

Midlife Madness on SAFARI



21 wild days - June 2017



A SPECTACULAR WILDLIFE ADVENTURE IN KENYA & TANZANIA We're going on a LION HUNT!

THE WAKE-UP CALL COMES AT 5:45AM. "IT'S ON your side," I mumble. And as my sleepy wife scrambles in the darkness to grab the phone, she nearly strangles herself in the mosquito net that shrouds our bed. We lie there for a few minutes longer, struggling to get our bearings. Then, suddenly, it registers: we're in deepest, darkest AFRICA. And we're about to head off for an early morning LION-HUNT ...

Masai Mara Regional Park – along with its famous neighbour, the Serengeti – is centre-stage for the most dramatic wildlife show on earth: the legendary 'meals-on-wheels' migration of wildebeests and zebras. And, close behind the million-strong herds that swarm the grassy plains, are the hungry predators – lions, leopards, hyenas, jackals and vultures.

You'll have trouble believing this, but only yesterday we watched, spellbound, as

- a beautiful full-grown leopard slid gracefully down the large tree up which he'd been snoozing, and (with a warning snarl) loped off into the undergrowth
- four cute young cheetahs romped playfully around our vehicles while their mum, quite unconcerned, checked the landscape for their next hot meal
- several magnificent lions (first, females with their nearby cubs and, later, a bachelor party of adolescent males) brought down several unlucky wildebeests.



*WE'RE GOING ON A LION-HUNT.
We're going to catch a big one.
What a beautiful day.
We're not scared ...*

I'd often sung this silly song with my kids, but I'd never been on a REAL lion-hunt before. I'd never seen for myself how lions-on-the-prowl can creep, superbly camouflaged, through long grass. I'd never seen a herd of

wildebeests run panic-stricken in every direction when the lions begin their charge. I'd never watched (in real time) these natural predators single out their prey, sprint alongside, leap on its back, lock their jaws around its throat, and bring it crashing to the ground. And I'd never known how quickly the silence returns, the dust settles, the panicked herd starts grazing again, and the lions begin to feed.

We lost track of time that morning, hanging out the open

roofs of our safari vehicles with cameras glued to our faces. One wary lioness, needing some privacy I assume, dragged her still-kicking lunch into nearby bushes – never once taking her yellow eyes off us. Another healthy female, pooped after all this chasing around, seemed happy just to lie down and relax, while her cubs played roly-poly on the wildebeest she'd just killed.

Yes, I know. Scenes just like this have been happening for thousands of years all over the sunburnt African continent. But that powerful/awful display put on by those big cats was put on just for us, I'm sure ...

Midlife Madness Cruises & Tours

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