



I would recommend this company to anyone interested in an African safari and believe that you will not only get the best bang for your buck but you may just find yourself with some of the best memories of your life.

**Beth Auerbach, April 2010**

### **Private Safari to Tarangire/Serengeti/Ngorongoro**

Where to begin.....

That was without question the best trip Debbie and I have ever taken. (If you could just somehow shorten the long flights). Tanzania is a beautiful country and Millinga was an excellent representative for his country.

EVERY day had awe inspiring moments with beautiful scenery and magnificent animals up close and personal. Thanks to Millinga's diligence and expertise as a professional guide, we found all animals we wanted to see, most with young. There was nothing we wanted to see that we missed. His tracking ability and his instincts led us to some amazing observations. Millinga was professional, courteous, knowledgeable and thoughtful (he even provided a cake and bottle of wine for our anniversary)

He also has some stamina as we endured long days in dust but he had to drive literally hundreds of miles all the while maintaining his typical positive attitude and interesting commentary. Be sure to motivate Millinga to stay with your AAC group. He's worth every cent you pay him.

The tents were just fine, definitely better than I had imagined. In my opinion, Oliver 's wasn't much different than the mobile tents in the Serengeti. Food similar, beds similar, tents similar. The road (last 1 - 2 KM) to Oliver's was terrible very full of swampy potholes / Tse-Tse flies. I'll have to say the social time at Oliver 's was better in that the guests intermingled leading to very interesting conversation.

At the mobile camp we sat with the same people that we had just spent 12 hours on the road with and subsequently, the conversation at Ranger could idle. The Sopa Hotel at Ngorongoro had beautiful views and we loved the location. However after the tents maybe we expected too much but that was just a hotel, nothing special. Food was OK and not really better than the tents cooking.

Overall, this trip receives an A++ grade as it definitely exceeded expectations in almost every area. I am recommending AAC to my friends and Tanzania specifically. We will strongly consider your group for future travel.

Thanks to you personally for the agenda. The time spent in tents (2) then a hotel followed by tents (4 nights) was thoughtful. We asked for animals and nothing else and we got ANIMALS and excellent accompanying comments & direction from Millinga. Thanks to you Andre' and your assigning us Millinga as our guide, this was literally a perfect vacation.

Thanks again

**Mike Deets, Feb 2010**

## Group Lodge safari to Lake Manyara/Serengeti/Ngorongoro/Tarangire

Lynne,

I am writing to express my complete and overwhelming satisfaction with my recent trip to Kenya and Tanzania. I had a fantastic time and it was a far better trip than I could have imagined. I met some travelers from UK, Ireland, and Botswana who all were impressed (as well as myself) with the caliber of guides, transfers, and lodges. It was great to know that I paid less than they did for the same trip!

I have been on safari 6 times in India, Australia, and several countries in Africa. I can say without a doubt that Mellina with Ranger Safaris is the best guide I have ever had. I was on my own for the first few days of my trip and with him for 2 trips into Tarangire National Park. We met up with a group for the remainder of my time in Tanzania. We all agreed he is the best! I encourage you to continue working with his company. Everyone I met from Ranger Safaris was great and made my trip a breeze. In addition, the Serena Lodges were excellent. The food was wonderful; the staff was great; and the views/locations were spectacular. I was so pleased, considering I have stayed in quite rustic accommodations and tented camps in other countries.

Finally, I would like to thank you for answering all my questions and ensuring my trip went so smoothly. You handled everything well with such short notice (3 weeks!) and I appreciate that (and know how hard it is to do). I have already given your email/website to a coworker and 2 friends planning a wedding who want an adventurous honeymoon. I will continue to refer you to everyone I know. I can't wait to take my next trip with your company! Thank you again and please contact me with any questions.

PS--The rainy season was not an issue. I would go back this same time of year again. We had no crowds in the parks, saw every animal imaginable (including big 5 and the great migration), and had fantastic weather (one day of rain en route to the crater). Fantastic!

**Eric Gassaway, May 2010**

## Visit Zanzibar

### Private Safari to Lake Eyasi/Ngorongoro/Serengeti

### Gorilla trekking in Volcanoes National Park

### Extension to Shompole

Dear Mark and Elena,

We've made it back in one piece, and want to thank you for planning a wonderful trip for us. Every portion of the trip was slightly different from the others, and we all had different favorites. The trip was a perfect blend of game-viewing, cultural experiences, and relaxation. Everywhere we stayed, service was exceptional, and people were friendly and eager to please. It didn't hurt that Matt delighted (and frequently surprised) staff members by speaking to them in Swahili--they were particularly solicitous of him thereafter, and he entertained them and us with some pretty hilarious stories of his travel and work experiences...

