

Il N'gwesi Lodge



Highlights

- One of the most successful community run game lodges in Kenya, with the local people benefiting in a number of ways.
- A quiet and game rich area of Kenya.
- The Laikipia area of Kenya is one of the best areas to see rhino.
- A wide range of cultural activities based within the community.
- Walking safaris offered are a great way of getting a more detailed insight into the endemic wildlife.

Situation

The lodge is sited on a rocky outcrop on the northeastern edge of a 16,500 hectares reserve, north-west of Mount Kenya.

Activities

Game drives; guided bush walks; bush meals; cultural boma visit; camel assisted walking safaris.

Il Ngwesi means 'people of the wildlife'. This is a pioneering and award-winning community-owned and run lodge in the Laikipia region of Kenya. Since it opened in 1996, Il Ngwesi has been used as a role model for other community lodges, and the reason is simple -it works! It works for guests, for the local Il Ngwesi Maasai community, the environment and the wildlife.

Set on 16,500 acres of north west of Lewa, at an altitude of about 1400m, the six bandas are beautifully and organically constructed with thatched roof and local wood (from elephant damage etc), and have great views from the verandas and en-suite bathrooms (showers only). Furniture is all locally made. There is a good swimming pool and lounge area, and a waterhole giving you a chance to get closer to the wildlife. Since this is a 'Big Five' area, the wildlife viewing can be excellent.

Friendly and well-trained local staff look after you in the lodge, and expert guides take you on game walks and drives, birdwatching, and into Lewa Wildlife Conservancy. You can also visit the cultural village to see fire-making and hunting skills, house repairing, blacksmiths work of the Maasai community. You can even come to the village for an evening of traditional food and dancing, and perhaps even stay the night. Il Ngwesi can also be used as a start or end point for Walking Wild camel-assisted walks (another project

part-owned by this community), or even as a stop on a horse riding journey in the region. You might also want to consider walking to the nearby Tassia Lodge on the Lekurruki Group Ranch.

Fair Trade / Responsible Travel

All profits go to the Laikipiak Maasai community of Il N'gwesi which numbers about 6000 people. The funds are spent on such things as schools, water supplies, health and cattle dips. Il Ngwesi Lodge is eco-friendly, using solar power for energy and local building materials, and water is economically used from a nearby spring. This community ranch is the first in Kenya which has been entrusted with the protection of rhinos.

