

## Balloon Safaris

Balloon safaris in Tanzania are a romantic and evocative way of experiencing the wilderness of East Africa, as you gracefully and silently fly over the plains teeming with herds of wild life in the early morning.

Typically, a balloon safari begins between 6 am and lasts for around 1-2 hours, during which you will likely see the magnificent wildlife below over several square kilometres of the game park. Balloon safaris are held regularly only in the Serengeti and take off from designated sites (in the Seronera area) where the disturbance to animals is kept to a minimum. Your safari vehicle drops you off at the take off site and picks you up from your landing site. The safari is followed by a champagne breakfast in the bush, a fitting end to your memorable flight in the wild. Maximum in a balloon

A hot air balloon is a lighter-than-air aircraft consisting of a bag, called an envelope, which contains heated air. Suspended beneath is a gondola or wicker basket, which carries passengers and a source of heat, in most cases an open flame caused by burning liquid propane.

### Southern Serengeti Ndotu Balloon Safari

Ndotu This area of southern Serengeti is where the gently rolling short-grass plains meet the vast sky at the far horizon. Humbling spaces, ever shifting arrangements of light, cloud and wildlife on an epic scale make this ideal ballooning country. A million wildebeest amass to feed on grass made rich by the volcanic ash that settles here on warm coastal winds, and remain to bear their young. From above, the patterns of the herds as they spread and regroup can be mesmerizing and you can see for miles from the Ngorongoro Highlands and Gol Mountains right across the endless plains of the greater Serengeti. Predators too are always present here, and a cohort of herbivores and birds, great and small, all playing their own roles in this vital ecosystem.

### Central Serengeti Balloon Safari

The waters of the Seronera River, along which our flight path most often lies, feeds the Central Serengeti and its resident wildlife. The year round water and grazing means a dependable game experience, where crocodile and great pods of hippo bask in the shallows and fish eagles glide between the acacia trees on the banks. Lion are regular visitors here as is the odd leopard, draped soporifically over a gnarly bough. The migration of wildebeest and zebra moves through here in search of fresh grazing between March and June, dispersing and re-grouping as they wend their way gently north. They return in November & December on their way to breed in the south. Whether viewing the action from just above the treetops or from 500 feet above, the feeling of being in a balloon is one of unbounded freedom.

### Western Serengeti Balloon Safari

A unique ecosystem defined by an ancient pocket of Central African forest and the Grumeti River makes for an extraordinary balloon flight. On a clear day, it is possible to spot a ship on the inland sea of Lake Victoria 20miles (30km) away while floating several hundred feet above the Serengeti. On the ground below reside unusual birds, colobus monkeys, some of the largest crocodiles you'll ever have the pleasure of meeting, and a good concentration of giraffe, elephant, topi and lion to mention but a few. It is a quieter area of the Serengeti with very much its own particular flavour. During May to July, the wildebeest migration must cross the river, weaving between the giant crocs and trying to avoid the predators on the banks. It makes for exciting viewing.

### Northern Serengeti Balloon Safari

Between June/July and November, a million and a half ungulates arrive to feed on the rain-fed grass of the northern plains around the Mara River near the border between Tanzania and Kenya. They cloud-chase back and forth, seeking the most succulent grazing, braving the crocodiles that lie in wait in the river and the lion, cheetah, leopard and hyena that prowl the wooded streambeds. Lone acacias and mesa-topped hills dot the waving grassy plains of this quintessentially African landscape. It's a beautiful area to soar above with plenty to see and photograph. Untethered by roads, it's possible to escape some of the more popular areas and enjoy the peace of the endless skies, making ballooning one of the most rewarding activities on safari in the Serengeti.