

Saruni Mara



Highlights

- Relaxed, luxury retreat in the hills overlooking the Masai Mara.
- Stunning views from the cottages and complete privacy.
- Spectacular game viewing in one of the most famous ecosystems in the world.
- Delicious food served either in the lodge or in the bush.

Situation

Saruni Mara is perched majestically at the head of a remote valley in the heart of the prime game viewing area of the Masai Mara - the Mara North Conservancy.

Activities

Day and night game drives; guided bush walks; bush meals; sundowners; cultural visits; Maasai massage and well-being space; drawing safaris; 'warrior for a week' programme

Nestled into the hills of northern Mara overlooking a gorge populated by elephant and buffalo, Saruni has the wide open game plains to the south and forest to the north. Therefore clients have the opportunity to walk in lush forest looking for Colobus and Sykes monkeys, as well as following the big game on the plains below.

Saruni Mara was set up by Italian owner, Riccardo Orizo, aiming to provide exclusivity and tranquility while not compromising on elegance and security.

Saruni Mara comprises six uniquely decorated cottages furnished with colonial antiques, African art as well as artefacts produced by community members. Each cottage has hot and cold running water, electricity, polished wooden floors, and elegant Italian bathroom fittings in the large bathrooms, whose the canvas fronts can be totally open to offer an amazing shower with a view. The large verandas provide private views of elephant, leopard, waterbuck, bushback and impala traversing freely and peacefully in the grounds of the camp as well as the distant Mara plains

The common dining area and is a mixture of old-fashioned Africa and modern design. Its huge fireplace is the focal point of life at Saruni and it is here that guests can exchange memories of the day's safaris. Meals are served dinner party style with the cuisine having a strong Italian influence while also including local ingredients and dishes. Particular favourites include chilled carrot and ginger soup, chicken filled with

sun-dried tomatoes, and black cotton rum slice. Alternatively meals can be taken in the bush, or by candlelight on the cottage veranda.

A unique feature of Saruni Mara is its extensive collection of books and its library. With thousands of rare books Saruni's library is a place to think, rest and relax.

In collaboration with Grand Hotel des Iles Borromees (Stresa, Italy) and its world famous spa - Centro Benessere Stresa - Saruni runs the Maasai Wellbeing Space. It is a unique feature in the Masai Mara: in the most serene and relaxing environment, guests enjoy massage and wellness treatments under the supervision of highly trained staff. Considered one of the most professional and inspiring 'beauty centres' in Kenya, the Maasai Wellbeing Space is a private cottage hidden in the valley's olive and cedar forest and devoted to the use of local plants for beauty and relaxation treatments. The new techniques combine sophisticated methods developed at Centro Benessere Stresa with ancient Maasai wisdom and knowledge.

Fully-open Land Rovers specially designed for maximum visibility are used during game drives, with guests enjoying the services of both a professional guide and a tracker. Foot safaris explore both the Masai Mara plains and the mountains and hills that surround Saruni incorporating local Maasai knowledge.

In both cases the intention is to not only take in the famous spots but also to discover secret corners. There is also an opportunity to meet the neighbours where guests can visit them and see the local Maasai way of life, how the Maasai live, why they protect the environment and in what ways they are different from other African tribes.

Saruni is part of the Mara North Conservancy and has a unique location next to the only indigenous forest left in the Mara, with a population of elephant, buffalo, leopard and several species of buck. The only population in the Mara of Sykes and Colobus Monkeys also live nearby.

Accolades and Comments about Saruni Mara

Finalist Best Safari Camp Spa - The Good Safari Guide 2009

'The lodge here is peppered with personal touches: organic soaps and Persian carpets, assorted art and colonial furnishings; lovingly collected by the owner on his frequent foreign travels. Canvas-fronted bedrooms make you feel like you're camping - albeit in unadulterated comfort - and a massage in the Wellbeing Space completes the feeling of being totally at one with nature.' Hedge Hideaways

Fair Trade / Responsible Travel:

Saruni has established a women's group, whose members come from the local community. The ladies are encouraged to sell their artefacts directly in the Saruni shop and the lodge makes sure that the group remains in charge of the income generated from this activity. Saruni also supports the Kibera Paper project, selling cards in the shop to support HIV-affected single mothers who live in Kibera slum (Nairobi). More than 80% of Saruni's employees are from local communities. Saruni also sponsors young Maasai to train as guides at the Koiyaki Guiding School. Saruni pays park fees directly to the land around the camp. The camp uses solar power to produce electricity and to heat water.

RECOGNITION

5 GLOBE RATING



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