden Summer concerts featuring local acts like Ami Faku and Mango Groove. This year you're also invited to a soul stirring evening with international Jazz sensation Lalah Hathaway in Johannesburg. If festivals are more your vibe, then Calabash Fest promises to be the biggest one of the year with international rock stars Maroon 5 headlining alongside some incredible local stars. Then bring the whole family to worship in the peaceful and natural beauty of Emmerentia Gardens at the Thank God Festival at the end of January. February is for the lovers, so celebrate at the Habitat – Fields of Love outdoor music experience. Closing of the wildest start to the year is the annual Ultra Music Festival for those who want to keep their bodies moving all night long. There's so much more to dance to this year.

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Inspiring new ways

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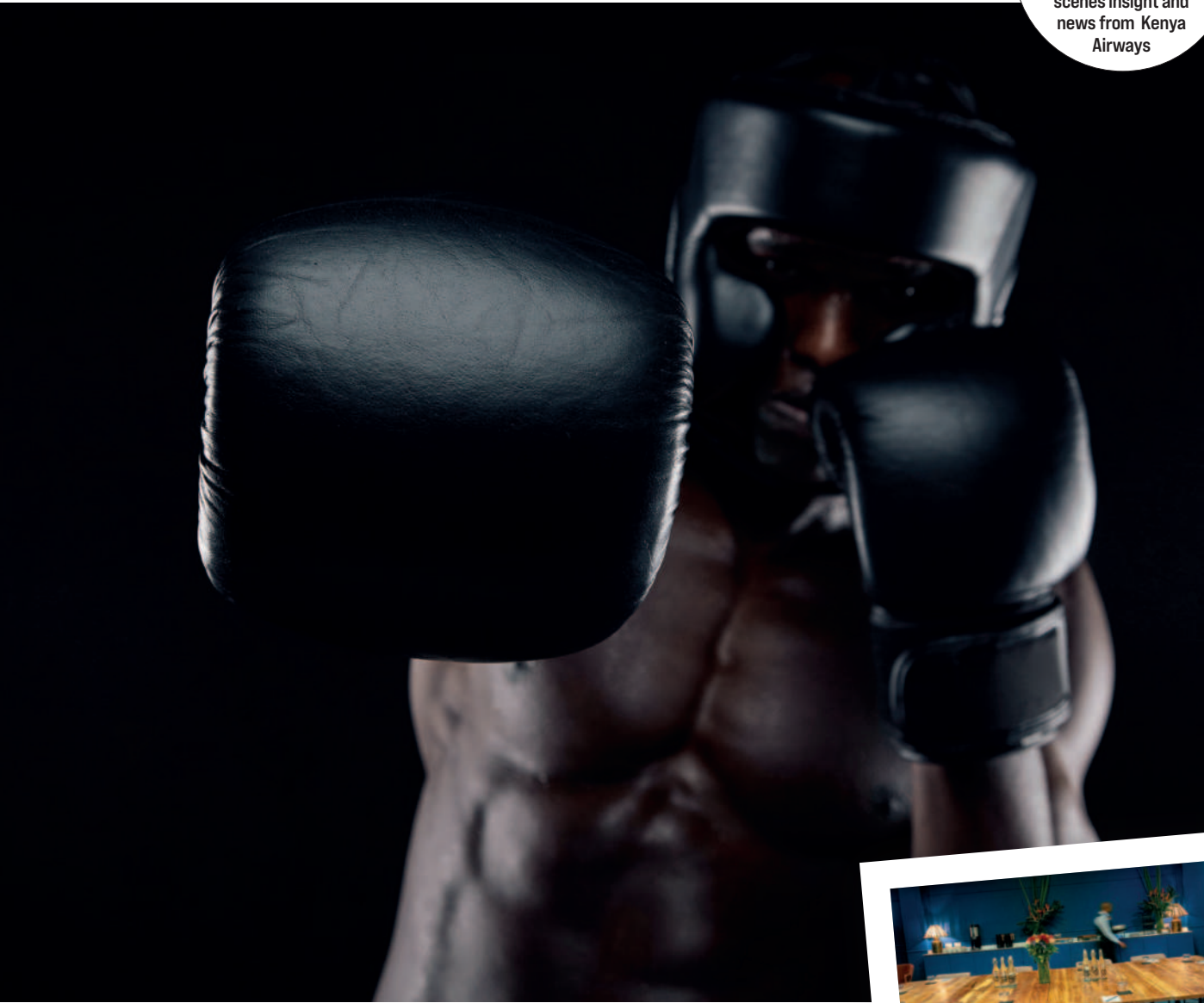
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Seasoned African traveller Philip Briggs selects 10 highlights from a recent self-drive trip as he rediscovers this fascinating country



NAIROBI

BEST IN TRAVEL 2024

Kenya's capital is the number one city destination in Lonely Planet's *Best in Travel 2024*. To celebrate their 'home town' we asked two local photographers, **Peter Irungu** and **Sam Muchai**, to capture their unique views of the city

According to Lonely Planet, Nairobi is "shrugging off the colonial gaze and embracing its unique rhythms, with an impressive array of restaurants inspired by local cuisine, and a steady rotation of arts and cultural venues that has given rise to a distinct kind of Nairobi cool".

Its annual round-up of travel inspiration is showcased in *Best in Travel 2024* – the top 10 countries, cities, regions, value destinations and sustainable spots around the world right now.

Compiled by Lonely Planet staff, writers and online community, the book highlights Nairobi's cuisine, music and art scenes. "Nairobi's food scene is growing and glowing up," it claims. "International menus dominate, offering an eclectic mix of food from the many cultures that have crossed paths through the city over the decades. But locals demanded, restaurants listened, and today an impressive array of eateries are experimenting with local ingredients and cuisines, challenging chefs to keep it interesting with what's available."

Budget travellers are recommended to try "the nine-course tasting menu at Amaica in Peponi, or Kienyeji's in Kilimani, which specialises in cuisine from western Kenya including ox tongue".

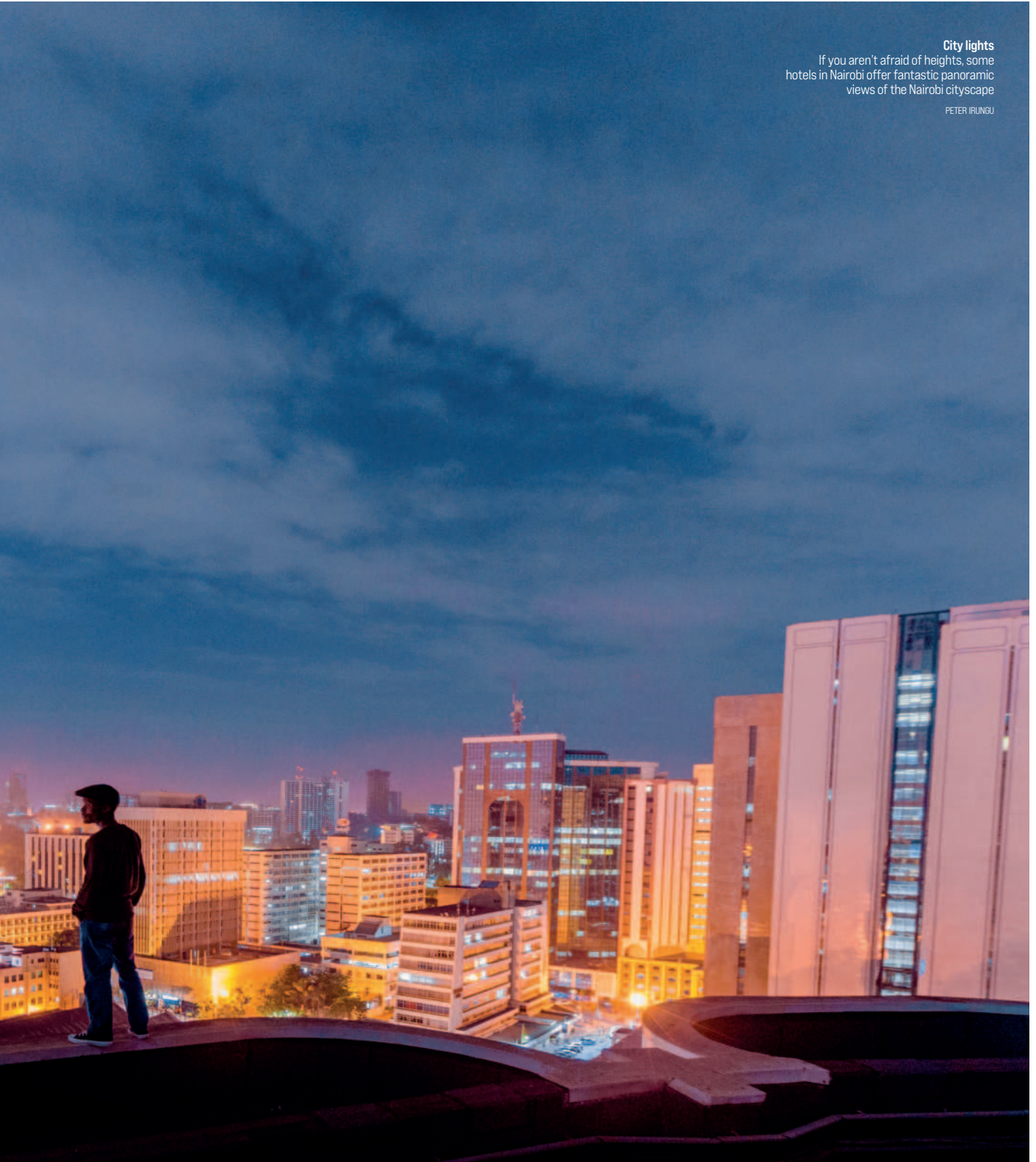
Following the pandemic, Nairobi's live music scene has roared back to →



City lights

If you aren't afraid of heights, some hotels in Nairobi offer fantastic panoramic views of the Nairobi cityscape

PETER IRUNGU



life. “DJ nights are a dime a dozen,” says Lonely Planet, “but if you really need to see someone pluck some strings or bang some drums, you will not be disappointed.”

Where to go to feel the beat? “K1 in Westlands offers rhumba every Sunday afternoon, while in Lavington, Geco Café curates a steady rotation of talent across genres. After a short hiatus to regroup, the quarterly Blankets & Wine festivals at the Kasarani Stadium are building up to 2024 as their biggest year yet.”

Nairobi is also beating the drum for arts. Lonely Planet suggests visiting the Nairobi Gallery in the Central Business District, to “take a peek into the life of Joseph Murumbi, Kenya’s second vice-president and owner of the largest-known collection of African textiles, stamps and jewellery”. Other top spots for arts lovers include the One Off Contemporary Art Gallery in Rosslyn, with its stunning sculpture garden, and the Circle Art Gallery in Lavington.

NAIROBI THROUGH THE EYES OF TWO LOCAL PHOTOGRAPHERS

**STREET LEVEL:
PETER IRUNGU**

**FROM ABOVE:
SAM MUCHAI**

1: Drone view of downtown Nairobi at night

2: Graffiti artist Swift Graffiti painting a mural on an old train at the Nairobi Railway Museum

3: While working on a timelapse film about the rush hour in Nairobi I wanted to capture the organised chaos in one of the city’s busiest bus stations, KENCOM.

4: The Kenyatta International Convention Centre stands out in this cityscape taken using a drone



2



1



3



TAKE ME THERE

1:
During the full moon at certain times of the year it rises behind the iconic KICC building that is symbolic of the city landscape, viewed from Uhuru Park

2:
My favourite street performers are the freestyle skaters. These passionate kids come out every Sunday and just skate around the city and have fun – it's less chaotic than during the week

3:
On my way home I always pass by this vendor who roasts maize which you rub some lime and chilli into for flavour

4:
A mass of shop signs in downtown Nairobi

5:
World-renowned ballet dancer Joel Kioko at dawn in Uhuru Park. As one of two public parks in Nairobi it offers space for creatives to practise their skills





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**LONELY PLANET'S
TOP 10 CITIES FOR 2024**

- 1
Nairobi, Kenya

- 2
Paris, France

- 3
Montréal, Canada

- 4
Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina

- 5
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

- 6
Manaus, Brazil

- 7
Jakarta, Indonesia

- 8
Prague, Czech Republic

- 9
İzmir, Turkey

- 10
Kansas City, USA



HUMAN ORIGINS

IN THE BEGINNING

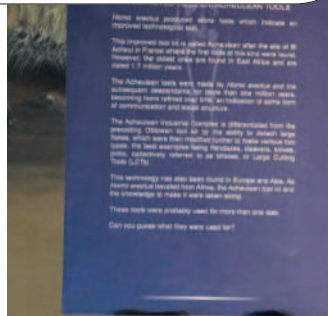
We met with Dr Fredrick Kyalo Manthi, one of the foremost palaeoanthropologists at the National Museums of Kenya (NMK), to discuss ‘The Home of Human Origins’

1 WHY IS KENYA OFTEN REFERRED TO AS ‘THE HOME OF HUMAN ORIGINS’?

Kenya holds the most complete fossil record that documents human ancestry and evolution spanning from seven million years ago to the present. The fossils have been recovered from sites scattered across the country, and more continue to be unearthed. The position of Kenya as ‘The Home of Human Origins’ has been strengthened by the discovery of stone tools in the Turkana Basin that date to 3.3 million years ago. These are the earliest stone tools made and used by early humans, and indeed marked the long technological journey that humanity has walked, culminating in the innovations we witness in our times. We are very honoured to have Kenya’s President H.E. Dr William Samoei arap Ruto taking the lead in welcoming all humanity to Kenya, the Home of Human Origins.

2 IN WHICH MUSEUMS CAN VISITORS FIND OUT MORE ABOUT KENYA’S HUMAN ORIGINS?

The Nairobi National Museum houses an excellent exhibition that speaks about Kenya’s position as the Home of Human Origins. Site museums including Olorgesailie (Kajiado County) and Kariandusi (Nakuru County), which occur within



Main image:
A visitor views part of the human origins exhibition at Nairobi National Museum

Above and far right:
The skull of ‘Turkana Boy’, a 1.6-million-year-old fossil of a *Homo erectus* youth found in Nariokotome, Turkana



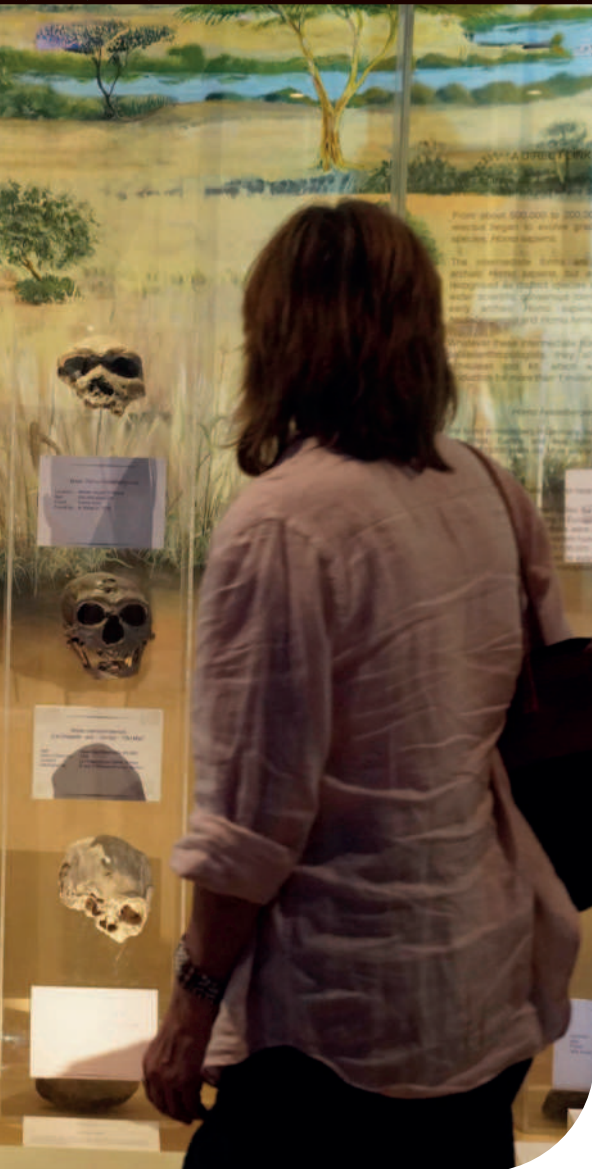
SKULL IMAGES: SABENA JANE BLACKBIRD/ALAMY; MAIN IMAGE: IMAGO/ALAMY

a range of about 100km from Nairobi, also hold both indoor and in situ exhibitions about our human origins.

3 WHAT ARE THE LATEST DISCOVERIES THAT YOU ARE MOST EXCITED ABOUT?

Fossil discoveries in Kenya never cease! Every year, palaeontological and archaeological investigations and excavations are undertaken by both Kenyan and foreign researchers, and these result in the recovery of hundreds of fossils, including those of early humans. In the recent past, fossils attributed to the genus

Australopithecus and our own genus, *Homo*, have been uncovered at different sites across Kenya. We know from the fossil record that populations associated with *Australopithecus* lived from around 4.2 million years ago to around 1.7 million years ago. Populations associated with *Homo* have lived from 2.5 million years ago to date, and we modern humans are an end product of this very successful genus. Kenya is home to the world-famous ‘Turkana Boy’ (*Homo erectus*), which was found at Nariokotome, west of Lake Turkana, and is dated at



around 1.6 million years old. To date, this is one of the most complete human ancestors ever discovered, with around 90% of the skeleton recovered. More discoveries have been made and will be announced to the world very soon. Be sure to watch this space!

