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## Wild West Tanzania - Lake diving, Chimps and Mountains

### Lake Tanganyika and Mahale Mountains – South Western Tanzania (9 Day / 8 Night)

An adventure in the little known south of Lake Tanganyika , an expedition boat trip to unique areas, snorkelling, birding, remote villages – and finally, track the famous chimpanzees of Mahale Mountains, from Lakeshore Lodge.



Perched on the banks of Lake Tanganyika in south western Tanzania, you will find Lake Shore Lodge.

There are a lot of Adventure Activities to keep you active for days or places where you can relax on your own – where a sense of peace and tranquillity will flood your soul and quell your mind. You choose how to Sculpture your days here.

Relax in a hammock, wake at noon, kayak at sunset, scuba dive in the morning and then watch the sunset before a sumptuous dinner on the beach under the African stars. Life is tough here! “Come as Guests and leave as Friends”.

It is a small, owner-run business, so flexibility in your day is easy and our pleasure. They specialise in this region, and operating boats along the coast, and hosting adventurers into unique areas in a friendly , professional manner

Getting here is part of the adventure. We PROMISE you, it will be worth it.

From Lake Shore Lodge you will set sail in a motorised dhow on Lake Tanganyika, doing some snorkelling en-route to Mahale. What a great adventure and romantic setting, camping on the beautiful beaches of the lake, sitting by the bon fire having your dinner, overlooking the stunning African sunset.

The highlight of this trip is seeing the charming chimpanzees in Mahale! It is an unforgettable experience being in such close proximity with the chimps. This is a trip to be on your bucket list!

**THIS SAFARI IS GUARANTEED WITH MINIMUM FOUR GUESTS, MAXIMUM EIGHT GUESTS**

**Of course, if you prefer a PRIVATE trip – we can organize that too!!**



## **Safari Itinerary**

### **Day 1 – Dar es Salaam to Mbeya**

Fly on the early morning flight on Fast Jet at 07h00 from Dar and arrive in Mbeya at 08h25.

Guests will be collected from Mbeya and driven to Lake Shore. This is an 8 hour drive and is truly beautiful as it goes through the Lwafe Game and Forest Reserve, down the escarpment to Lake Tanganyika. You have a packed lunch en-route.

**Lake Tanganyika** is one of the Great Rift Valley Lakes found on the western border of Tanzania, in East Africa. This massive expanse of water is the longest Lake in Africa (720 km long) and is the second deepest Lake in the world (1,470m) – second only to Lake Baikal in Russia. It is said to hold roughly 18% of the world's available fresh water and is also the world's second largest fresh water Lake by volume. There are 26 rivers that flow into Lake Tanganyika and only one (the Lukuga River) that flows out. Only the upper 100m of the Lake is oxygenated.

The Lake's temperature is typically 24 to 26 degrees Celsius (70 degrees Fahrenheit) all year round. It has an average ph of 8.4.

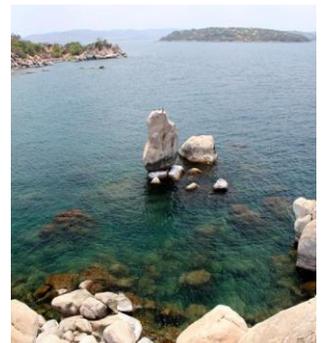
The Lake boasts visibilities of up to 20m with massive boulders, spectacular drop offs and a shell covered bottom. It is thought to date back 9 to 20 million years and is one of the richest aqueous environments in the world, supporting at least 280 varieties of fish. Most of the 200 and more types of cichlid fish found here are endemic to the Lake. These small, colourful fish are exported for aquariums and fish tanks around the world.

Because of their unique feeding techniques, Tanganyika cichlids prefer different habitats. This means that by going only a few hundred meters, you are able to view totally different species, making your diving and snorkelling trips very exciting. Apart from cichlids you can also catch a glimpse of otters, speckled eels, catfish, burrowing clams and freshwater crabs.

In the deeper water you may well spot some of the larger fish – "Kuhe" (*Boulengerochromis microlepis*) and "Sangala Pamba" (*Lates Angustifrons*), or even the Lake Tanganyika jellyfish, a nearly transparent, pulsating disc about 2 cm in diameter. Freshwater jellyfish are unusual as most species are found in the ocean. This species is completely harmless to swimmers and does not sting like those found in the sea.

You arrive mid-afternoon and spend a night in one of the Lawn Bandas.

The Lawn Bandas are well-appointed, spacious rooms, with shared bathrooms just behind the rooms. All the Bandas are built on the lawn, with stunning views of the Lake.



### **Day 2 – Lake Shore**

Today you will have a day at leisure at Lake Shore Lodge.

### **Day 3 – Set off early (around 06h30) in our local dhow, the Lake Wanderer.**

Stop en-route to have a packed breakfast and a picnic lunch and to snorkel.

That night you set up a fly camp in one of the pristine bays along the Lake and have dinner around the fire at the water's edge. There will be a boat driver and a chef on board.

We try to leave as small a footprint as possible when you fly camp. There is a separate tent that is used for your toilet area, which is set well back from the Lake. This has a portable eco-friendly, chemical toilet and separate hand wash basin. The shower is in another tent and is also set well back from the Lake. Hot showers are provided with a portable water heater which uses gas to heat the water that runs through it. Guests can of course have a swim in the Lake rather than use the shower.



The guest tents are 2-man individual tents that are easy to set up and take down with comfortable bedding, towels etc. You can sit upright in the tents but you cannot stand in the tents. Each guest will have his/her own tent.