Elena, you were absolutely right that we loved our safari guide, Jabshir. He was pleasant, friendly, extremely knowledgeable, and worked hard to meet our every wish. He managed most of them, too. We got the hoped-for mating experience in the Serengeti when he found us two lions who mated 5 times in the 50 minutes we watched--while the defeated male watched from nearby... We had never seen a rhino

(except 12 years ago when a group of lions were devouring a dead and nauseatingly stinking one) but Jabshir found us 14--including a couple of babies--in one day, beating his own one-day rhino-sighting record by six. Thank goodness for digital cameras--we collectively returned home with literally thousands of photos. And we will have to return again, because we have yet to witness a cat kill, and we would also like to see the elephant mourning circle some day.

The favorite lodging for most of us was probably the Governor's Silverback Lodge, though the Sopa Lodge on the crater isn't far behind, and my personal favorite was Shompole... we loved the hunts with the Hadzabe and the visit to the Mangati (I think I have that right) compound where we did a fascinating Q&A session with the three wives of one family, sitting on makeshift "stools" in the "room" of one wife and watching, while we talked, a toddler licking out a bowl of something that minutes before a dog had been licking out. We asked each other questions about how we lived, and the women could not understand and did not like the concept of monogamy. They were doubtful that women could like living alone with their husbands. They also clearly disapproved of the single and childless status of our three 20-somethings.

Everyone had different game-viewing favorite places. In the Crater, we loved the beauty and the manageability and the abundance of game. One morning we asked for an early start, earlier, definitely, than Jabshir would have liked--but as always, he accommodated our wishes--and therefore had a couple of hours with almost no other vehicles in sight and we were able to catch animals in early -morning activity. We enjoyed the drive from the Crater to the Serengeti, too; despite the uncertainty because of rain, Jabshir was able to take us to see Shifting Sands, a special experience.

In the Serengeti, we enjoyed being right there in the middle of it all at the mobile camp, which was visited on our second day by an elephant and a giraffe (and where we wallowed in mud that was as plentiful as in Rwanda), we enjoyed the campfires and getting to know the other guests at the camp and exploring the areas near the camp. The only complaint anyone had about the Serengeti was the number of vehicles in the main areas--at one lion site we were competing with nearly 20. But the sheer number of animals was mind-blowing.

In Shompole, the game was sparser, but it was so beautiful and we were one of, at the most, two vehicles in this huge area. It was so peaceful and we loved being able to get out of the vehicle periodically ...

Again, thank you for providing us with an exciting, fulfilling, memorable and environment ally responsible trip. We compliment you on the quality of your product.

**Sue Schaffer, Mike Rogan and family, Jan 2010**

**Private Safari to Lake Manyara/Ngorongoro/Serengeti in Tanzania  
Gorilla trekking extension in Volcanoes National Park, Rwanda  
Visit to Zanzibar**

Alison, our trip that you and The Africa Adventure Company organized for us was WONDERFUL! Our guides, Masha in Tanzania and Alex in Rwanda were soooo good and so interesting!!! Cannot say enough good about these two people!!! Everyone else that we were connected to were excellent too - Rosemary in Nairobi, just great! The places we stayed - wonderful!

We,( Miranda, George, Gail and Lara) just had a wonderful trip to Africa - first to Tanzania; Ngorongoro Crater and the Serengeti. which was green, not brown - and *full* of animals everywhere. *Had a Serengeti Safari from a Balloon - it was great!* Then it was off to Rwanda - Gorillas and the country. (I LOVE

Rwanda – more below). Then it was off to Zanzibar, (only place that doesn't need a rope at trip, but interesting...) and then to Nairobi to see more. Everywhere else could use many repeats...

Was such an interesting trip - Moose would have LOVED it..... Bugger....

You and your company did a wonderful job. Everything; all connections and logistics went smoothly and all was excellent!...The first morning that we were all in Arusha, Evans, who was so good and so nice, gave us a talk about what to expect with our trip logistics, etc. He was excellent! He was told about the first night at the hotel when George and Gail arrived and seemed to follow up on that. That truly was the only thing that did not go perfectly.) What nice people everywhere!!!

ESPECIALLY INTERESTING - RWANDA! What a country. IT WAS SUCH A FANTASTIC SURPRISE. What they have done since their Genocide War! The country is a jewel. The Rwandan president Paul Kagame - he is too good to be true!!!