4 WHY DO YOU THINK IT SO IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND WHERE WE CAME FROM? Human beings are very curious about their ancestry, which explains why almost every community has legends about how, where and when

Above right: Palaeoanthropologist Dr Fredrick Kyalo Manthi undertaking field work in Kenya

Above far right: The Cradle of Humankind gallery is just one of the highlights at the Nairobi National Museum. There are also exhibitions on Kenya's diversity of birds and mammals, as well as history and culture. The museum is open year-round Monday to Sunday, 8:30am-5:30pm

Find out more: museums.or.ke



“The position of Kenya as ‘The Home of Human Origins’ has been strengthened by the discovery of stone tools in the Turkana Basin...”

they originated. Palaeontological research provides a scientific explanation of how different biological species, including humans, have evolved over time. Indeed, whichever explanation or narrative about our ancestry we might subscribe to, each of these provides a sense of identity.

5 TELL US ABOUT SOME OF THE LESSER-KNOWN MUSEUMS RUN BY THE NMK We have 25 museums and over 400 gazetted sites and monuments across Kenya. More sites and natural and cultural heritage hotspots are continuously being added. Some of the heritage sites and museums that are less known include Meru Museum in Meru County, and the magnificent ancient Swahili cities at Gede and Jumba La Mtwana in Kilifi County.

6 WHAT NMK EXHIBITS SHOULD WE PUT AT THE TOP OF OUR MUST-SEE LIST? NMK holds numerous exhibitions that speak to different thematic areas. However, some of the ‘must-visit exhibitions’ include the Cradle of Humankind exhibitions in a number of our museums, the History of Kenya Gallery at the Nairobi National Museum



and the Birds Gallery at the Nairobi National Museum.

7 WHEN WAS THE NMK ESTABLISHED AND WHAT IS ITS VISION FOR THE NEXT 10 YEARS? The history of the NMK spans over 100 years when it was established (in 1910) as a repository for natural history collections. Indeed, NMK’s vision is to continuously strengthen its position as a powerhouse for heritage research for the benefit of humanity.

8 WHY DO YOU LOVE WORKING FOR THE NMK? NMK is a great institution and it is here where I have honed my career and passion towards being the palaeoanthropologist I am today. With all humility, I have established myself as a world-class scholar and to me this could not have happened anywhere else outside the NMK. Many more Kenyans owe their successful careers to the NMK too.

POSTTUS/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM





SO YOU WANT TO BE A...

POLO PLAYER

We caught up with **Fredd Kambo**, chair of the Nairobi Polo Club, to ask him how new and seasoned players alike can get saddled up...

01 What beginner-friendly programmes does Nairobi Polo Club (NPC) offer?

I fondly remember my time as a beginner trying to break into the sport. As an amateur club, beginners rely on the goodwill of what is a warm and welcoming community. The first step for any beginner is learning to ride. There are various riding schools where one can do this, scattered across the city in Kitusuru, Muthaiga and Karen. Once you can ride, the next step is to come on over to NPC, sign up as a stick-and-ball club member, and we will facilitate your access to horses and training. Be forewarned, though: once you start, it is very addictive.



03 How does Nairobi Polo Club support individuals looking to rekindle their polo skills after a break from the game?

NPC has club chukkas every weekend during the season. The captains do a good job of arranging slow or medium chukkas for those who are looking to rekindle their skills after time away. That said, it's not long before these folks feel that they are ready for the 'full fat', hell-for-leather experience. It's the nature of an adrenalin-filled, competitive sport...



02 Are there rental ponies or introductory sessions available at NPC?

We don't have rental ponies as such. However, once you have joined as a stick-and-ball member, more senior full-playing members will take you under their wing and help you along the curve. Polo at NPC is really all about community and relationships, so we encourage new members to take the time to meet and get to know current members, either at tournaments or club chukkas. Club chukkas are informal games where members meet and play.

04 Apart from the game, what makes Nairobi Polo Club an inviting community for newcomers and those rediscovering polo?

NPC has a lovely clubhouse that hosts players and social members. We encourage our members to bring their friends, families and colleagues to experience the soul of our club. We have wonderful food and drinks, good music, and what is arguably the most beautiful sunset in Nairobi. The community is always up for sharing a good time with newcomers from all over the world.

05 Parting shot?

Camaraderie is at the heart of NPC. Beyond the sport, we organise various social events, barbecues and gatherings that bring members together. We encourage team spirit not only on the field but off it as well. Whether it's through charity events, friendly matches, or simply socialising at our clubhouse, we promote an inclusive environment where friendships flourish and teamwork is celebrated. The essence of polo extends beyond the game; it's about building lasting connections within our community.

Find out more: polokenya.com

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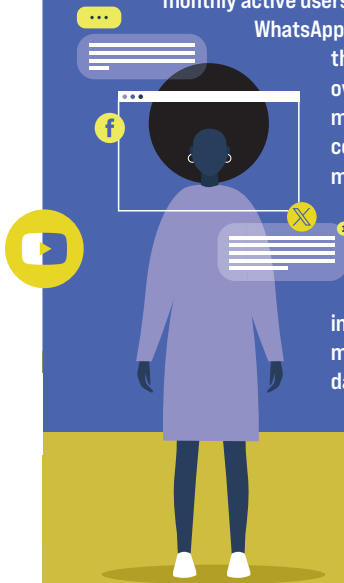
NOTES TO MY FUTURE BETTER SELF

3 THINGS ABOUT SOCIAL MEDIA I WISH I KNEW EARLIER

It forms a large part of our lives, but how much do you really know about social media?

NUMBERS NEVER LIE

Around 55% of the global population uses social media. Every second, six new profiles are added on Facebook and two new members join LinkedIn. Facebook has over three billion monthly active users worldwide, while YouTube, WhatsApp and Instagram each boast more than two billion. LinkedIn has over 950 million members and more than 58 million registered companies. Other popular social media platforms such as WeChat, TikTok, Douyin, X (formerly known as Twitter) and Telegram all have hundreds of millions of people logging in and posting each month. Social media is deeply ingrained in our daily lives.



Social media is a double-edged sword that has us thinking we are connecting more, while isolating and disconnecting us from those right next to us. According to author and health coach, Simi Fromen, 'In a world of algorithms, hashtags and followers, know the true importance of human connection.'

THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A FREE LUNCH

Most social media platforms are freely accessible – assuming you have internet connection. But one of my friends often says, 'When something is free, you are the product.' While several social media platforms

enable us to connect with relatives and friends, increase our awareness and knowledge, help us find employment and even sell our products, is it true that we get to enjoy all this for free? The fact is, the 'currency' we use to pay for so-called free social media services

is our data: our age, gender, location, preferred brands and politics, dislikes, fears, hobbies, dreams... our everything! Everything we share on social media is data – and it is mined as fast as we share it. Our data is used to fuel the artificial intelligence that runs the

algorithms used in the micro-targeting of advertisements. Have you ever wondered why it is that when you check on a certain product or service online you subsequently receive several offers from different avenues related to the searched product?

Unachodharau ndicho huharibu

WHAT YOU DISREGARD IS WHAT SPOILS

(SWAHILI PROVERB)



SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE DOPAMINE LOOP

The average social media user spends 15% of their daily waking hours on social media. That is a whole two hours and 24 minutes every day! How do some people become addicted to social media? It may well have something to do with the fact that it can drive surges of dopamine in the brain. The resulting feel-good sensation makes us anticipate the next episode of use, the next 'like', the next comment. It keeps us coming back for more. If not controlled, you can easily get caught up in the dopamine loop! Too much time spent on social media can result in mediocre performance at school and work, estranged relationships, loss of employment, anxiety and depression. In extreme cases, the resulting physical inactivity can lead to obesity, cardiovascular diseases and other physical illnesses.



THE HEALING PROCESS

My dad passed away in September. Like most men, I had zero grief-related parenting skills. Trust fate to spring a crash course. I was forced to learn and lead – virtually blind – in the thick fog of grief. Here are some lessons I learnt that can help children cope with a death in the family

BREAK THE NEWS WITHOUT BREAKING YOUR CHILDREN

How, where and when you break the news matters. My father passed away when my daughter, who's in boarding school, was about to do her end-of-year exams. I called the school and requested their counsellor to professionally handle the matter. When breaking news of a death, parents must also be cognisant of children's ages. Let each child know, in age-appropriate manner and language, what has happened. Don't tell tales that will require un-telling. Avoid saying, for example, that the departed soul has embarked on a long voyage. Your heart may be in the right place, but you'll put your child's head in a tailspin.

BE A DAD, NOT A DICTATOR

Allow children's voices to be heard and heeded. My children did not want to view their grandfather's body. And that was that. Period. I never allowed tribal traditions to override my children's wishes.

Here's the thing. Don't needlessly thrust decisions down your children's throats. The only burial protocol carved in stone is the Pope's. The family may have decided, for instance, to go all black during the burial. However, if there's a child who's decided to follow the colour blocking route, accord them some grace and space. Allow them to make last (and lasting) memories in a way that's unique and authentic

to them. Do you, bro. Create your own traditions. Light candles. Free doves. Plant a memorial tree. Compose elegies.

TRUST THE HEALING PROCESS

Be vulnerable. Stumble and weep with your children through the process. Tears aren't a sign of weakness. I've learnt that, in grief, tears are priceless ointments used to paint cherished murals.

One other thing: don't rush your kids' closure. To each their own rhythm and pace. Easy does it. Closure doesn't have an expiry date. It'll happen when it'll happen.

WATCH YOUR WALLET

In Kenya, we don't just bury our dead, we throw lavish send-off parties. Even if we've got more debt than our government, we'll still throw all caution to the wind. There are mourners to please, right?

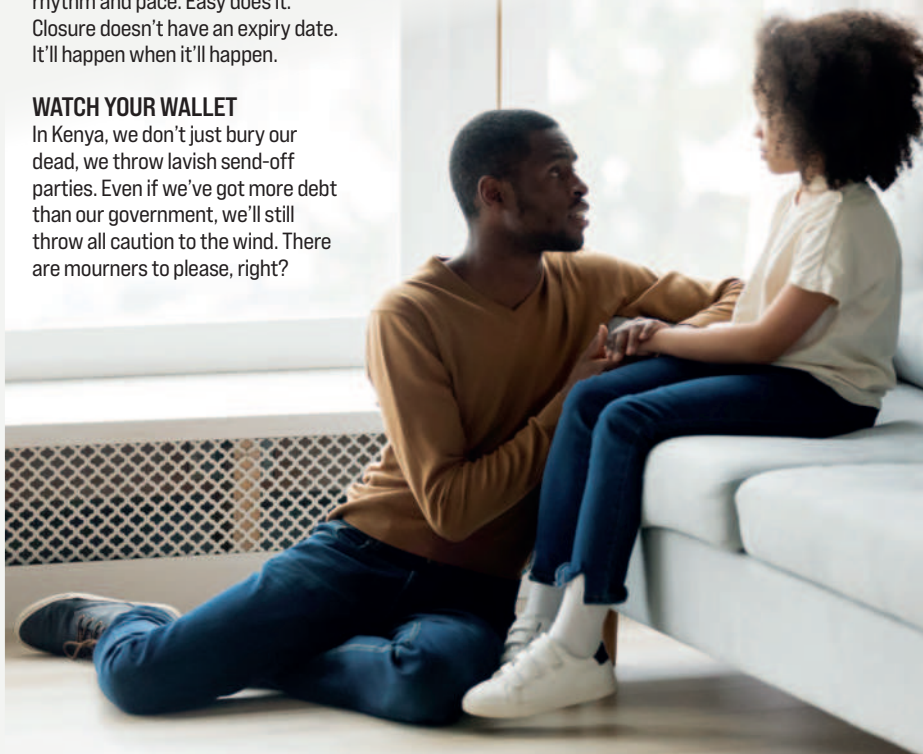
Every dad must resist the tribal propensity to paint the burial ceremony red. After mourners have scoffed every morsel and scrambled off leaving you holding the bag, your befuddled children may think the deceased was the cause of the family's penury. Such a happening can ruin their memory of the departed.

ASK FOR HELP

In Swahili, we say *Kuuliza sio ujinga*. It means asking isn't stupidity. Asking is akin to opening doors for grace, growth and guidance. Just ask, man. Even Superdad can't walk the path of grief alone. Help can come from your religious beliefs, solid shoulders, therapists or podcasts. But you must be strong and humble enough to ask. Grace. Growth. Guidance. Those are three essential tools that sharpen every dad's grief-related parenting skills.



**GRACE.
GROWTH.
GUIDANCE.
THOSE
ARE THREE
ESSENTIAL
TOOLS THAT
SHARPEN
EVERY
DAD'S GRIEF-
RELATED
PARENTING
SKILLS**





MAKING ACCOMMODATION SUSTAINABLE

AFRICA'S GREENEST ESCAPE

Christian Lambrechts and Jane Wangui reflect on their award for developing the most environmentally sustainable Airbnb in Africa

Since its founding in 2008, online home-sharing platform Airbnb has revolutionised the hospitality industry by offering affordable and unique accommodation to travellers worldwide. The platform recently unveiled its Africa Pledge – an initiative that seeks to support inclusive, diverse and sustainable tourism growth on the continent. The aim is that it will help governments and tourism organisations identify and unlock new opportunities and empower the next generation of entrepreneurs. We spoke to Christian Lambrechts and Jane Wangui, a Kenyan conservationist couple from Timau, Meru County, who have won an award for developing Africa's most eco-friendly Airbnb.

1 WHAT WAS YOUR INSPIRATION?

It all started with our desire to have our own conservation project on the farm, which lies between Borana Conservancy, Ngare Ndare Forest (part of the Mt Kenya World Heritage Site) and Lolamarik Ranch. The core purpose was to restore degraded lands and showcase income-generating activities that are in harmony with nature. We also planned to establish a self-sustaining countryside home, away from the urban hustle and bustle, without any intentions of hosting visitors. Our farm, which has incredible views of Mt Kenya, was initially a personal project to promote sustainable land management and natural resources for the benefit of the neighbouring community.

2 WHEN DID GUESTS ENTER THE EQUATION?

We realised that by opening our doors to guests we could show how a home can be carefully designed to have a limited impact on the environment. We also wanted to show how degraded land can be rehabilitated and managed while generating an income. For instance, instead of growing wheat, we grow hay and do bee-keeping, which takes care of the land and the environment.



3 WHAT ASPECTS OF YOUR HOME SHOWCASE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY?

In order to minimise ecological disturbance, every aspect of the architectural plan was carefully considered. The cottage is solar-powered and has a rainwater-harvesting system. Long-lasting timber was sourced from renewable commercial plantations. We have also planted over 8000 trees and 3000 aloe plants to prevent soil erosion, and we've installed 140 bee hives for pollination.



Cycling through the farm

4 YOU HAVE BEEN CITED AS A 'SUPERHOST'...

We routinely go over and above the usual Airbnb hosting by ensuring that each and every guest learns about our home's sustainable efforts. Besides our staff educating guests on key sustainable features of our cottage, we have brochures telling our story and signposts on each sustainable practice. We have learned that feedback from guests and hands-on management not only improve visitor experience but also encourage guests to be better travellers.

5 YOUR PERSONAL FULFILLMENT?

As a couple, we share great passion about environmental conservation and derive immeasurable joy in knowing that our beautiful quiet home in the foothills of Mt Kenya has inspired other people to make changes in their own lives. Many guests inform us that they may replicate some of the eco-friendly practices learned during their stay here. That is quite fulfilling!



Find out more: Chui Cottage (Chala Farm): abnb.me/MheLMDIwrFb



Left: Christian Lambrechts and Jane Wangui relaxing at their farm

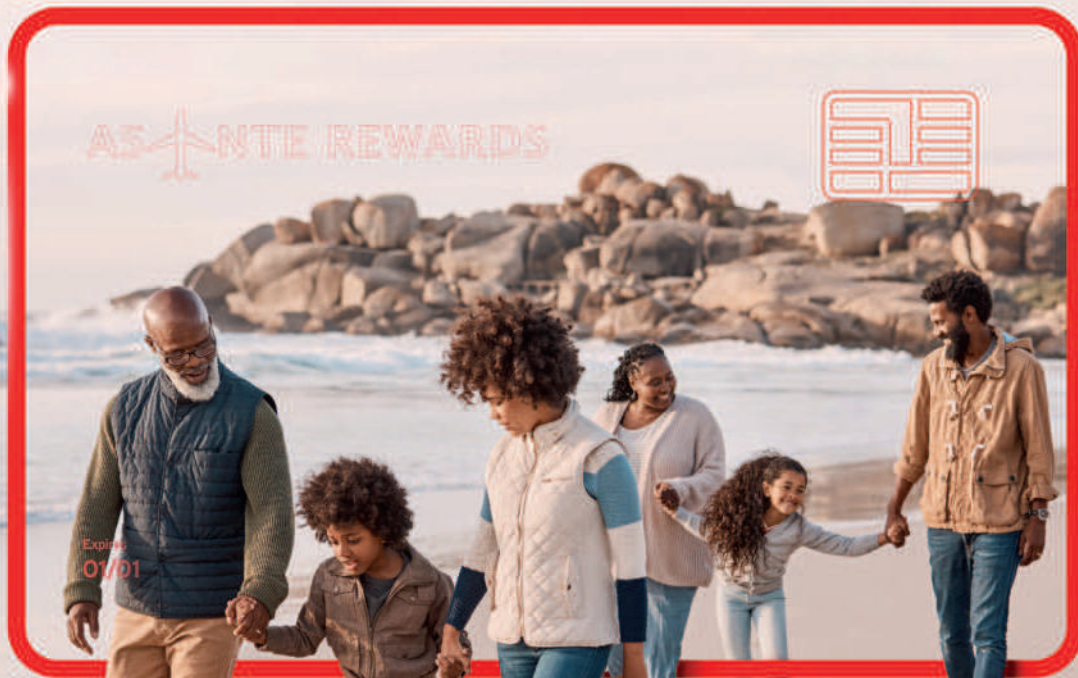
Above right: Local produce is on the menu

Right: The interior and exterior reflect the farm's sustainable credentials

ASANTE REWARDS

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GADGETS FOR FEELING GOOD

SMART MOVES

The future of flexing? Here's our expert's pick of the best fitness and wellness gadgets for 2024...