**Day 4 – Continue up Lake Tanganyika to Mahale.** You will need to register at the National Park and then set up a fly camp on the beach in Mahale where you will overnight. Famous for containing some of the last remaining wild chimpanzees in Africa, the **Mahale Mountains National Park** was gazetted in 1985, covers an area of 1 613 km<sup>2</sup> and is located about 128 km south of Kigoma town on the eastern shore of Lake Tanganyika. The western boundary of the park protects an adjacent 1.6 km wide strip of Lake Tanganyika's waters.



The land in and around Mahale is the traditional homeland of the Watongwe and Waholoholo tribes. Japanese primate researchers began exploring along the shore of Lake Tanganyika, south of Kigoma as early as 1961. In 1965, the researchers established their first camp, 'Kansyana', in Mahale and began habituating chimpanzees. The terrain is mostly rugged and hilly, and is dominated by the Mahale Mountains chain that runs from the northwest to the southeast across the park. The highest peak (Mount Nkungwe) rises to 2 462 m above sea level.



**Day 5 – Do an early morning chimp trek** and return to camp after seeing the chimps. You will spend a second night camped in Mahale on the beach.

**Day 6 – Another Chimp trek today.** You will have a second opportunity to see the chimps and do another morning chimp trek. After that you will return to the boat and start to head back to Lake Shore and camp near Sibwesa, just outside Mahale.

**Day 7 – Head southwards down Lake Tanganyika,** snorkelling and enjoying the beautiful shoreline and the clear waters. You will fly camp in another beautiful bay for the night.

**Day 8 – Set off for Lake Shore** and arrive in the afternoon. Overnight in one of the Lawn Bandas. Have your last evening with a lovely dinner at Lake Shore.

**Day 9 – Depart at 07h00 to drive back to Mbeya** so that guests can catch the return flight back to Dar es Salaam. The flight leaves Mbeya at 18h00 and arrives in Dar at 19h25.

End of Services.

Cost:

6 guests travelling together : USD \$3530 per person sharing,

PLUS return flights from DAR : USD 180 per person – subject to change

PLUS park fees and chimp permits : USD 320 per person – subject to change

*Single supplement : USD 110 per person*

**Private safaris available – enquire for pricing depending on group size and time of travel  
Surcharge for less than 6 guests travelling together.**

All prices are subject to change due to rate of exchange fluctuation or any unforeseen price increase. Terms & Conditions apply. E. & O.E.

**Price includes:**

- Return flights on Fast Jet from Dar es Salaam to Mbeya
- Return Airport transfers to/from Mbeya
- All meals, teas and coffees
- Park fees and entries (noted separately)
- 2 x Chimp treks
- 3 x Nights accommodation in a shared Lawn Banda at Lake Shore Lodge
- 5 x Nights fly camping in bays on Lake Tanganyika
- Services of a driver/guide, support crew and cook as appropriate

**Excludes** – International flights, visas, travel insurance, health requirements, gratuities, drinks (other than teas and coffees), all items of a personal nature and any service not specified.

**Optional Extras:**

If guests spend a few days extra at Lake Shore they can add on:

Kayaking

Diving (for certified divers only as we are not able to give dive courses at the moment)

Sunset sundowner cruises

Quad biking

Fishing

Other add-on possibilities, either before or after the trip - we can help arrange a few days in either Katavi National Park or Ruaha National Park.

**Charging facilities:**

In the Lawn Bandas at Lake Shore (on the first and last nights of the trip) there are 220v plugs in the room so guests can charge laptops, cameras etc. We operate on solar power here at Lake Shore so we have solar panels and a bank of batteries with a backup generator to top up the batteries when they run low. We don't provide hairdryers in the rooms but if guests bring their own hairdryers it is possible for them to dry their hair.

Then on the boat trip and in Mahale there will be a solar panel on board with an inverter and socket plugs so that guests can charge cameras etc during the day. We have solar lights and solar torches for the nights (we always recommend that guests bring a torch for themselves to use at night for when they want to get to their tents etc.)

**Weather:**

Tanzania is a land without winter. Temperatures in northern Tanzania range between 15-21C during the day and 4-10C at night, from May to October. From November to March the daytime temperature varies from 21-32C and from 15-23C at night.

Mahale's dry season runs from mid May to mid October so I would not expect rain in August but perhaps the occasional short shower in May. Because your May trip is after the rains, everything will be lovely and green at that time. The air is usually very clear so the stars are amazing, you can see right the way across to the Congolese mountains on the other side of Lake Tanganyika and we have incredible sunsets at this time because the colours bounce off the last remaining clouds and turn the Lake pink. There are also often lots of butterflies in Mahale during the green season so they may still be around for your May trip. The chimp trekking could be longer for the May trip as the fruit is found on trees all over the park so the chimps don't need to come very close to the lake for food. Also the pathways could be more slippery and muddy than in August.

For your August trip, this is in the middle of the dry season the chimps will probably be closer to camp because the fruit is usually on trees closer to the Lake during the dry season. Because it is dry the air is not as clear (due to the heat haze and the smoke from fires that are set in various villages around the Lake), so guests will not be able to see such good stars or across to the Congolese mountains. We do get incredible red sunsets (I call them the red carpet sunsets because it looks like a red carpet along the top of the water). So both your trips will be special in their own ways.

I trust the above information provided is in order and I look forward to being of further assistance to you and your clients. Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards

Sonja Newlands

Owner and Senior Safari Designer

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