01

PIVO MAX VIDEO TRACKER

Lots of fitness enthusiasts like to record their workouts these days, either for social media or to check their progress. But since propping a sweaty mobile phone up in the gym isn't ideal, get yourself a Pivo Max. It's a digital camera that spins 360 degrees, automatically following your movements, and producing professional-quality Instagram videos. \$270 • PIVO.AI



02

POWER PLATE REV

If you're aiming to improve your cardiovascular fitness, this elite exercise bike could be just the ticket. It features Power Plate's patented VibeShift Technology, which delivers vibration through the pedals and claims to boost the intensity of your workouts by up to 167%. In other words, it will help you burn more calories while putting in less effort. No wonder it's so expensive... FROM \$4000 • POWERPLATE.COM



05

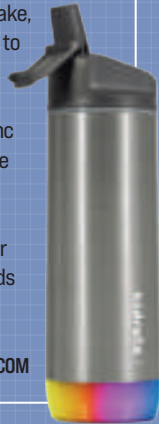
COROS PACE 3 GPS SPORT WATCH

Coros makes some of the coolest fitness trackers around. Engineered for athletes, this advanced model offers precise tracking for running, cycling and swimming. You can expect detailed performance analytics – not to mention a lot of envious looks from your gym buddies. \$249 • COROS.COM

04

HIDRATESPARK PRO

You need to stay hydrated if you're to stay on top of your fitness game. This smart water bottle tracks your water intake, reminding you to stay hydrated at all times. It can even sync with your Apple Watch, Fitbit or Garmin and calculates your hydration needs based on your activity level. \$80 • AMAZON.COM



03

SIQ SMART BASKETBALL

This intelligent basketball uses a next-gen 9D sensor, AI and an app to track over 190 data points for every shot, pass and block. It offers real-time coaching tips (many NBA professionals use this technology) and even promises to improve your goal-rate by up to 25% in a matter of weeks. \$180 • SIQBASKETBALL.COM



06

THE TEMPO STUDIO

You can transform your living room or garage into a state-of-the-art gym with the Tempo Studio. This all-in-one fitness solution seamlessly combines AI-powered workouts (delivered via an HD screen) with stylish home gym equipment. You can tune into live classes or request a personalised routine based on your fitness goals. FROM \$1695 (PLUS SUBSCRIPTION) • TEMPO.FIT



07

ROLL RECOVERY R4 BODY ROLLER

Say goodbye to muscle tightness and soreness with the Roll Recovery R4 Body Roller. There are tons of foam rollers to choose from, but this clever model allows you to target specific muscle groups with ease and accelerates recovery, so you can enjoy a professional massage experience in the comfort of your own home (gym). \$60 • ROLLRECOVERY.COM





08

THERABODY RECOVERYTHERM CUBE

Fed up with ice packs? This ultra-portable device is designed for both hot and cold therapy to reduce inflammation, alleviate muscle soreness, increase circulation and enhance your overall post-workout recovery. Therabody says it uses “scientifically optimized” temperature to deliver the best possible result.

\$149 • THERABODY.COM





LET'S TALK BUSINESS

THE GREEN SHOOTS OF BUSINESS

Meet three 'agripreneurs' shaking up the food market in Africa

Emmaculate Kanyuiro

EMMART AGROFARM, KENYA
EMMATAGROFARM.COM

After graduating in 2016, Kanyuiro worked for a microfinance institution, opened a mobile money shop, a nail parlour and grocery store – and had a two-year stint as a banker. But by 2021, she had made up her mind to venture into agribusiness. "I took a loan of KSh200,000 and leased some land to grow French beans," says Kanyuiro.

Though she knew little about agribusiness, she contacted a food export company who connected her with an agronomist to guide and monitor her farm. "They offered me a good price for a crop I was yet to plant."

Her first crop of French beans took 55 days to mature; a harvest of six tons that fetched her KSh480,000. Today, she farms 15 acres of land and hopes to export directly to the Nordic countries.

"Feeding people will never end. There are opportunities to advance if young people set their minds to farming," says Kanyuiro. "I am currently mentoring those who would like to farm as a business."



Bobby Jjuuko Kimbugwe

PURE GROW AFRICA, UGANDA | PUREGROWAFRICA.COM

Bobby Jjuuko Kimbugwe hails from a family rooted in agribusiness. In 2015, he founded Pure Grow Africa to address challenges faced by farmers. Then, in 2017, Kimbugwe rebranded the outfit as a food value chain company providing safe, high-quality foods to hotels, catering services, supermarkets and schools.

"This strategic move not only contributed to solving market access issues for farmers, but also aligned with the global demand for sustainable and responsibly sourced food products," says Kimbugwe.

"This approach allows us to empower many small-scale farmers, offering them unprecedented market opportunities. These would have been inaccessible to smallholder farmers due to challenges such as financing, logistics and quality requirements. We act as a bridge connecting them to the markets and ensuring sustainable growth for all stakeholders involved," he says.

Can smallholder farmers feed the continent? "Yes! Despite population growth, urbanisation and reduced agricultural land, the responsibility of feeding the continent still lies with small-scale farmers."

Ebun Feludu

KOKARI COCONUTS & COMPANY, NIGERIA
KOKARICOMPANY.COM

After Ebun Feludu suffered from a reaction to lactose, she began experimenting with coconut milk in her kitchen. That led, in 2016, to the creation of Kokari Coconuts & Company (named after the Yoruba phrase that means 'may there be enough to go around'). Among her first major clients was a big coffee chain in Nigeria that was looking for a plant-based milk alternative for lactose-intolerant clients.

"From raising coconut seedlings to processing and distributing our finished products, our goal is to ensure we deliver excellence and engage our



stakeholders from farm to factory and outlets," says Feludu.

Sadly, a 2023 cash crunch, the crash of the naira and high fuel prices affected production costs. The crisis led the team to create Kokari Café, a first-of-its-kind coconut experience centre "that made us engage directly with the community and have better control of our cash flow".

Feludu's vision is to have multiple Kokari Café outlets across the continent to empower the women who will co-own the spaces and earn a living.

"Every food product we create is an ambassador of the Africa of my dreams," she says.



BEST OF THE REST

5 FOR THE BOOKSHELF

GREAT READS

Check out our latest selection of the best African books to read

BEST READ!

The Window Seat

AMINATTA FORNA

First published in 2021, *The Window Seat* is a collection of essays in which Fornia invites us to take a peek into her life, and bear witness to the worlds she's inhabited. Born in Scotland to a Sierra Leonean father and Scottish mother, Fornia spent portions of her childhood having to run away from tragedy, whether from Freetown after her father was imprisoned for opposing the dictatorship, or from Tehran where her mother and father (a UN official) worked. In '1979', one of the most enchanting essays in the collection, she takes us to pre-revolution Iran, where she spent her "evenings reading before taking a freezing shower (if there was water, which often there was not) with which I tried to imbue myself with revolutionary spirit". In other essays, she remembers the indentured

labourers her grandfather had, the happy moments she spent on flights as an unaccompanied minor and the fox that made her garden its home. Elsewhere, she turns analytical, exploring the often-duplicious symmetry of race in America, as well as reflecting on Barack Obama and her own father, members of the Renaissance Generation — a gilded class of African students who were awarded scholarships to study in Western universities. Fornia is an enchanting essayist, capable of both humour and insightful reflection. This, taken with her work as a novelist and a documentary filmmaker, marks her out as a writer of exquisite range.



"As a child, I was taught to ignore aggressive dogs, to keep walking. Once you're out of its territory, the dog will leave you alone... The same is supposed to be true of men, except it isn't."

AMINATTA FORNA, FROM 'THE WINDOW SEAT'



MEMOIRS OF A PORCUPINE

ALAIN MABANCKOU
The people of the Congolese village where Mabanckou's novel is set believe that every living person has an animal double which shapes the choices they make and the decisions they can take. For Kibandi, a young boy in the village, his animal double is the porcupine. Together, the two of them roam the village, committing grisly murders. In the book, told from the point of view of the porcupine, the spiny animal recalls their adventures.



LUCKY GIRL

IRENE MUCHEMI-NDIRITU
The Kenyan writer's first novel revolves around Soila, a girl living in Kenya with a mother who has narrow expectations of what her life is meant to be. Craving freedom, Soila goes to America for her college education. There, she finds her ideas about love, race and life

debunked. Confronted with a picture of what life can be, she attempts to marry it with the culture she grew up with in Kenya.

YINKA, WHERE IS YOUR HUSBAND?

LIZZIE DAMILOLA BLACKBURN
One of the most popular novels to be published in Africa over the past few years, this hilarious debut is the story of Yinka, a freshly minted graduate of Oxford who is facing societal pressure to settle down and find a husband. Her mother takes up the self-appointed role of finding her a partner, a coterie of aunts devote their energy to praying to God to find Yinka a man to marry her, while her friends chide her for being too traditional.



BLACK MAMBA BOY

NADIFA MOHAMED

Mohamed's novel is a fictionalised account of her father's move from Somalia, through Yemen, Sudan, Egypt and Palestine, all the way to the UK. Ten-year-old Jama tries to find an education and make something of his life. His mother dead and his father absent, he tries to make sense of his life while the wars of colonial conquest swirl around. As the Second World War breaks out, Jama finds himself witness not only to the wars of his home, but also to the plight of Jewish families fleeing Nazi Germany.



EYES ON THE GAME

EVERY FOUR YEARS, AFRICA GATHERS FOR ITS VERY OWN 'OLYMPICS' – THE AFRICAN GAMES. GHANA HOSTS THE 13TH EDITION OF THE CONTINENT'S SPORTING SHOWDOWN FROM 8 TO 23 MARCH. READ ON TO FIND OUT WHICH COUNTRIES TO WATCH...

WORDS: TIMOTHY OLOBULU

Previously known as the All Africa Games, the quadrennial championships bring together the entire continent to compete across multi-sport disciplines in a two-week celebration of African talent. The Games are organised by the Association of National Olympic Committees of Africa (ANOCA), a continental body of the International Olympic Committee. They were first held in 1965 in Brazzaville, Congo, almost 45 years after the idea was first conceived by Olympic movement founder, Frenchman Pierre de Coubertin. The debut competition attracted 30 African countries. Despite difficulties in hosting the subsequent edition four years later, the Games grew in leaps and bounds during the following years, with more countries enrolling to compete. Some 54 countries participated in the 2019 event in Rabat, Morocco. From 8 to 23 March 2024, Ghana will host the 13th African Games, with the cities of Accra, Kumasi and Cape Coast hosting 23 sporting disciplines – with rugby sevens and arm-wrestling set to debut. The African Games are viewed by most countries as a springboard for emerging talent. With many well-established athletes focused on the Olympic Games in Paris later in the year, Ghana offers those whose careers are beginning to blossom an opportunity to showcase their talent. Many athletes will head to Ghana with their eyes set on qualification for Paris.





STARS FROM THE AFRICAN GAMES

NUMEROUS ATHLETES WHO HAVE ENJOYED SUCCESS AT THE AFRICAN GAMES HAVE GONE ON TO BECOME GLOBAL SPORTING STARS

The Nigerian duo of **Tobi Amusan** and **Ese Brume** shone at the 2019 African Games in Rabat, and went on to establish their names in athletics folklore. After competing in Rabat, where she won her second African Games title, Amusan made history at the 2021 World Athletics Championships where she set a new record in the 100m hurdles, running 12.12 seconds in the semis, breaking the previous best of 12.20 set by American Kendra Harrison in 2016. She also became the first Nigerian world record holder in an athletics event.

Long jumper Brume also excelled after her victory in Rabat, going on to win bronze at the delayed Olympic Games in Tokyo in 2021, and double bronze in both the indoor and outdoor World Championships in 2022.

Moroccan boxer **Khadija El Mardi** is also a star born from the African Games. She won gold in the middleweight in Rabat, 2019, before going on to take bronze in the same weight division at the World Championships that same year. El Mardi then moved to the heavyweight division

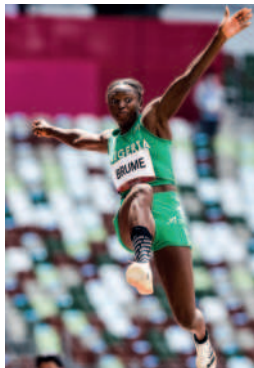
Right top: In the fast lane – South Africa's Chad le Clos powers through the 200m butterfly at the Tokyo Olympic Games

Right: Flying high – Nigeria's Ese Brume in the long jump

Four countries to watch



PA IMAGES/ALAMY



POIN PHOTOGRAPHY/ALAMY

and is the current world and African champion. She won the world title in 2023 in New Delhi.

Ivorian sprinter **Marie**

Jose Ta Lou clinched a double in the women's 100m and 200m in Brazzaville, 2015 – before going on to win double silver at the 2017 World Championships in London in both the 100m and 200m and

an Indoor silver in Birmingham in 2018. She returned to the African Games in Rabat in 2019 where she successfully defended her title.

South African swimmers **Cameron van der Burgh** and **Chad le Clos** are also stars from the African Games. Van der Burgh clinched two gold medals in 2015, in the 50m and 100m breaststroke, before going on to break the world record at the World Championships that same year. In 2016, he won his second Olympic medal before securing a world title at the World Short Course Championship that same year.

Le Clos won gold in both the 50m and 100m butterfly in 2015, before going on to win two silver medals at the Rio Olympics the following year. At the 2016 World Short Course Championships in Windsor, Canada, Le Clos broke his World and Championships records in the final of the 100m butterfly to win gold.



GHANA

As the hosting nation, Ghana will enjoy home support

and enter as many athletics events as possible. With a 15th place finish in the medal tables during the last Games held in Rabat, the Ghanaians will aim to bag more than the 13 medals they won in Morocco. Among the sports where Ghana will be going for gold is football, where they will be determined to progress beyond the group stages. The Ghanaians will also be seeking to build on their strength in weightlifting, the sport having given them eight of their 13 medals in Rabat.



EGYPT

The Egyptians were the table toppers at the 2019 Games in Rabat, winning a total of 259 medals. They've dominated events such as fencing, swimming and gymnastics, while their strength in judo and weightlifting (the latter earning them 56 medals in Rabat) makes them a force to be reckoned with. In team sports, Egypt are the defending champions in women's beach volleyball, while the men won silver in the 3x3 basketball and handball.

Left: Tobi Amusan is the current world record holder in the 100m hurdles with a time of 12.12 seconds



SOUTH AFRICA

Just like Egypt, South Africa have

always entered athletes in multiple sports. They won 87 medals in Rabat, including 10 medals in canoeing and 45 in swimming. With rugby sevens introduced at the Games, South Africa will now have an opportunity to bag even more medals in both the men's and women's tournaments. The South Africans are also expected to compete well in athletics field events, where they have previously dominated in competitions like the shot-put and hammer.



KENYA

Kenya, hosts of the fourth All Africa Games in 1987,

have always competed well in the competition and their athletes will be in line to battle for medals when the first gun fires at the University of Ghana Stadium. Kenya has often brought some of its top talent to the African Games. Among those who have clinched medals include Olympic silver medallist and former world javelin champion Julius Yego. He is expected to compete in Ghana as he looks to build up for what will possibly be his last Olympics in Paris later in the year. Kenya are also the defending champions in women's volleyball and will hope to shine in the rugby sevens tournament. (11)



Bucket-List
**SOUTH
AFRICA**

10 UNFORGETTABLE
EXPERIENCES TO ADD
TO YOUR ITINERARY



South Africa

01

CATCH A WAVE

Where to catch the perfect wave? For serious surf dudes the search for the ultimate break is a never-ending quest, but several destinations have surfaced as top spots to ride on the crest of a wave – and one of them is Jeffrey's Bay in the Eastern Cape Province. Lying at the heart of the Sunshine Coast, it has six main breaks, ranging from Kitchen Window (a good place to learn) to Supertubes – a classic right-hander that's the focus of the Billabong Pro surfing contest (also known as the J-Bay Open) each July. Practise first on 'lesser' breaks like Tubes and Magnatubes. Best time to go: May-August. ➔





South Africa
02

GET ON THE TABLE

Cape Town is dominated by this 1086m flat-topped mountain; its sheer slopes and 'tablecloth' of swirling clouds have for centuries intrigued seafarers, and it continues to astonish visitors today as it commands almost every view of the city. The dizzying ride to the top in the Table Mountain Aerial Cableway is one of Cape Town's must-dos, but the more adventurous can ascend on foot. Choose from several walking trails to the summit. Of the five official routes, the 2.5hr Skeleton Gorge trail is the shortest and most popular. Allow at least one hour to reach the top.



South Africa
03

TAKE THE PLUNGE ▲

Breathing underwater, experiencing weightlessness, riding undersea currents... everything about scuba diving is exhilarating – not to mention the incredible marine life and seascapes awaiting the underwater adventurer. South Africa boasts a sensational range of scuba opportunities and none are more thrilling than cage diving with great white sharks at locations like Gansbaai in the Cape. Heading east towards Durban, the Protea Banks are bristling with copper, dusky, ragged-tooth, thresher, tiger and Zambezi sharks, but with strong currents and depths ranging from 30 to 40m, this

is a site for experienced divers only. Nearby Aliwal Shoal hosts congregations of up to 150 ragged-tooth sharks between June and November. Time your visit to May or June and you might be lucky enough to witness the sardine run – an annual mass migration along the KwaZulu-Natal coastline when millions of tiny baitfish spark a feeding frenzy as sharks, tuna, seals, whales and dolphins drive the shoals to the surface. Boat trips give experienced divers (and brave snorkellers) the opportunity to witness bronze whaler sharks and both common and bottlenose dolphins corralling the sardines into tight bait-balls, bombarded from above by Cape gannets. ➔

South Africa

04

RAISE A GLASS

Just a short drive from the city is South Africa's oldest and most beautiful wine-producing area. This fertile series of valleys links the historical towns of Stellenbosch, Paarl and Franschhoek. The real architectural gems are the fine whitewashed Cape Dutch homesteads, some of them centuries old, which offer wine tasting al fresco under oak trees or underground in the cool cellars. Perennial favourites include the family friendly Spier Estate, or historic Vergelegen and Boschendal, both founded in the late 17th century and set around gracious old-world Cape Dutch manors. In the southern suburbs, Groot Constantia is the oldest wine estate in the Cape (dating back to 1659) and is one of several vineyards on the Constantia Wine Route. The variety of South African wines is astonishing – try the full-bodied red Pinotage, a grape variety created in South Africa in 1925.



South Africa

05

GET TO THE POINT

Allow a day to tour the spectacular Cape Peninsula with its spine of mountains, golden beaches and beautiful bays. The stunning coast road winds its way through the city's swanky suburbs on the Atlantic Seaboard on the western side, and down to Cape Point and the Cape of Good Hope at the southern tip of the peninsula (part of the Table Mountain National Park). Here you can climb to the lighthouse or hike on the wild beaches, before returning to the city via



the quaint fishing villages of the False Bay area on the peninsula's eastern coast. On the way, take a boat trip to see the Cape fur seal colony offshore from Hout Bay on Duiker Island, enjoy the hair-raising Chapman's Peak Drive, which is carved perilously into the cliffs above the sea, and be entertained by the comical African penguins at Boulders Beach. There are many quirky shops, craft markets and art galleries to grab your attention along the route, and ample places to stop for lunch – be it simple fish and chips or a gourmet seafood meal.



South Africa
06

WANDER THE WATERFRONT ▲

Cape Town's Victorian harbour is a lively district packed with shops (selling everything from souvenirs to luxury brands), buzzing bars, gourmet restaurants and all kinds of entertainment from comedy clubs to movie theatres – all linked by pleasant waterside walkways. The V&A Waterfront is still pervaded by maritime charm, thanks to its original historical buildings and working port. Attractions include the Cape Wheel and the Two Oceans Aquarium with its giant tanks showcasing aquatic wonders from kelp forests to sharks. Don't miss the Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa, developed in the old grain silo complex. Boat operators along Quay 5 offer a range of cruises, from short harbour tours to sunset sails to Camps Bay. Ferries to Robben Island, 12km away, can be picked up at the Nelson Mandela Gateway. Each excursion includes a fascinating tour by former political prisoners. You'll see infamous sights such as the Lime Quarry and a graveyard of leprosy victims. The most moving experience, however, is to see the maximum-security prison where thousands of South Africa's freedom fighters were incarcerated. To look inside Nelson Mandela's prison cell is to witness one of the most poignant places in South Africa's history.



South Africa
07

FLY LIKE AN EAGLE ▲

Rising on a thermal and a surge of adrenaline, spiralling with birds of prey and swooping across mountain slopes, paragliding is the ultimate free-spirited, free-flying adventure. Take off from Table Mountain for an incredible flight over Cape Town and the Twelve Apostles before landing at Camps Bay. Other great spots for getting aloft include the Cape Winelands, Garden Route and southern Drakensberg. ➔

South Africa
08

FLOAT AWAY

From the Nile to the Alps, hot-air balloons can get you on a high above some of the world's most iconic landscapes. With its

superb climate and dramatic landscapes, it's not surprising that hot-air ballooning is popular in South Africa. Prime year-round locations include the Magaliesberg Mountains, Pilanesberg National Park and Oudtshoorn in the Karoo.



South Africa
09

GET MULTI-ACTIVE ►

Lace up your hiking boots to explore the trails along the Dragon Mountains, a range of basalt outcrops extending for around 1125km from the Limpopo and Mpumalanga provinces of South Africa through KwaZulu-Natal and Lesotho to the Eastern Cape Province. Head to Royal Natal National Park to tackle the trek to the Amphitheatre, a vast semicircle of vertiginous cliffs. Abseiling and horse riding are also available, while whitewater rafting enthusiasts should set their sights on the Tugela River (best from November to April). One of the most challenging and potentially dangerous adventure activities, rock climbing not only demands strength and endurance, but also a high level of technical competence and thorough training. Not for the faint-hearted. Nestled in the Drakensberg Mountains on the fringe of the Mpumalanga escarpment, Waterval Boven is the gateway to South Africa's finest rock climbing, with more than 600 routes.




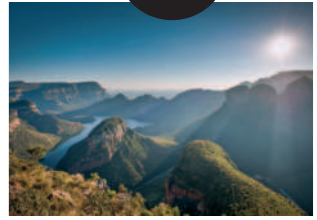


 Fly Nairobi to Johannesburg and Cape Town. Check out the latest deals at: kenya-airways.com

PLUS


And there's more...

 Embark on a scenic road trip along the Panorama Route to discover the breathtaking **Blyde River Canyon**. The **Three Rondavels** and **Bourke's Luck Potholes** are must-see attractions.




 Hike through the stunning **Brandwag Butress** and take in the sweeping views and golden sandstone cliffs of the **Maluti Mountains** in Golden Gate Highlands National Park.



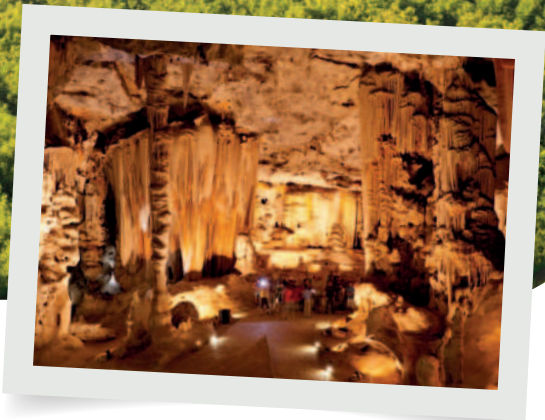
 Wander through the colourful streets of **Bo-Kaap**, a historic neighbourhood in Cape Town, admiring the vibrant houses and sampling Cape Malay cuisine.



 Explore the **KwaZulu-Natal Battlefields**, museums and memorials that tell the stories of the Anglo-Zulu and Anglo-Boer Wars. Shown here is Isandlwana.



 Uncover the secrets of an ancient African kingdom at **Mapungubwe National Park** where archaeological sites provide a glimpse into the rise and fall of a great civilisation from more than 700 years ago. 



South Africa 10 GO UNDERGROUND ▲

Squirming through narrow passageways deep underground may not be everyone's idea of fun, but there's no denying the adventurous allure of caving – and there are plenty of caves with enough headroom for those who prefer to be upright. A short way from Outshoorn in the Klein Karoo region of the Western Cape, the Cango Caves have easily accessible show caverns. Those in search of adventure can join a guided tour that descends several hundred steps to reach the Grand Hall and King Solomon's Mines before squeezing through the Tunnel of Love, which narrows at one point to just 30cm. Next comes the Ice Chamber, the Coffin and the Ice Cream Parlour, followed by a final tight scramble through the Devil's Chimney.





Pride of The
MARA

AUSTRALIAN PHOTOGRAPHER SHRAVAN RAO HAS BEEN NAMED THE GREATEST MAASAI MARA PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR 2023, WITH HIS POWERFUL IMAGE 'NIGHT RAINS' OF A MALE LION IN THE RAIN. FIND OUT HOW HE TOOK THIS REMARKABLE IMAGE AND DISCOVER WHAT INSPIRED THE OTHER NINE FINALISTS

WINNING PIC

NIGHT RAINS

BY SHRAVAN RAO
(AUSTRALIA)

Canon R6 | Canon EF 70-200mm
f/2.8 | 1/8s | ISO 12,800

STAYED AT: *Serian The Original*

GUIDED BY: **George Osono & William Kasale**

IN AID OF: **Mara Conservancy**

The **Greatest Maasai Mara Photographer of the Year** is an annual photographic competition designed to celebrate the Maasai Mara's year-round wildlife, supporting boots-on-the-ground conservation initiatives while harnessing the passion and talent of the Mara's wildlife photographic community. This year the competition received well over 1000 entries, with 359 photographers from 40 countries participating by submitting images captured during their stays at 94 different lodges and camps across the Greater Maasai Mara.

Shravan Rao receives a prize of US\$10,000 in cash and a five-night safari for two, courtesy of Angama Mara.

"The original idea was to get a backlit lion at night," he explains. "We got lucky with the torrential rains. The spotlight from the other vehicle lit up the lion perfectly, but the real bonus was the heat emanating from the lion's back and the heat from the ground that gave it a surreal, almost vintage look. The camera struggled in the very low light. Rain poured into the vehicle, drenching us completely, making it very hard to see, and very hard to keep the camera and lens dry enough. Nothing has been added or removed from this image. It is a real image with usual edits for contrast, sharpness and noise reduction." →



WHAT ARE THE JUDGES LOOKING FOR?

This year, the judging panel was looking for creativity and a fresh perspective; with a focus on the visual impact and emotional response that each image had. In addition, the technical difficulty and execution were also considered – the composition, lighting and background all needed to take the image to the next level. “I love the mood, slow shutter speed with the rain creating lines and the rim light on the lion,” said Gurcharan Roopra, one of the judges. Another, Adam Bannister, added: “Photography like this bursts with creativity and transcends the boundary with art. Unusual colouring and a fresh perspective of a very moody scene.”

GUIDING STARS

One of the competition’s main goals is to recognise the vital role safari guides play in the sustainable growth of photographic tourism, with their in-depth knowledge of animal

behaviour often being what gets the photographer to exactly the right place at the right moment to capture award-winning imagery. Each year, the winning photographer’s guide is also awarded a prize. This year, we have two winning guides from Alex Walker’s Serian camp – George Osono and William Kasale – who each receive a fully inclusive trip outside of Kenya.

SUPPORTING CONSERVATION

Every entry fee (US\$20 per image, or KSh1000 if paid by M-Pesa) goes to one of the competition’s conservation partners active in the Maasai Mara. The 2023 competition raised over US\$18,000, with proceeds shared between the Anne K Taylor Fund, The Maa Trust, Mara Elephant Project, Mara Conservancy, The Sheldrick Wildlife Trust and the Angama Foundation, which hosts the competition. Entries for this year’s competition are now open – find out more at thegreatestmaasaimara.com

UNDER A KENYAN SKY

BY PAUL DUNPHY (CANADA)

“One evening, it was mostly overcast and raining intermittently so my guide, Lenkoko, and I drove around chasing clouds and light. I was very happy to capture this group of eland posing under a big Kenyan sky. One of my photographic goals on this safari was to capture wildlife images which included the environment and landscape in which they live in order to provide a more complete story of the tranquillity and beauty of life in the Mara. Although 14,000km away, this scene reminds me of Alberta, where I grew up. Rolling prairie grassland under a dramatic sky with a slash of light in the foreground, a curtain of rain in the middle distance, along with sunlit clouds and foothills in the distance.”



Sony A1 | Sony 24-105mm G | f4.0 | 1/320s | ISO 800

STAYED AT: **Rekeru Camp**

GUIDED BY: **Dickson Lenkoko**

IN AID OF: **Mara Conservancy**



Nikon D5 | Nikon 500mm f4 | f/10 | 1/1000s | ISO 640

STAYED AT: **Oltepesi Tented Safari Camp**

GUIDED BY: **Jackson Ole Ronko**

IN AID OF: **Mara Conservancy**

THOSE LAST SECONDS

BY **ALEX BRACKX** (BELGIUM)

"One morning, we decided to follow four cheetahs on a hunt. We followed them for hours. We passed herds of topis, gazelles and zebras. We knew something was going to happen. When, five hours later, our Maasai guide whispered, 'They are going for the zebras,' I was convinced they would attack the topis or gazelles dotted across the valley. Seconds later, the cheetahs burst into a small group of zebras. One cheetah ran towards us, clinging onto a foal. In those seconds, I took this picture of the mother zebra launching a last attempt to push her foal away from the attacking cheetah. She failed. I will remember those last seconds for the rest of my life." ➡



I'LL CARRY YOU TILL THE END OF THE WORLD

BY DANIELA DI LILLO (SWITZERLAND)

"We were enjoying a warm afternoon game drive along a river when we found the mother lion and her sister showing protective behaviour. After a while the mum approached the hiding spots of the cubs and called them. We just caught a glimpse of them as they tried to climb out of a hole. We watched and waited for around three hours and finally, as the sun was going down, the mum felt confident enough to relocate the cubs. It was a very rewarding sighting."

Canon EOS 5D Mk III | 70-200mm | f2.8 | 1/640s | ISO 2,500

STAYED AT: Matira Bush Camp

GUIDED BY: Jamlick Naurori

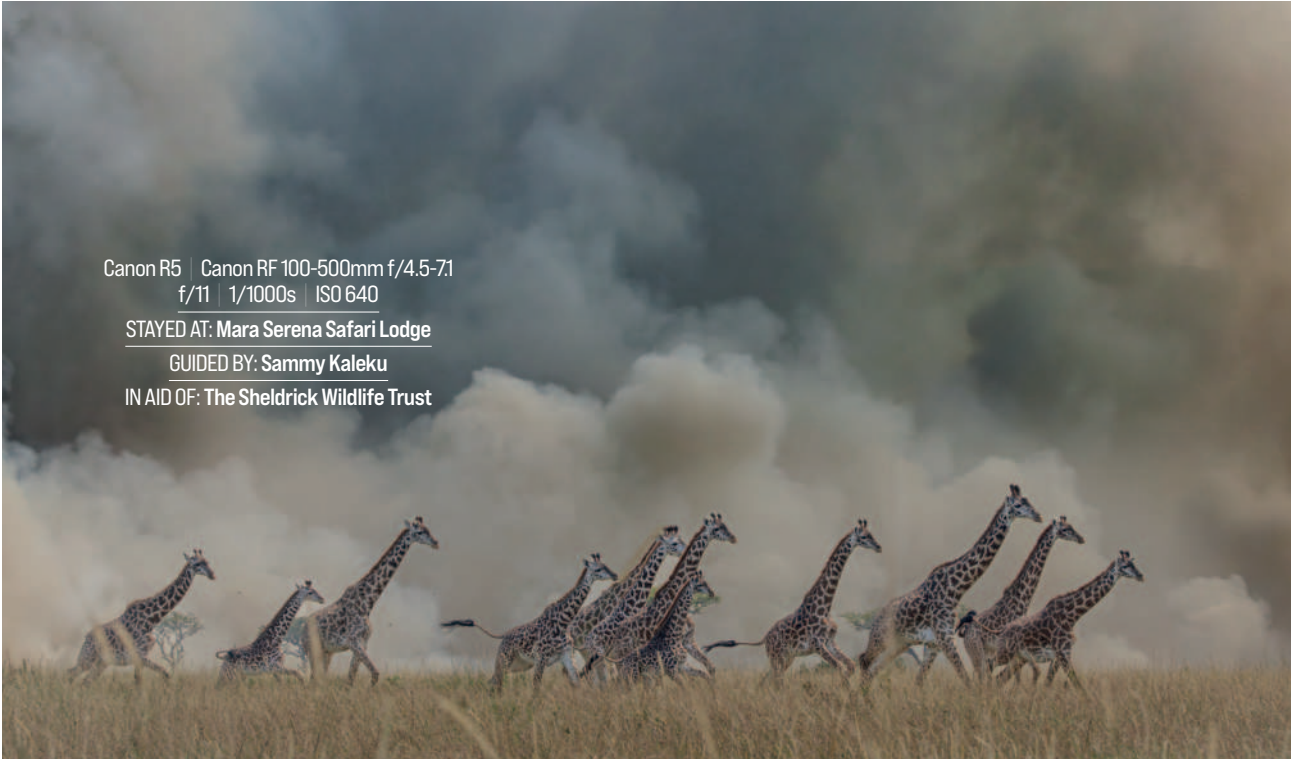
IN AID OF: The Sheldrick Wildlife Trust

Canon R5 | Canon RF 100-500mm f/4.5-7.1
f/11 | 1/1000s | ISO 640

STAYED AT: Mara Serena Safari Lodge

GUIDED BY: Sammy Kaleku

IN AID OF: The Sheldrick Wildlife Trust



RUN! BY VICKI SANTELLO (USA)

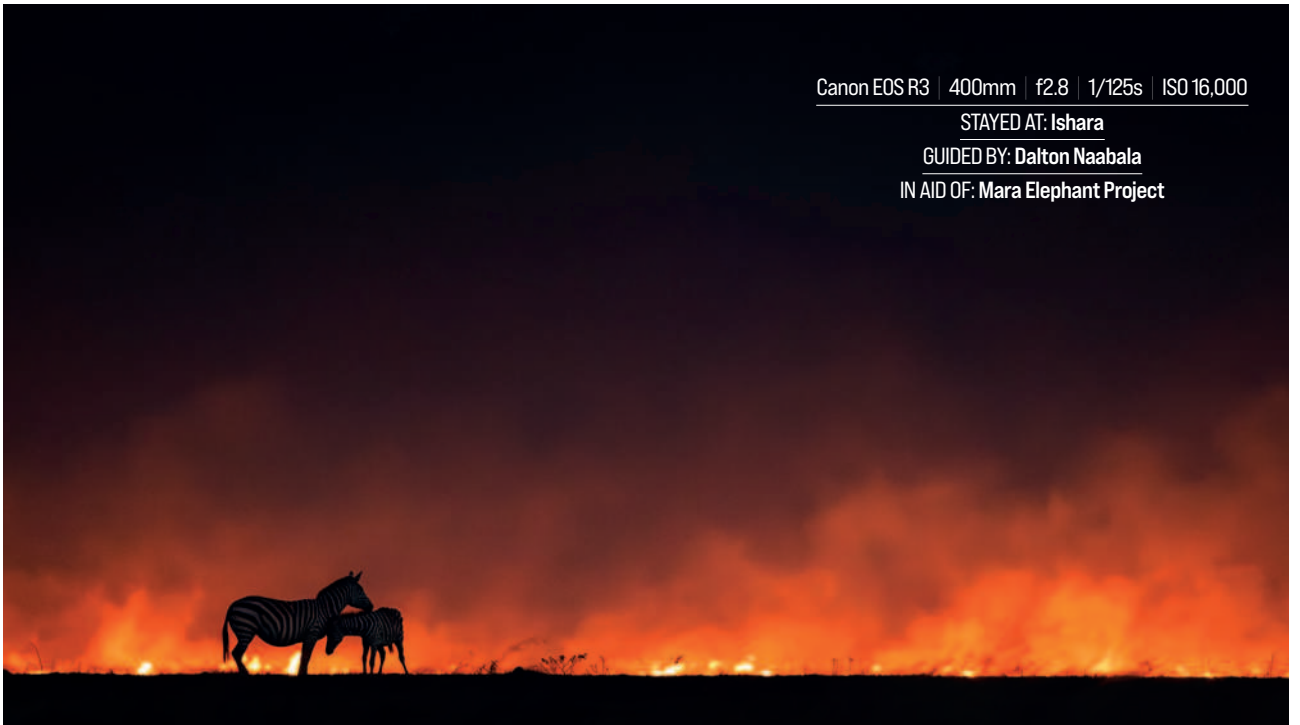
"A controlled burn spewed thick smoke clouds across the savannah while I watched from the road. Against the backdrop of plumes, animals of all species were desperate to flee the flames. None were more dramatic, in my eyes, than these giraffe that stampeded to safety."

Canon EOS R3 | 400mm | f2.8 | 1/125s | ISO 16,000

STAYED AT: Ishara

GUIDED BY: Dalton Naabala

IN AID OF: Mara Elephant Project



TOGETHER THROUGH THE INFERNO BY ERIC AVERDUNG (KENYA)

"After a long day spent in the Mara Triangle following the large herds, we returned to the reserve to find raging fires all over the plains. The controlled burning had taken place while we were away. Amidst the post-apocalyptic landscape, we spotted a herd of zebra, with the fires right behind them – a perfect opportunity to capture silhouettes with the flames. As I was shooting, I noticed a mother and her foal, separate from the rest of the herd.

Then they shared an embrace, completing the perfect moment, full of emotion and a joy to capture." ➔

KING I AM

BY TINA TOVAR DIAS (USA)

"As the sun was slowly dipping to the horizon, we were lucky to have chanced upon this beautiful lion from a distance. He calmly inched closer to us, which made my heart beat faster.

He eventually came to a halt and, at that fleeting moment, I did not know whether to simply watch him in awe or to photograph him.

His majestic pose as he surveyed his kingdom right in front of us was truly a sight to behold!"

Nikon Z9 | Nikkor Z 100-400mm f/4.5-5.6 VR S
f/5.6 | 1/1000s | ISO 4,500

STAYED AT: Mara Bush Camp

GUIDED BY: Wilson Siele

IN AID OF: Mara Conservancy

Nikon Z8 | AF-S Nikkor 300mm 1:4 E PF ED VR
f4.0 | 1/2500s | ISO 560

STAYED AT: Olive Bush Camp

GUIDED BY: Ben Maleyo

IN AID OF: Anne K Taylor Fund



MIRACLE

BY HEIKE SOMMER (GERMANY)

“We came across this very newborn giraffe calf – still wet from birth and doing its very first steps, still very wobbly and still having to sort its legs. The next thing we saw were two lionesses, trying to attack the little baby while the mother desperately and furiously tried to protect its little one. Courageously she kicked at the lionesses again and again until the baby slowly but surely got more and more sure-footed. However, the lionesses attacked the baby twice – the image shows one of these incredible attacks. It’s nature for sure, but was still hard to watch. Unbelievable but true, the baby managed to get back to its feet and galloped away with its mother until they disappeared over the horizon.”

Nikon D850 | 400mm 2.8, 1.7x teleconverter | f4.8
1/100s | ISO 400

STAYED AT: Mara Engai Wilderness Lodge

GUIDED BY: Onesmus Ole Mulwa

IN AID OF: The Sheldrick Wildlife Trust



RAINY DAY DREAMING BY VICKI JAURON (USA)

“It’s always great to get some moody rain opportunities on safari and I never seem to get enough. We were thrilled when the rain came down in droves and we used a relatively slow shutter speed in order to capture some streaks rather than dots. It wasn’t long before we had to zip up the canvas windows in order to avoid getting completely drenched ourselves, but the cheetahs didn’t seem bothered by the rain at all. A bit later, a rainbow emerged.” ➔

GLOWING RAINY STARS


BY REMYA WARRIER (KENYA)

“Rain in the Mara opens doors for some unique and magical frames. One such afternoon we saw some lions drenched in the rain with an eland kill and we waited patiently for it to shake. Choosing the right background matters for such frames.”

Nikon D850 | Nikon 80-400mm f4.5/5.6G
f6.3 1/3200s | ISO 1,250

STAYED AT: Osero Sopia River Camp

GUIDED BY: Jonathan Dkunny

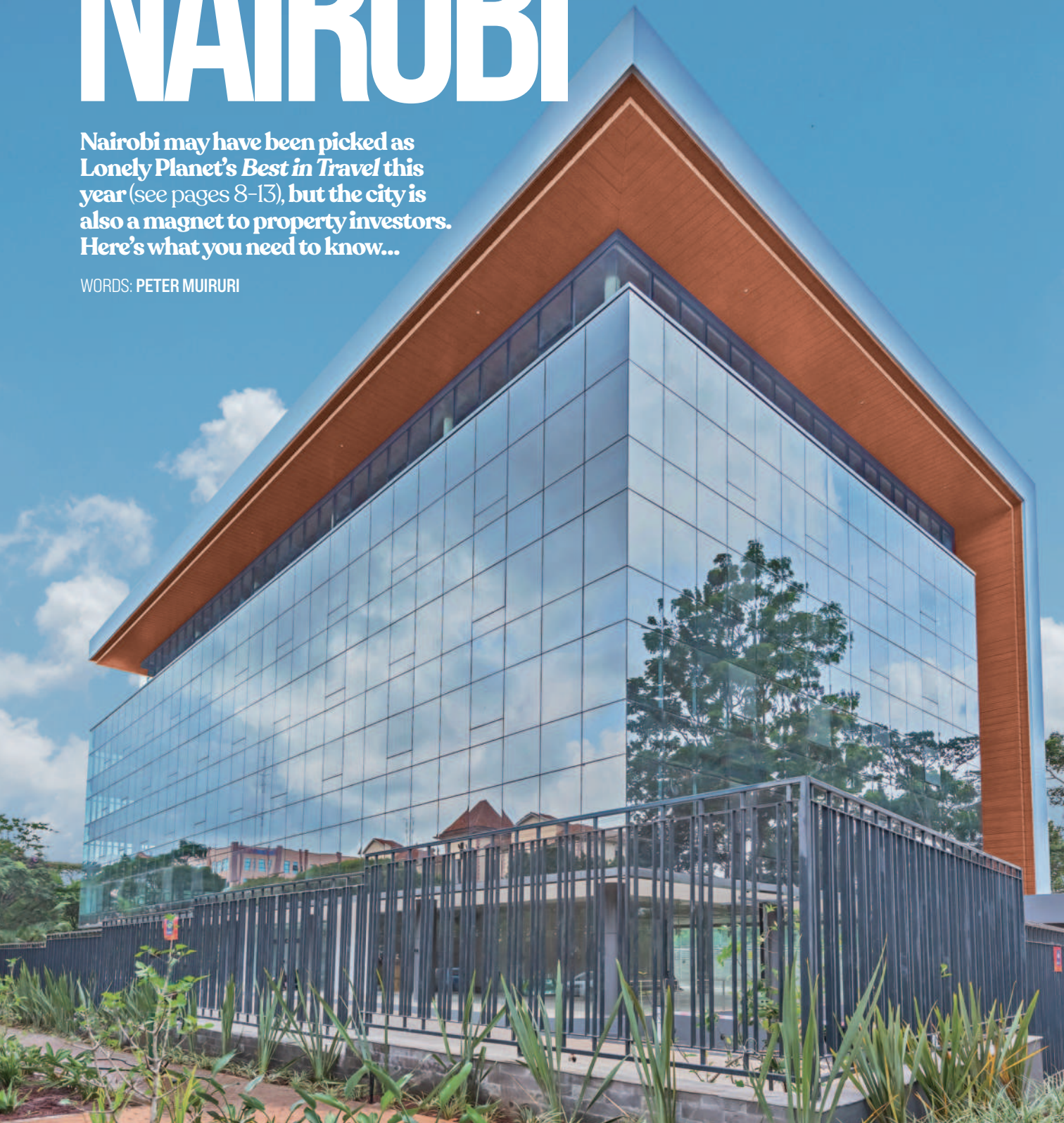
IN AID OF: The Sheldrick Wildlife Trust 



The rise and high-rises of NAIROBI

Nairobi may have been picked as *Lonely Planet's Best in Travel* this year (see pages 8-13), but the city is also a magnet to property investors. Here's what you need to know...

WORDS: PETER MUIRURI





Left: Riverbank Apartments at Two Rivers by Centum Real Estate

Far left: The Cube managed by agents Knight Frank Kenya

Below: One Africa building, also managed by Knight Frank

When the British railway contractors arrived at Kenya's future capital in 1899, they were not impressed by what they saw. The swamp that local Maasai herdsman called *uaso nyrobi*, or 'place of cool waters', was only good as a watering spot for their cattle.

Ronald Preston, an engineer, described it as "a bleak, swampy stretch of soggy landscape, windswept, devoid of human habitation of any sort, the resort of thousands of wild animals. The only evidence of the occasional presence of humankind was the old caravan track skirting the bog-like plain".

But Nairobi was set to change, beginning with the arrival of more than 5000 railway workers who needed accommodation and other social amenities. Tents and shanties slowly morphed into an urban sprawl, "a labyrinth place in which people and rats lived together in common squalor".

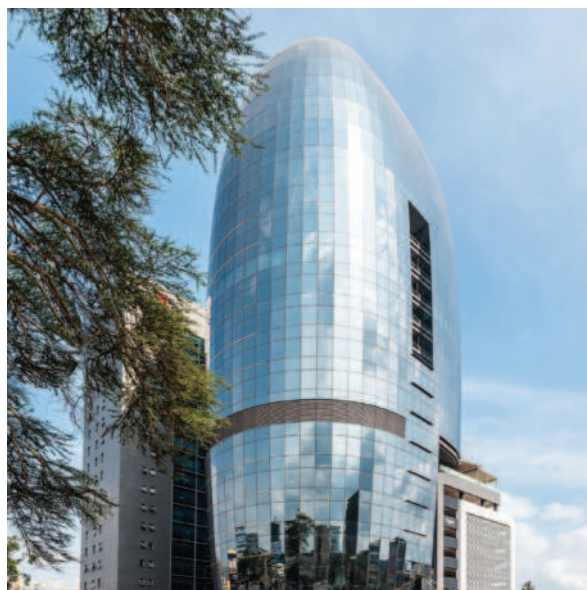
All that may sound like a fairytale as Nairobi has grown to become one of the most charming and well-developed cities in Africa. The current skyline bears little semblance to the 'swamp' that gave the continent a major commercial centre, thanks to the transformative power of the property industry.

For instance, along Nairobi's Waiyaki Way stands East Africa's premier skyscraper. Soaring 184m above the city skyline, the Global Trade Centre is full of superlatives. It is among the region's tallest office towers, hosting the five-star JW Marriott Hotel, an opulent

apartment community and a boutique mall. Having spent over US\$440 million on 300,000sq m of construction area, the GTC developers opine the structure will house Fortune Global 500 companies and help catapult the country's property scene onto the international market.

"It represents an overall rise in standards of both service and scale among city complexes in East Africa" states GTC in an online post.

"It provides Nairobi with a premium, high-quality, convenient and safe one-stop working and living platform. It is destined to be the hub of the economy, business and living consumption within Nairobi and East Africa."



DESPITE SUPPRESSED GROWTH IN THE LAST THREE YEARS DUE TO COVID-19, ANALYSTS SEE A RESILIENT MARKET WHERE EXCLUSIVE HIGH-END OFFICE, RETAIL AND RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS "CONTINUE ENJOYING PRIME RENTS AND ABOVE MARKET OCCUPANCY RATES"

Despite suppressed growth in the last three years due to Covid-19, analysts see a resilient market where exclusive high-end office, retail and residential developments "continue enjoying prime rents and above-market occupancy rates", according to Knight Frank Kenya. With the value of building plans approved by the Nairobi City County government hitting Ksh162.5 billion in 2022, there's reason for optimism.

"Kenya is definitely a good place to invest in property," says Mark Dunford, managing director at Knight Frank Kenya. "Remember we just came out of Covid-19, then went through Kenya's election cycle. We have the war in Ukraine, as well as the ongoing crisis in the Middle East. However, the long-term fundamentals of investing in property in Kenya are sound."

Dunford says anyone investing in the sector should do an analytical study to see where gaps exist for an investment opportunity. "If the office uptake slows down or the residential segment softens, there are alternative investment classes, such as student housing and industrial developments that have seen growth in the last 24 months," he says.

In addition, statistics from GlobalData show the construction industry in Kenya is expected to grow at an average annual rate of 5.9% between 2024 and 2027 →

as the government continues to incentivise investors in low-cost housing in a country with one of the highest housing deficits in Africa.

“The commercial construction sector is expected to expand... before registering an average annual growth of more than 5% from 2024 to 2027, supported by investment in the construction of retail buildings and in leisure and hospitality projects, amid a rebound in tourism activities – which is one of the leading sources of foreign exchange for Kenya,” states GlobalData’s report on Kenya.

Such positive reports are causes for optimism among key players in the country’s property sector with the housing deficit elsewhere in Africa offering an opportunity for developers. It is expected that the continent will become home to six of the 43 megacities in the world by 2030 with the middle class increasing to 1.1 billion people by 2050, pushing the need for better housing and retail facilities further. Nigeria, for example, will require at least 22 million houses to address the current housing deficit.

THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME

As the GTC tower rules the Nairobi skyline, the country’s new malls are competing for the middle- to high-class pockets. From the industrial town of Thika north of Nairobi to Kitengela, a township located southeast of the city and aptly known as ‘Nairobi’s bedroom’, the shopping experience is no different to anywhere else around the world.

Gucci, Givenchy, Prada and Chanel have become household names to shoppers in these malls. Scenes of young ones reaching out for a bite at a KFC, Burger King or Subway in an upmarket mall away from Nairobi’s CBD while their parents shop at the French giant retailer Carrefour are common. And these malls are getting bigger by the day.

For example, Two Rivers Mall, located next to the diplomatic node of Gigiri, has dominated the shopping scene for the last six years, drawing on its mixed-use concept – where people live, work and play – to reel in customers. At 65,000sq m, it has



This pic, and below: KOFISI Africa is a market leader in delivering bespoke workspaces for offices, restaurants and hospitality areas





The rise of **FLEXIBLE OFFICE SPACE**

In a number of African destinations, a new concept of flexible working spaces has emerged, complete with amenities such as a gym, kitchen, nursing rooms and gaming areas. We interviewed **Michael Aldridge**, CEO and founder of KOFISI Africa about what the new office trend means for the continent

Q Can you give us an overview of KOFISI's presence in Africa? We've been in the Kenyan market since 2014 and rebranded as KOFISI in 2019. We have six centres in Nairobi, one in Dar es Salaam and one in Lagos. We've expanded our centre in Lagos and are taking on more space in Dar es Salaam. We are opening a centre in both Kigali and in Casablanca in 2024. We target on operating 300,000-500,000sq ft of work and office space in each gateway city on the continent.

Q What gaps are you seeking to fill? There is a gap in the market for a premium, 'customer service driven' office product. Companies are looking to build a stronger culture of productivity and connection through superbly designed spaces fitted with the latest technology and a full range of hospitality services including room and reception services, food and beverage, restaurants, bars and wellness – akin to the services you'd expect in a hotel. We call it the 'hotelification of the workplace'. We have attracted a number of multinationals such as Google, GIZ, Bolt and Amazon.

Q How has the model been embraced? Post-Covid, there was a huge shift globally with companies embracing the flexible office model as opposed to long and costly office leases. The future of the workplace is more than providing just a desk and a chair. Hospitality and hotel design is shaping that trend, especially in Kenya and across Africa, where a young, savvy and technologically advanced working population wants to work from premium, engaging and service-led environments.

Q How would you describe Nairobi's Grade A office space? Nairobi's Grade A office space is of exceptional quality, but there's not enough

of it, with an oversupply of Grade B buildings. Companies with offices inside Grade B buildings are often tied down to lengthy traditional leases with fixed rents too high for the current economic climate. Transitional clients often want to move into Grade A space, but their contracts are fixed. The current perception of a 'glut' in office space is because many landlords are not responding to the cyclical or recessionary drivers in play. They're holding out to achieve rental rates that are no longer affordable or justifiable to most businesses.

Q What kind of infrastructure is needed to support these flexi working spaces in a city like Nairobi? Road infrastructure has improved access to most of our centres, opening up Westlands and Riverside as a preferred destination for business. The Nairobi Expressway has provided easy access from the airport and reduced travel time between Karen and central Nairobi. However, we need a more forward-thinking approach to city planning with investments in cycle and bus lanes with pedestrian walkways. Some African cities have smart city traffic and management systems. A similar investment in Nairobi would enhance the urban experience in this innovative city.



carried the tag as East Africa's largest mall, part of a Ksh25 billion investment by Centum Group.

At the other end of the city in Eastleigh, a suburb to the east of Nairobi known as 'little Mogadishu' owing to the large Somali community, a new mall that seeks to put a shine on that part of town is up and running. Business Bay Square (BSS Mall) consists of 3500 shops, 32 restaurants, 12 banks, three hospitals, a gold market and a seven-star hotel – all served by 2200 parking spaces.

Like Two Rivers Mall, BSS Mall is a Ksh25 billion investment and, like similar developments, targets the rising middle class in Kenya and the East African region.

"With a growing middle class, and thus more disposable income, international and local developers have quickly grabbed the opportunity to tap into the ready market with the mall concept which has seen Kenya become the second largest in mall space in Africa, after South Africa," states the Nairobi-based real estate firm Cytonn.

The big mall concept seems to go head-to-head with smart residential developments. For example, on Centum Real Estate's pipeline in Two Rivers Residential District in Nairobi there is a total of 3089 units, both completed and under construction. Vipingo Development in Kilifi, Elmer One in Nairobi and Pearl Marina Estates, a futuristic waterfront address in Uganda, round up the group's premier developments. And with an asset base worth over Ksh40 billion and over 4250 hectares of land bank, Centum RE is poised to shake the region's real estate market for some time to come.

Kenneth Mbae, managing director at Centum RE, says there has been a market shift towards mixed-use residential developments, with developers incorporating sustainable or 'green building' to attract global funding and a well-informed clientele.

"There has been a growing trend in the development of affordable houses that integrate green building designs or certifications such as EDGE, an International Finance Corporation tool, amongst others. This has enabled



developers to attract green financing or investments from institutional developers," he says.

Above: NestyWoods Villas are marketed by Kinet Properties

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

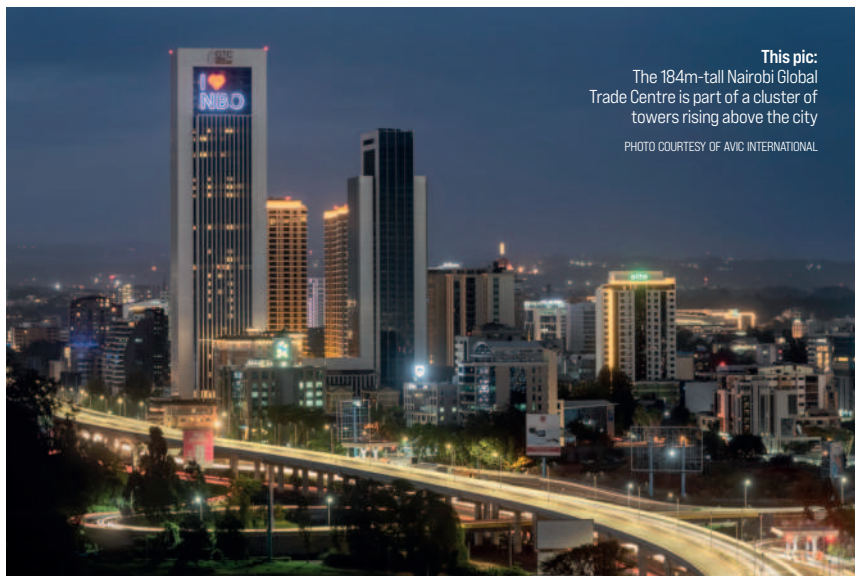
Across Kenya and the rest of the continent, governments and bilateral donors continue to lay massive infrastructure projects that, in turn, spur real estate development. For example, when the government completed the US\$360m Thika Superhighway connecting the city with central Kenya, property along the corridor almost doubled in value.

"The expressway has yielded impressive and visible results," stated the African Development Bank, one of the project financiers. "It has contributed to improvements in accessibility, affordability and reliability of the transport infrastructure system to promote economic growth and socio-economic development in Kenya. It has attracted a long list of businesses from supermarkets,

to car dealerships and hotels."

According to Kenneth Mbae of Centum, the development of road infrastructure by the government has positively impacted the property market especially along Kenya's coast by making some hitherto nondescript locations more attractive to real estate investors. For example, Vipingo on the north coast, with its luxury resorts, golf clubs, residential developments and industrial parks, is now a premier business and lifestyle destination.

"Vipingo is well connected to other parts of the coastal region through the Mombasa-Kilifi highway, currently being expanded into a dual carriageway. As a result, there has been an uptick in demand within the property market."



This pic: The 184m-tall Nairobi Global Trade Centre is part of a cluster of towers rising above the city
PHOTO COURTESY OF AVID INTERNATIONAL

HOUSE HUNTING? A QUICK GUIDE TO PROPERTY

Few endeavours are as stressful as hunting for a home. How do you decide if it's worth buying a house or renting one? **Ian Kahara**, chief executive at Kinet Properties, takes you through the process of finding the right roof to go over your head

Seek reliable information on home ownership from reputable sources, such as government housing agencies, real estate websites and financial institutions. Additionally, engage with professionals in the sector and attend property expos for valuable insights.

To build or buy: Building a home offers customisation options and potentially lower costs, while buying a pre-built home provides immediate occupancy with less hassle.

To buy or rent: Buying a home offers long-term equity and stability, while renting provides flexibility. Home ownership symbolises stability and success, but changing economic dynamics

and a growing younger population are driving interest in alternative models like rent-to-own and tokenisation, providing more flexibility.

Pay that mortgage quicker: Accelerating mortgage payments can be achieved by making extra payments whenever possible, exploring shorter loan terms and using windfalls or bonuses to reduce the principal.

On rent-to-own models: These are gaining popularity in Kenya, especially among individuals who may face challenges securing traditional mortgages. They offer a pathway to home ownership while allowing tenants

to build equity over time. Such innovative approaches provide an additional avenue for financing and ownership that effectively converts your rent into a saving.



KENYA'S HOUSING DEFICIT: A CHALLENGE AND AN OPPORTUNITY

200,000 housing units needed annually for all income levels

The culminating housing deficit stands at over **2 million units** with nearly 61% of urban households living in slums

Production of housing units currently at **less than 50,000 units** annually, well below the target number

Demand and supply side exacerbated by an urbanisation rate of 4.4%, equivalent to **0.5 million new city dwellers every year**

There are fewer than **25,000 outstanding mortgages** in a population of 47 million

Banks have limited access to long-term funding and few institutions have accessed capital markets to fund mortgages

MAKING AN OLD HOME LOOK NEW

Sitna Chanzu, an architect and interior designer with Nairobi-based Design Source, shares some tips if you're thinking of renovating your home

For best results, Chanzu recommends speaking to an expert who will guide you on how best to achieve your home makeover. "Discuss budgets and cash flow projections. For any changes and additions that may come midway through the project, consult and plan before actualising them," she says.

Next, identify the style you want and build a theme around it – this allows you to have a design direction for your project.

Chanzu advises against fast design trends that fall in and out of style quickly. "While aesthetics is important, it is vain without functionality." Instead, she urges the use of functional and sustainable design features that allow for longevity. For example, African baskets can be used not only for beauty but storage as well, as can glassware, earthenware and wooden sculptures.

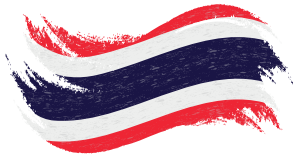
"Apart from being pieces of art, a few personal quirks such as wall art, sculptures, lamps and accent throws have functional elements too. Moderation and balance are important since even luxurious items, when overused, can be obtrusive. For ambience, use warm colours to create an air of comfort, relaxation and uplifting moods."

As for the kitchen, Chanzu says the layout should suit the user. "Changing cabinet doors, drawer fronts with their ironmongery, floor tiles, backsplash and countertops makes a difference in the look of the kitchen space," she advises. "And remember to use modern kitchen appliances. It helps in elevating the kitchen's overall feel." 





48 HOURS IN BANGKOK



HOW TO SPEND TWO DAYS IN THE VIBRANT THAI CAPITAL IN A WHIRLWIND OF CULTURE AND CUISINE

Bangkok effortlessly blends tradition with modernity. In just two days, you can dive into the heart of Thai culture, explore historic temples, savour mouth-watering street food and experience the city's dynamic atmosphere. Here's our travel guide to help you make the most of 48 hours in one of the world's most exciting cities...

Right: The feet of the Reclining Buddha are 5m wide, while the overall statue is 46m long





Fly Nairobi to Bangkok.
Check out the latest deals at:
kenya-airways.com

This pic:
The Grand Palace

Right:
Guardian statues
supporting the golden
Chedi Stupa at Wat Phra
Kaew, and cloud-pruned
trees at Wat Arun Temple



DAY 1 IT'S TEMPLE TIME

MORNING

Start your day with a visit to the iconic Grand Palace, a dazzling complex of opulent buildings, courtyards and temples, each adorned with intricate architectural details and vibrant colours. Built in 1782, it served as the royal residence for generations of Thai kings and remains an essential symbol of the nation's monarchy. At its heart lies Wat Phra Kaew, the Temple of the Emerald Buddha, enshrining the revered Emerald Buddha – a sacred and meticulously crafted statue dating back to the 14th century.

After exploring the Grand Palace, take a short stroll to Wat Pho, known for its massive



reclining Buddha statue. Established in the 16th century, Wat Pho pre-dates the founding of the city itself and stands as one of Thailand's oldest and largest temple complexes. Steeped in history and spirituality, it holds a significant place in Thai Buddhism. As well as the 46m-long, gold-plated Reclining Buddha, the temple complex also houses over a thousand images of Buddha and

Right: Exploring
Thonburi by boat

Below: Asiatique



KODAKWA / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

numerous elaborately adorned stupas, pavilions and courtyards.

AFTERNOON

Head to Tha Tien Pier and board a boat to cross the Chao Phraya River to the historic district of Thonburi, dotted with ornate temples, traditional wooden houses and markets. Don't miss Wat Arun, the Temple of Dawn, with its intricate spires and panoramic views of the river. The canals, or khlongs, threading through Thonburi are ripe for exploration. Take a boat ride along the waterways, weaving past stilted houses and floating markets, before enjoying a riverside lunch at a local eatery.

Return to the city centre and delve into Asiatique The Riverfront, nestled along the Chao Phraya River. The innovative shopping and entertainment complex is renowned for its colossal Ferris wheel, which offers panoramic views of the river and the cityscape. At sunset, Asiatique transforms into a kaleidoscope of lights, creating a magical ambiance. The riverside marketplace offers everything from traditional Thai handicrafts to electronics.

Dress modestly, covering your shoulders and knees, as a sign of respect when entering religious sites.

Wat Pho is not only a religious pilgrimage site, but also a centre for traditional Thai massage – an opportunity to rejuvenate and recharge for the afternoon ahead.

TOP TIP



COMAROLON / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

DAY 2 CULTURE AND CUISINE

MORNING

Kick off your second day with a visit to the Jim Thompson House, a museum dedicated to the American entrepreneur who played a significant role in reviving the Thai silk industry. The traditional teakwood house is an architectural gem surrounded by lush gardens.

A must-see exhibit is the extensive collection of exquisite

Thai silk artifacts, including intricate textiles, garments and samples of Thompson's pioneering silk designs. The tropical garden, complete with lotus ponds and statues, is a peaceful refuge from bustling Bangkok. On the guided tour you'll learn about Thompson's mysterious disappearance in Malaysia's Cameron Highlands in 1967.

Afterwards, explore nearby Siam Square, the city's lively

Left: The Jim Thompson House offers a fascinating insight into the Thai silk industry

Below: Delicious street food is widely available in Bangkok

Right: Elephant souvenirs on sale in MBK





shopping and entertainment district. Indulge in some retail therapy or simply soak up the energetic vibe of this modern urban centre.

Head to the nearby MBK Centre, a massive shopping mall where you can find a wide array of local and international cuisine. You'll find everything you'd want here – but MBK is particularly famous for its vast selection of affordable fashion items and accessories. Several floors are dedicated to electronics and gadgets. You can find great deals on smartphones, headphones, cameras and other tech accessories. Explore the upper floors for Thai handicrafts and souvenirs, or head to the lower floors to find food stalls.

AFTERNOON

Visit the Erawan Shrine, dedicated to Lord Brahma, the creator god in Hinduism. An iconic symbol of Bangkok, it represents the harmonious coexistence of different religious beliefs in Thai culture. Its detailed design and spiritual atmosphere make it a must-see cultural landmark. Devotees often make floral offerings, light incense and perform traditional dances.

As the sun begins to set, head to the vibrant district of Sukhumvit where you can explore the bustling night markets and sample local street food.

Above: Baskets of dyed silk on display at the Jim Thompson House

Below: The Erawan Shrine is also known as the Thao Maha Brahma



6 STREET FOOD DISHES YOU MUST TRY

Kai jeow: Thai-style omelette, usually served with rice. Variations may include minced pork, onions and sometimes chillies for an extra kick.

Khao niew mamuang: A dessert of sticky rice topped with ripe mango slices and drizzled with sweet coconut milk.

Pad thai: Vendors in Sukhumvit often offer variations of the iconic Thai stir-fried noodle dish with a choice of protein, tamarind sauce, peanuts and lime.

Som tum: A spicy and tangy green papaya salad that typically includes chillies, lime, fish sauce and peanuts.

Moo ping: You won't be able to resist the smoky flavour and tender meat of grilled marinated pork skewers served with sticky rice.

Gai tod: Thai-style chicken, typically marinated in a mix of herbs and spices before being deep-fried to perfection.

Right: Bite-size skewers of marinated pork – or moo ping



Getting around

The BTS (Bangkok Mass Transit System) Skytrain is an efficient and fast way to travel between key locations in the city. It covers both the Sukhumvit and Silom lines, connecting many popular areas and is useful for avoiding traffic congestion. The MRT (Mass Rapid Transit) subway complements the BTS system, covering different areas of Bangkok. The city's bus network is extensive, but may be challenging for tourists to navigate due to language barriers. Taxis are widely available and relatively affordable in Bangkok. Ensure the driver uses the meter, and it's advisable to have your destination written in Thai. The Chao Phraya River runs through Bangkok, and express boats provide a scenic and efficient mode of transportation. They operate on fixed routes, making them suitable for riverfront destinations. Bangkok's city centre, especially around popular areas like Sukhumvit and Silom, is pedestrian-friendly – and walking is the best way to immerse yourself in the street life and markets. 🚶



Guidebook writer Philip Briggs and his photographer wife Ariadne Van Zandbergen recently spent six

REDISCOVERING

ZIMBA

Pride of Zimbabwe. The Hwange Lion Research Project, set up in 1999 by the Wildlife Conservation Research Unit at the University of Oxford, is one of the longest-running conservation research projects in Africa

weeks driving the length and breadth of Zimbabwe to see what it is really like to travel round right now

ZIMBABWE

WORDS:
PHILIP BRIGGS

IMAGES:
ARIADNE VAN
ZANDBERGEN



Zimbabwe should, by rights, be one of Africa's top tourist destinations. And – easy to forget today – for a few years in the 1990s that's exactly what it was. Adrenaline junkies flocked to Victoria Falls to raft the white waters of the Zambezi and bungee jump from its historic bridge. Safari enthusiasts enjoyed world-class wildlife viewing in the likes of Hwange and Mana Pools. A plethora of scenic highlights, headed by the peerless Victoria Falls, was complemented by a tangible cultural heritage that included the monumental ruined city of Great Zimbabwe and some breathtaking prehistoric rock art sites.

Boosted by tourist amenities that catered to every corner of the market, and one of Africa's highest literacy and education levels, Zimbabwe back then was positively pumping, and it felt like a country with the rosiest of futures.

A quarter century of political and economic turmoil now separates us from those halcyon days. Having been regular visitors to Zimbabwe back in its heyday, Ariadne and I returned earlier this year on a six-week self-drive trip, to experience a country that seems ideally poised to continue its tourist revival.

The likes of Victoria Falls, Hwange and Great Zimbabwe are as alluring as ever. The travel infrastructure is still in unexpectedly good shape. And, at risk of generalisation, the people of Zimbabwe, despite all they've had to contend with, remain as welcoming and articulate as ever. So, what were the highlights from our trip?



01

SUNRISE OVER VICTORIA FALLS

You'd be crazy to visit Zimbabwe and not make the effort to see Victoria Falls. Known as *Mosi-oa-Tunya* ('The smoke that thunders') in the local Lozi language, this raging mile-wide waterfall constitutes the world's largest sheet of falling water, and thoroughly deserves its spot as the sole African representative in the official Seven Wonders of the Natural World. But there is one catch. As is so often the case with headline tourist attractions, Victoria Falls at peak hours can become overrun with selfie junkies. To avoid the crowds, we set the alarm early and headed to the entrance gate at opening time. And it was well worth skipping breakfast to experience the Thundering Smoke in this near pristine state. Watching the sun rise behind the explosive main falls, tinting the sky several shades of orange, is an unforgettable sight. Better still, for a good 30 minutes after we arrived, we wandered along the cobbled paths that connect the spray-soaked viewpoints with barely another tourist in sight.

02

EXPLORING THE FORGOTTEN KHAMI RUINS

Situated within easy day-tripping distance of Zimbabwe's second city Bulawayo, Khami is often overlooked in favour of the larger stone ruins at Great Zimbabwe. But a visit to this little-known site, which sprawls across a hilly stand of miombo woodland, is worthwhile – and made doubly enjoyable by the fact you're likely to have it to yourself.

The highlight of Khami is the Main Platform (left), a former royal residence comprising nine terraces and a maze of passageways where our only companions were a few vervet monkeys. Although Khami is far smaller in scale than Great Zimbabwe, the drystone walls here feature

a more complex variety of checkerboard, herringbone and other decorative patterns.

Not far from Main Platform is a Dominican Cross reputedly set in place by the Portuguese warlord Sísñando Dias Bayão, who led a 1644 expedition into present-day Zimbabwe to locate the source of its gold, and might well have been responsible for the destruction and abandonment of Khami. As with Great Zimbabwe, the site museum is more worthwhile than its modest proportions suggest – artefacts unearthed during excavations include a unique ceramic pot that resembles a headless hippo.





It was well worth skipping breakfast to experience the Thundering Smoke in this near pristine state. Watching the sun rise behind the explosive main falls, tinting the sky several shades of orange, is an unforgettable sight.

PHILIP BRIGGS

A LUNCH STOP AT THE VULTURE RESTAURANT

It doesn't sound particularly tempting, does it? But the vulture restaurant at Victoria Falls Safari Lodge turned out to be an unexpected highlight of our time in Zimbabwe. Every day, at 1pm, meat offcuts and scraps from the lodge restaurant are placed at a feeding spot that attracts large flocks of hungry white-backed and other vultures.

Far from being gimmicky, the vulture restaurant represents an important conservation effort. All Africa's vulture species are now listed as endangered, and maintaining a fixed feeding spot helps discourage them from roaming outside conservation areas and eating poisoned

meat left out by farmers. It's also a genuinely educational experience. Vultures are not the most superficially lovable of creatures, but the informative talk given before they are fed emphasises the vital ecological role played by these and other scavengers by clearing the bush of rotting carcasses and associated diseases.

Admirably, Victoria Falls Safari Lodge doesn't charge outsiders for the vulture experience. However, we lingered on to enjoy a pizza at the terrace restaurant, which overlooks a waterhole that attracts a steady stream of wildlife from neighbouring Zambezi National Park. →

03



04 GATHERING ELEPHANTS IN HWANGE

One of Africa's truly great safari destinations, Hwange is Zimbabwe's largest national park and home to an exceptional diversity of wildlife. Highlights of the several days we spent there included a super-chilled cheetah with cubs on the prowl in the Bomani concession, a face-off between a lion pride and elephant herd near Nehimba, and tracking newly reintroduced rhinos on foot in the community-owned Ngamo Wildlife Sanctuary. Where Hwange really excels, however, is the staggering number of elephants – currently estimated at around 50,000 – that congregate around its waterholes in the dry season. We were lucky enough to witness one such pachydermal gathering at Verney's Camp, which overlooks a pumped pan that attracted perhaps 500 elephants over the course of an afternoon. The playful interaction between the different herds kept us so entertained that we sat there all afternoon without bothering to go on a game drive.

BOULDERS AND ROCK ART OF MATOBO HILLS

The granite domes, giant whalebacks and improbable balancing rock formations that characterise many parts of Zimbabwe reach their apex in Matobo, an Ndebele name that means 'Bald heads'. The most striking rock formation we saw here is the so-called Mother and Child, which resembles a woman carrying a baby on her back, with a top-heavy head that looks like it's one tiny gust away from decapitation (pictured below).

A better-known landmark included on pretty much all visits is the grave of that arch-imperialist Cecil John Rhodes. This rests within a ring of giant boulders at the summit of a vast whaleback called Malindidzimu (a local Kalanga name meaning 'Hill of ancestral spirits') and offers spectacular views over the surrounding hills.

Scenery aside, our two main highlights of Matobo were tracking white rhinos on foot (we got within a few metres of these imposing creatures, which are bulkier than any terrestrial mammal other than elephants), and visits to several prehistoric rock art sites including Nswatugi Cave, which houses a complex panel of superimposed paintings dominated by some outstanding figures of running giraffes.





06

STEPPING BACK IN TIME AT GREAT ZIMBABWE

Great Zimbabwe really should be on everybody's African travel wish list. This imposing stone city, which supported 20,000 inhabitants in its mediaeval heyday, prospered at a time when up to a quarter of the world's gold supply was mined by its Shona constructors, then transported along the Zambezi and Save valleys to coastal trade entrepots such as Sofala and Kilwa.

I'd already visited Great Zimbabwe a couple of times in the 1980s and '90s, and returning a quarter of a century later it was every bit as atmospheric as I remembered. Most spectacular is the oval Great Enclosure, whose mortar-free stone walls possess the largest footprint of any ancient structure in subequatorial Africa, and enclose a mysterious 10m-high Conical Tower (pictured above). Elsewhere, we took childlike pleasure in exploring the sprawling passages and platforms of the labyrinthine Hill Complex, which is the oldest part of the city, dating back at least 1000 years. Drop into the site museum to place Great Zimbabwe in its historical context, which – despite voluminous colonial-era wittering to the contrary – had absolutely nothing to do with the Queen of Sheba, or King Solomon, or the Ancient Egyptians, or any other alien constructors. The museum also houses a wealth of artefacts unearthed at the site, most notably the iconic soapstone bird statues that are now the national symbol of Zimbabwe.

07

HARARE'S SUPERB SHONA SCULPTURE GALLERY

Newsweek magazine has called Shona sculpture "the most important art form to emerge from Africa in the 20th century". Rooted in an ancient heritage epitomised by the famous soapstone birds of Great Zimbabwe, this distinctively Zimbabwean genre explores traditional Shona spiritual themes through a filter of contemporary surrealism. The sculptors like to use mineral-rich serpentinite rocks extracted from the Great Dyke and their work tends to complement and highlight the rock's natural grains and colours.

Of all the galleries we visited during our trip, none compare to the Shona Sculpture Gallery, set in a manicured garden in Harare's southern suburbs. We were blown away by the variety and quality of work on display, representing first-generation pioneers such as Edward Chiawa and John Takawira, who emerged in the 1950s, as well as many of their younger heirs. Although the gallery is aimed at serious collectors, with price tags that reflect this, casual visitors are welcome and the guides – all sculptors in their own right – are very passionate and friendly. ➔



OFF-THE-BEATEN-TRACK WANDERINGS IN THE EASTERN HIGHLANDS

Zimbabwe's Eastern Highlands is a magnet to hikers, birdwatchers and other outdoor enthusiasts. The magnificent granite domes that grace Nyanga National Park are a kind of high-altitude equivalent to the better known Matobo Hills, while the Vumba Massif outside the sleepy town of Mutare is probably the most reliable site in southern Africa for spotting samango monkey, along with localised highland birds such as silvery-cheeked hornbill, Swynnerton's robin-chat, Gurney's sugarbird, Robert's prinia and Chirinda apalis. For us, an unexpected scenic highlight was the 762m-tall Mutarazi Falls. This little-known waterfall ranks as the second-tallest in Africa, and stands 17th on the global list. For adrenaline junkies, it is also the site of an exciting skywalk and zipline.



09

SUNDOWNERS ON THE WORLD'S LARGEST MANMADE LAKE

Not content with being southern Africa's longest river and home to the world's most spectacular waterfall, the Zambezi can also lay claim to feeding the largest manmade lake on Earth. This is Kariba, which came into being in the late 1950s after a hydroelectric dam was built to span the eponymous gorge.

We were fortunate enough to take a motorboat across Lake Kariba to Matusadona National Park, an underrated safari destination where we had excellent sightings of lion, elephant and buffalo. But our top Matusadona highlight was undoubtedly a sunset cruise on the lake. As the sun dipped behind a photogenic forest of dead trees in the shallows, we heard African fish eagles calling overhead while elephants drank on the shore and hippos emerged from the water to start their nocturnal foraging. And what more appropriate way to celebrate this magical moment than by cracking open a cold Zambezi – not only the name of the river that feeds Kariba, but also Zimbabwe's national beer!

08



Highland highlights:
The Vumba Botanical Gardens, a peaceful retreat for nature lovers; Muchururu Falls, the sister to Mutarazi Falls, on the same escarpment overlooking the Honde Valley, a forested haven for birds

10



GUIDED GAME WALKS IN SOME OF AFRICA'S WILDEST PARKS

Zimbabwe places a strong emphasis on walking safaris, which can be conducted by any qualified professional guide in any of its national parks. During our time in Zimbabwe, we enjoyed sensational guided walks below the burnished Chilojo Cliffs of Gonarezhou and along the Matusadona lakeshore. But we were particularly excited to head out on foot in Mana Pools National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site that protects a stretch of the Zambezi floodplain renowned for its high wildlife densities in the dry season. Animals seem so much larger when you're on foot: coming face-to-face with an elephant, buffalo or hippo is at once humbling and a genuine adrenaline booster, but we also enjoyed more tranquil encounters with the likes of eland, kudu and zebra.

REALITY CHECK

Tell people you plan to visit Zimbabwe, or have recently been there, and you'll soon realise how negatively this wonderful country is still perceived by outsiders. To be fair, we also approached our 2023 trip with a certain degree of trepidation after 20 years' absence. So, it is worth examining a few common misapprehensions about Zimbabwe to assess how well founded they actually are:

Roadblocks and corrupt cops make self-driving a nightmare

This may have been a concern a few years back, but it's not something you need to worry about today. Over the course of driving some 5000km, we were only stopped twice, and in both cases we were detained for no more than a minute or two while the officer asked politely to see the driver's licence then waved us on.

They've poached all the wildlife

Nonsense. Wildlife is plentiful in all the main parks, and numbers are growing in the once-neglected likes of Gonarezhou and Matusadona, which are now managed in partnership with respected international conservation agencies. Zimbabwe's estimated population of 80-85,000 elephants is the world's second highest after Botswana.

Main roads are appalling

Yes and no. Zimbabweans are the first to lament the deterioration of their roads,

and there are stretches of certain trunk routes – Harare to Kariba, for instance, or Bulawayo to Victoria Falls – that should be driven slowly and with extreme caution due to a combination of gaping potholes, ragged verges and trucks hurtling in the opposite direction. That said, in a broader African context, most other roads in Zimbabwe remain pretty stress-free, provided you're not overambitious about the distance you try to cover in a day.


It's an economic shambles

In many respects, that's true. Power cuts are frequent, urban water supplies are erratic, unemployment is rife, and the long queues outside Western Union outlets indicate an unhealthy economic dependence on cash from relatives working abroad. Even so, while life in Zimbabwe is undoubtedly tough, there's no sense of imminent collapse. The towns are positively bustling with economic activity: shops of all descriptions are well stocked, fuel is usually readily available,



there's a local takeaway, restaurant or bar on every other street corner, and the informal economy is absolutely thriving. Moreover, whatever hardships Zimbabwe is experiencing, tourism is a contributor to the economy, so there's no reason to let it deter you from visiting.

It's dangerous

The headline-grabbing farm invasions of the early 2000s have left many outsiders with the enduring impression that Zimbabwe is unsafe and a hotbed of anti-white sentiment. But this violence peaked 20 years ago and was always related to a specific set of circumstances as opposed to being representative of general racial attitudes. Zimbabwe today is emphatically a safe travel destination, violent crime against tourists is rare, and the general mood is friendly and welcoming. 



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Guess where...

The bronze sculpture of Jacob the Circle Dray Horse is just one of more than 1500 statues in this capital city. Aside from Jacob, which celebrates the dray horses that delivered beer in the 19th century, you'll find monuments dedicated to footballers, pop stars, kings and queens, African leaders, US presidents, suffragettes, lions, terrapins and even rush hour. But in which KQ destination is it?

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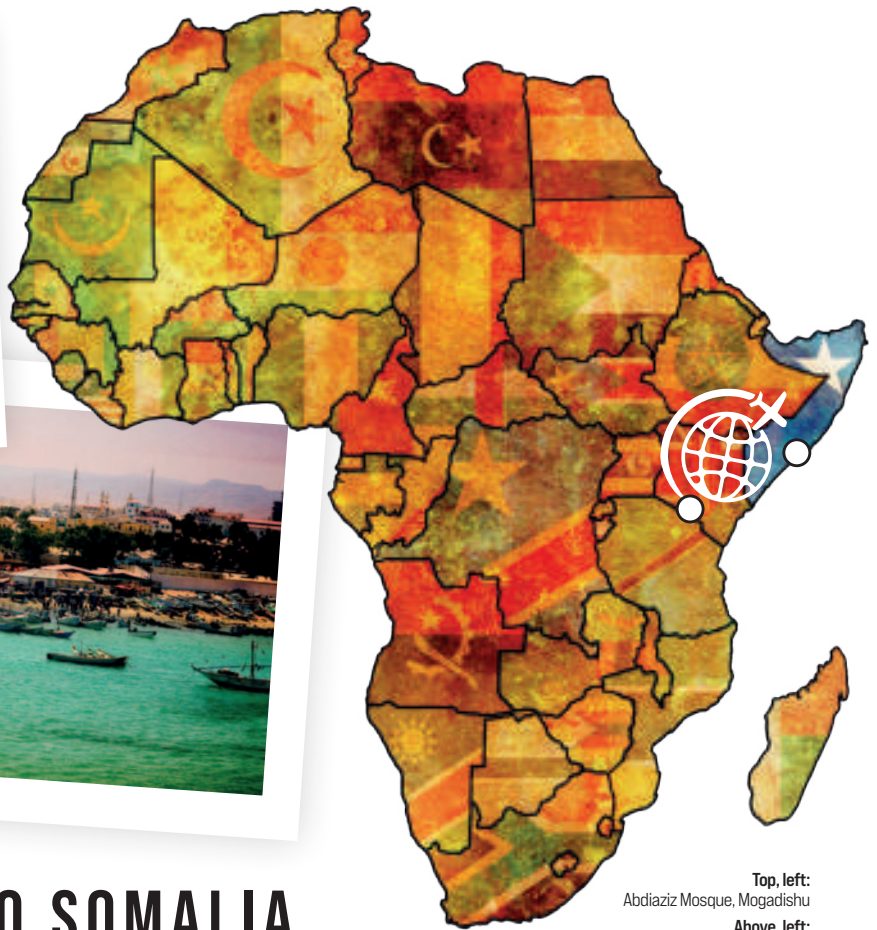
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Top, left: Abdiiaziz Mosque, Mogadishu

Above, left: Fish market, Port of Bosaso, Somalia

Below: Grand Palace and Wat Phra Keaw, Bangkok

HEADING BACK TO SOMALIA

KENYA AIRWAYS REINTRODUCES FLIGHTS TO MOGADISHU

Starting on 15 February, Kenya's national carrier will resume direct flights to Mogadishu from Nairobi. The service was suspended in August 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The airline will fly three times a week between Nairobi and the Somalian capital, on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays.

Speaking ahead of the resumption, Julius Thairu, chief commercial and customer officer at Kenya Airways, said: "We are eager about the potential of re-establishing the link between Mogadishu and Nairobi through KQ. This move aligns with the increasing business and the [growth] of air travel between Kenya and Somalia."

"We are eager about the potential of re-establishing the link between Mogadishu and Nairobi through KQ. This aligns with the increasing business and the [growth] of air travel between Kenya and Somalia"

The return of the Mogadishu frequency is part of KQ's network expansion strategy and commitment to enhancing connectivity across the African continent to contribute to long-term economic progress.

"Kenya Airways is committed to providing high-quality service for our customers, as we work

together to foster trade and investment for sustained growth," Thairu added.

Meanwhile, on 21 November last year, KQ resumed flying to Bangkok in Thailand. The five-times-a-week service returned following its suspension in 2020 because of the pandemic.

Speaking on the day of the relaunch, Thairu said: "This initiative underscores our proactive approach in expanding international routes, urging our passengers to embrace new and enriching travel experiences."

To celebrate the return to Thailand, customers can claim 15% off flight tickets purchased from now until 30 June, using promo code THAI24 for travel until July 2024.



FLY TO SOUTH AMERICA

KQ EXPANDS CODESHARE PARTNERSHIP WITH SAA

Following an agreement with South African Airways (SAA), Kenya Airways' guests can now enjoy the shortest route from Africa to South America, reducing the number of layovers and minimising their carbon footprint.

The expansion of KQ's codeshare partnership with SAA sees the inclusion of direct flights from Johannesburg to São Paulo in Brazil, allowing customers to fly seamlessly from Nairobi via South Africa to South America on one ticket.

The collaboration establishes unparalleled connectivity between the two continents, offering the most direct flight option from the region and providing a more sustainable alternative to travelling via the Middle East, Europe or North America.

Julius Thairu, chief commercial and customer officer at Kenya Airways, expressed the excitement surrounding this strategic move. "Customers will now enjoy expanded strategic co-operation, offering enhanced connectivity and a superior joint offering. Together, we are dedicated to providing passengers with unmatched travel options, world-class services and an expanded global reach."



Above:
The Octávio Frias de Oliveira Bridge, a unique cable-stayed bridge in São Paulo, Brazil

Left:
Catedral da Sé de São Paulo

Serena Hotel Kampala



ASANTE REWARDS

NEW RANGE OF LOYALTY PROGRAMME BENEFITS

KQ PARTNERS WITH SERENA HOTELS TO OFFER DISCOUNTS TO ASANTE REWARDS MEMBERS

Kenya Airways has partnered with Serena Hotels to provide a range of benefits for members of its Asante Rewards loyalty programme.

Under the agreement, Gold and Platinum Elite Plus Asante Rewards members will have lifetime membership in Serena's Prestige Club loyalty programme, while Silver Elite Asante members will enjoy Gold status in the Serena Hotels programme.

KQ's loyal customers will receive preferential discounts at food and beverage outlets at Serena's hotels in Nairobi, Dar es Salaam, Goma, Kampala, Kigali and Maputo; while Gold and Platinum members can also enjoy special accommodation offers. Meanwhile, the airline is offering 10% off flights until 15 May 2024 for Asante Rewards members.

KQ's chief commercial and customer officer Julius Thairu said: "This partnership aims to delight our customers with complimentary offers throughout their travels across Africa to

make the entire journey smoother, more rewarding and undoubtedly more exciting."

He added: "By merging the unparalleled services of Kenya Airways with the exclusive perks of Serena Hotels' loyalty programme, we are embarking on a journey to redefine convenience, luxury and reward for our cherished customers."

Asante Rewards enables customers to obtain greater value from their flying experience in the form of redeemable points, which can be earned from flights operated by Kenya Airways or any of its partners. Members can redeem their points for benefits such as reward ticket flights, seat upgrades, extra baggage allowance, priority services and seat selections, among others.



1 To learn more about Asante Rewards, tune into the latest episode of KQ's *Jetsetter* podcast at www.youtube.com/watch?v=u0Y4j4Ag8w8

2 To become a member of the Asante Rewards club, go to asante.kenya-airways.com

ON-TIME ACCOLADE

REPORT RANKS KENYA AIRWAYS AMONG WORLD'S BEST AIRLINES FOR ON-TIME PERFORMANCE

KQ has been ranked as Africa's second-most efficient airline in a global on-time performance review. The latest On-Time Performance Review report by aviation analytics company Cirium revealed the airline attained an impressive 71.86% on-time arrival rate out of 41,905 completed flights in 2023.

An on-time flight is defined as a flight that arrives within 15 minutes of the scheduled gate arrival.

Allan Kilavuka, CEO of Kenya Airways, said: "The high rankings

result from Kenya Airways' persistent focus on delivery of on-time performance each month of the year, which has been a cornerstone of improving our guest experience strategy.

"This is a testament to our commitment to improving our on-time performance and our dedication to implementing real improvements on board."

Kenya's national carrier was overall ranked 10th in the Middle East & Africa region.



72% on-time arrival rate out of 41,905 completed flights in 2023



Why do airport control towers have slanted windows?

The **slanted window design** enhances safety and improves situational awareness. The windows are angled at 15 degrees from the vertical at the top to decrease reflections from both inside and outside the tower, ensuring unobstructed panoramic views of the surrounding airspace. By tilting the glass away, it reflects any errant light onto the ceiling, which is painted black. Additionally, the angled windows help aerodynamics, reducing wind resistance and minimising the chances of turbulence-induced vibrations.

TECH SAVVY

Mwajuma Salim, acting general manager of Digital, Brand and Marketing at KQ, has been named as one of the Top 25 Women in Digital 2023. The honour not only recognises her exceptional leadership but also highlights the profound impact she has had on the airline's digital landscape.

In her role, Salim handles the development, implementation and transformation of KQ's digital sales strategies, revenue maximisation and cost reduction.

This includes co-ordination of digital marketing innovations, building robust customer experiences and implementation of overall digital and omnichannel strategy, which is responsible for more than 30 per cent of revenue generation.

"This award is a testament to the collaborative efforts of the incredible teams at Kenya Airways," said Salim. "It reflects our success in innovative digital retail with the focus on excelling in customer experiences.

"I share this recognition with my dedicated colleagues worldwide, shaping the future of digital excellence in the aviation industry."





“No matter who you are [or] where you come from your dreams have the power to transcend your circumstances and change the world”

Left
Captain James Kamau with the Laura Fote trophy

Inspiring hope

KQ CAPTAIN RECOGNISED FOR HIS SOCIAL IMPACT

Captain James ‘Jimmy’ Kamau has received the prestigious 2023 Laura Fote Award for his remarkable contribution to society.

In his capacity as director of Kenya operations for Crossing Thresholds, a non-profit organisation, the pilot has helped inspire hope through building schools in the Kibera slum in Nairobi, feeding and enriching children, as well as building partnerships with local community leaders.

“To be a catalyst for transformation in the lives of these children is truly profound,” said Capt. Kamau. “Contributing to their education is a powerful tool to uplift them from their unfavourable circumstances.

“Being part of a movement where children and the community awaken with dreams to strive for is incredibly fulfilling for me. It’s an honour to play a role in shaping a brighter future for these young minds.”

The accolade “reminds everyone that the future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams”, he added. “No matter who you are [or] where you come from your dreams have the power to transcend your circumstances and change the world.”

The Laura Fote Award is bestowed upon individuals who have displayed extraordinary vision, unwavering leadership and boundless inspiration in the face of challenges and barriers.

KQ SPONSORS JUNIOR GOLF FOUNDATION

Kenya Airways has partnered with the Junior Golf Foundation (JGF) as it further strengthens its commitment to supporting youth development, sports and community engagement in Kenya.

The airline will be the official travel sponsor of JGF events, affirming its dedication to nurturing young golfing talent.

The JGF provides young golf enthusiasts with opportunities to develop their skills, take part in tournaments and learn valuable life lessons through the sport.

Commenting on the partnership, Julius Thairu, chief commercial and customer officer at KQ, said: “Our partnership will facilitate travel for junior golfers to attend both regional and international golf competitions. We remain committed to long-term collaboration that will elevate the sport and its development in Kenya.”

At the end of last year, the airline partnered with the Kenya High Commission, among others, to sponsor the Kenya Week Golf Tournament in Uganda, marking Kenya’s 60 years of independence.

As part of the event, KQ also took part in a 4000-tree planting initiative at Busoga College Mwiri in Jinja, highlighting its commitment to the development of sports and environmental sustainability.





SCHOOL LEADERS VISIT

NEW LIVERY FOR AIRCRAFT DONATED TO MANG'U HIGH

Further to KQ's donation of a B737-700 aircraft to Mang'u High School in September, a delegation from the school visited the airline's headquarters to inspect and officially accept the livery on the decommissioned plane. The delegation included the school's board chair, its principal, the vice-chair of the

Mang'u High Alumni Association and representatives of the Parent Association.

The donation aims to enhance the school's aviation studies programme, providing students with valuable hands-on learning opportunities and reinforcing the airline's role in shaping the future of aviation education in Kenya.








Left: Members of the Mang'u High School delegation

Above: The newly painted B737-700 aircraft

FAMILY FUN

In December, Kenya Airways hosted its annual KQ Family Fun Day at the airline's headquarters in Nairobi. The event brought together staff and their families for a day filled with diverse activities, including performances by Thai traditional dancers and the Nairobi Horns Project, as well as the chance to tour some of the airline's aircraft. The day also featured a speech by the CEO, Allan Kilavuka, highlighting the importance of unity within the Kenya Airways community. The Family Fun Day serves as a platform to strengthen bonds, create positive connections and reinforce KQ's commitment to a vibrant and inclusive work environment.



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



Kenyan ambassadors visit

At the end of last year, Kenya Airways' Pride Centre hosted a visit from a delegation of newly appointed Kenyan ambassadors. With the airline a key stakeholder in the diplomatic realm, this strategic interaction not only underscored KQ's pivotal role as a national representative but also fostered a deeper connection between diplomacy and aviation.

BOOK YOUR KQ FLIGHT ON GOOGLE

Kenya Airways flights are now available on the Google Flights search platform (www.google.com/travel/flights) – which enables users to search for flights, compare prices and book tickets. The metasearch engine aggregates flight information from airlines and online travel agencies to help travellers find the best deal.

WHY ARE AIRCRAFT WINDOWS ROUND?

DID YOU KNOW?

After a series of accidents in the early days of commercial flying, engineers discovered that having square windows compromised safety, with the sharp corners concentrating the stress caused by pressure changes during a flight; round windows are far less likely to crack or break under the same stress.

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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

Kenya Airways
routes



DISTANCE FROM NAIROBI TO:

Abidjan	4600km	Kinshasa	2412km
Accra	4194km	Kisumu	280km
Addis Ababa	1157km	Lagos	3835km
Amsterdam	6662km	Lilongwe	1422km
Antananarivo	2250km	Livingstone	2192km
Bangui	2143km	London	6828km
Bangkok	7230km	Lubumbashi	1539km
Bujumbura	875km	Lusaka	1808km
Cape Town	4087km	Mauritius	3093km
Dakar	6205km	Mogadishu*	1003km
Dar es Salaam	665km	Mombasa	422km
Douala	3084km	Monrovia	5321km
Dubai	3548km	Moroni	1344km
Dzaoudzi	1569km	Mumbai	4531km
Entebbe	521km	Nampula	1547km
Freetown	5668km	Ndola	1581km
Guangzhou	8684km	New York	11844km
Harare	1945km	Paris	5368km
Johannesburg	2900km	Seychelles	2100km
Juba	905km	Victoria Falls	2216km
Kigali	759km	Zanzibar	599km
Kilimanjaro	234km		

SOURCE: AIRMILES CALCULATOR.COM; DESTINATIONS AS AT DECEMBER 2023
 * FROM 15 FEBRUARY

The KQ top 5

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

This issue: endemic animals

1 PANTHER CHAMELEON, MADAGASCAR

Madagascar is known for many endemic species, most famously its array of lemurs. However, the most colourful is undoubtedly the panther chameleon. Found mainly in trees and shrubs, this large lizard only heads to the forest floor to lay eggs. While the females remain a salmon-pink colour, the males can change colour to suit their environment and mood.

2 GIANT PANDA, CHINA

The distinctive black-and-white bear is a national treasure. Found mainly in forests in the mountains of southwest China, they eat up to 38kg of bamboo a day. Beginning life as the size of a stick of butter, males can grow up to 135kg. Despite their bulk, they are excellent tree climbers.

3 ASIATIC LION, INDIA

Having once roamed across Asia, from Turkey to eastern India, the Asiatic lion is now only found in the Gir

Forest, in Gujarat. Slightly smaller than their African counterparts, the male's mane is also sparser and darker, and its ears are often on show. But its most distinguishing feature is a fold of skin along its stomach.

4 ABERDARE CISTICOLA, KENYA

Found only on moist, high-altitude grasslands in Aberdare and Mau Narok-Molo, the cisticola feeds on beetles and flies. Believed to be monogamous, this solitary and territorial bird grows to 15cm in height and weighs up to 24g.

5 SCLATER'S GUENON, NIGERIA

Endemic to southern Nigeria, Sclater's guenon inhabits swampy forests. Because of deforestation, some have adapted to living in villages, however. The underside of its tail, which is around half its body length, is a bright rust-red.



2



3



4

NEL BOWMAN/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO



5

MICHAEL LEGBERG/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO



1

- International routes
- Domestic routes
- Regional routes

TIMELESS ELEGANCE

THE LATEST FRAGRANCES, WATCHES AND ELECTRONICS ON BOARD

LADIES' FRAGRANCES



\$115

NARCISO RODRIGUEZ ALL OF ME

Eau de Parfum 50ml

All of me is the new perfume for women by Narciso Rodriguez. Created for a new generation of women who are confident to show their true colours and embrace all that makes them unique. By combining the iconic scent of precious rose centifolia with an unexpected note of geranium bourbon, an ingredient typically only found in men's fragrances, all of me transcends the codes of perfumery to create a prismatic and multi-faceted perfume: a floral like no other.

QUICK SHOP

On a short-haul flight? No problem, we have you covered. Check out the Quick Shop at the back of the *Karibu* catalogue. This makes it quick and easy to order your duty free on board. Simply fill in the coupon, tear along the perforation and hand it to your cabin crew.

MEN'S FRAGRANCES

BOSS BOTTLED PARFUM

Eau de Parfum 50ml

Boss Bottled Parfum, for a man who knows he's a 'Boss'. His sophistication is striking, his warmth inspiring. This perfume for men features a woody-ambery scent with a noble heart of orris concrete and fig-tree root accord, expressing his powerful charisma.



\$80



\$40

ELECTRONICS

REFLEX ACTIVE SPORT PLUS WIRELESS EARBUDS

These Reflex Active Sport earbuds are your ultimate companion for immersive sound, uninterrupted calls and seamless connectivity. They provide audio clarity, shielding you from the hustle and bustle of the world while you stay focused on your music or calls. With an impressive five-hour calling time, you can engage in extended conversations without worry. The earbuds also boast an innovative auto-connect feature that effortlessly

pairs them with your device as soon as you remove them from the charging case. This means you can transition from your daily routine to musical euphoria or productive calls without missing a beat. Whether you're hitting the gym, commuting or just unwinding, these earbuds blend impeccable sound quality, seamless connectivity and comfortable design to elevate your audio experience to new heights.





WATCHES

SEKONDA LADIES' WATCH SET

This elegant watch has a silver and gold two-tone, stone-set case and stainless-steel case back. Finished with a sophisticated light champagne mother-of-pearl dial with clear crystals and batons and a silver-and-gold two-tone alloy bracelet. The set includes a matching gold, heart-shaped, stone-set pendant and earrings. Great gift idea for that special someone. **FREE GIFT:** Heart-shaped necklace and earrings.

WOLFE & JACKSON GENTS' CHRONOGRAPH FIELD WATCH

Experience the perfect blend of style and functionality with this minimalistic chronograph field watch. Crafted with a durable zinc-alloy case and a comfortable genuine brown-leather strap, this watch ensures long-lasting wear. The multi-function movement guarantees precise timekeeping, including Chrono Sec, Chrono Min and 24-hour features. Powered by a reliable battery, this watch keeps you punctual day after day. Presented in a luxurious gift box. Elevate your timepiece collection with this elegant and versatile watch.



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INDIANA JONES AND THE DIAL OF DESTINY

ACTION-ADVENTURE

Directed by James Mangold and written by Jez Butterworth, John-Henry Butterworth and David Koepp, *The Dial of Destiny* is the fifth instalment in this famous series. Starring Harrison Ford as the iconic adventurer Indiana Jones alongside Phoebe Waller-Bridge as Helena.

Confronted by the challenges of a changing era and the prospect of retirement, Indy grapples with finding his place in a world that appears to have moved on. However, when a familiar and malevolent adversary resurfaces, he must don his trusty hat and wield his whip anew to safeguard an ancient and potent relic from falling into evil hands.



DID YOU KNOW?

Harrison Ford embarked on 65km bike rides and took daily walks to get into shape for his return as Indiana Jones.

George Lucas, Steven Spielberg and Paramount Pictures agreed to five *Indiana Jones* movies back in 1979.



HAUNTED MANSION

SUPERNATURAL HORROR COMEDY

Directed by Justin Simien and starring LaKeith Stanfield, Rosario Dawson and Owen Wilson, the film marks the second cinematic interpretation of Walt Disney's theme park ride The Haunted Mansion.

It follows Gabbie, who is a single mother, as she enlists the services of a tour guide, a psychic, a priest and a historian to aid her in cleansing the recently purchased mansions she has discovered to be inhabited by spirits.

DID YOU KNOW?

Gracey Manor mirrors the design of the initial Haunted Mansion at Disneyland, while Crump Manor replicates the Magic Kingdom's version at Walt Disney World.

Amid the actors' strike, Disney opted to feature beloved characters from their theme parks and various movies on the red carpet during the premiere because the stars were refraining from promoting any forthcoming films or shows.



ELEMENTAL

ANIMATION-COMEDY

Directed by Peter Shon and written by John Hoberg, Kat Likkell and Brenda Hsueh, *Elemental* features the voices of Leah Lewis, who plays the role of Ember, and Mamoudou Athie as Wade.

Set in a hole that is inhabited by humanlike elements of nature, the movie follows the unexpected duo of fire element Ember and water element Wade in a metropolis where inhabitants from fire, water, land and air coexist. The spirited young woman and the easygoing man are on the verge of uncovering an essential truth: just how much they share in common!

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 YEAR OF THE DRAGON

WHERE TO CELEBRATE LUNAR NEW YEAR AROUND THE WORLD

It's the Year of the Dragon, and if you're looking to usher in the Lunar New Year somewhere exciting, SkyTeam can get you to celebrations across our global network. Here are our top picks:

SHANGHAI

Wear your best red clothing – the colour of good fortune – to Shanghai's Lunar celebrations. The bell of the Longhua Temple starts the festivities, ringing 108 times at midnight to bring good luck for the year ahead.

TAIPEI

The Pingxi Lantern Festival marks the end of Lunar New

Year. Sample street food delicacies, while firecrackers pop and thousands of lanterns gently soar into the night sky.

HO CHI MINH CITY

Nguyen Hue Street, the city's famous flower street, explodes into a vibrant carpet of colour during Tet. Fireworks, gongs and street performers add a festive soundtrack to the celebrations.

SEOUL

Experience real Korean culture at the Namsangol Hanok Village during Seollal. Here you'll find music, dancing and a chance to try the traditional Seollal snack – *tteokguk* – a soup with sliced rice cakes.

LONDON

Dancing troupes, marching dragons and street food combine to create the biggest Lunar New Year celebration outside Asia. The parade usually winds its way from Chinatown to Trafalgar Square.

LOS ANGELES

LA's Golden Dragon celebrations are even older than the Hollywood sign! This huge event has brought floats, marching bands and vibrant costumes to the city for more than a century.



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KOREAN AIR

MEHA

السعودية Saudia

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Guess where answer (from page 67): London, UK

The statue of Jacob stands on the site where the Courage Brewery dray horses were stabled, around the corner from the brewery on Horselydown Lane by Tower Bridge. According to a plaque on the statue's plinth the name 'Horselydown' has its origins in the 16th century and comes from a description of working horses resting before crossing over London Bridge into the City of London – 'horse lie down'.

➔ For more information about flights to London, go to www.kenya-airways.com

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CATCH THE VIEW FROM THE TOP OF THE CANTON TOWER

Looming 604m above the Pearl River, there is no better place to get a 360-degree view of Guangzhou than the sky-piercing Canton Tower. The highest place visitors can reach is the 488m Look Out, while other attractions include the heart-pumping Sky Drop – a vertical free-fall that holds the title of the world’s highest thrill ride. For a more sedate alternative, the Bubble Tram, shown here, consists of 16 spherical cabins rotating along a track 445m above the streets of the Chinese metropolis.

 Visit our website – kenya-airways.com – to plan your trip to Guangzhou.

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