I took an email that Kim Simon, who works for the Shoah Foundation, had sent to me - so I would remember Stephen Smith's name - he works for the Shoah Foundation, which is now working with the Rwandan Memorial Center (Genocide Museum). When I went into the Genocide Museum, I told them of my awareness of him and the Shoah Foundation and they all said "yes yes". Anyway, because of this introduction, a young man connected with the museum showed me some special things too. He was a (Tutsi) survivor, had been a young boy when the genocide had happened, his family was killed, but a Hutu had hidden him. Because of a foundation set up for survivors like him, he had his school paid for and he is now a lawyer and works at the Memorial Center. A lot of Rwandans were in the museum looking - not just "outside" tourists.

Seeing the gorillas was very interesting; but also wonderful was seeing the country side and Kigali and learning about what had happened - before, during and after the genocide. Our guide/driver was a Tutsi whose family escaped to Uganda - who grew up in a refuge camp there, then came back. He knew a lot. President Paul Kagame - he has a wonderful people's reconciliation program – The Genocide Museum playing a very important part, explaining how such a thing did happen - how people in Rwanda are now Rwandans - not Hutus, and Tutsis and Twas (pigmies) - RWANDANS!

The country is spotless! The president had the people pick up ALL trash - and once a month, 4 hours are set aside for all to find and pick up trash. Can't imagine what they do for four hours - there is NO trash anywhere.... It is against the law to throw trash on the ground. Plastic bags in Rwanda are against the law - even signs at the airport saying this. (Had to keep my suitcase locked - or I would have been looking out between bars.)

President Kagame had everyone in the country turn in their guns - against the law for people to have them. Considering what guns are for, great law... He seems like a wonderful and kind and very smart president!

I can't say enough about how impressive this country is - and especially concerning what happened there so very recently....

Alison and Ian, and everyone at Africa Adventure - THANK YOU SO MUCH!

**Kathy Kusner, Jan 2010**

## **SOUTHERN AFRICA**

**January-May 2010**

### **Linyanti/Okavango Delta/Makgadikgadi Pans**

Hello Kyle,

The memories from my safari in Botswana are unforgettable. I would like to provide some feedback and to enter the photo competition...

InterContinental Hotel at Johannesburg Airport was very comfortable for my one -night stay.

Sefofane's airplanes, ground staff, and pilots were excellent. I felt safe and the flights were on-time. Their ground staff at Maun airport was very helpful.

DumaTau Camp was the first and best camp among the four camps I visited. My tent was comfortable. The food was delicious and the service was excellent. The game drives were fantastic due to the guide's expert knowledge. Wildlife sightings were numerous and diverse.

Duba Plains Camp was the second camp. My tent was comfortable. The food was delicious and the service was excellent. The game drives were thrilling due to the deep water that the Land Rover had to traverse. Guiding was excellent. Naturally, the lions were the main attraction, but I saw plenty of wildlife.

Kwetsani Camp was the third camp. My tent was comfortable. The food was delicious and the service was excellent. I decided not to ride the mokoro, because I thought the game drive would see more wildlife. Water was very deep, so I had to take a boat to Jao or Hunda for the game drive. Guiding was adequate. Wildlife was difficult to spot because the grass was very high.

Camp Kalahari was the fourth camp. I was the only guest during my visit. Its facilities and amenities were rustic and offered a more rugged safari experience than the previous three camps. Daytime temperature was hot (93 F in the tent). The camp had minimal electricity. Mosquitoes were a serious problem due to April's rain that left a lot of water in the pan. I had the right mental attitude about these discomforts. Not everyone can handle them.

My tent was comfortable during the cool night. The food was fine and the service was excellent. Guiding was excellent. The variety of landscape was spectacular and the meerkats were lovely ...

Thank you,  
**Evan Chu, May 2010**

### **Flying Safari to Botswana's Jao Concession and Moremi Reserve**

Hello Kyle.

I want to let you know that we had an absolutely fabulous time on our safari – again! I couldn't have been more pleased.

Foster was an excellent guide at Selinda camp; a true professional and wonderful person. He made sure that we saw as much as possible (including two brother cheetah) and spoiled us with his attention.

And, I LOVED being back at JAO Camp. We were re-united with several of the same staff people who made our first trip so memorable (Tara & Chris, Kiddi, Joann & Mipa) who made us feel truly at home. The new managers, Andrew and Lauren, were so much fun and so hospitable. Joann gave me one of the best massage's that I've ever had anywhere (again). We even got to meet and spend some time with David Kays who is an excellent host. They were all working so hard to try to keep flooding at bay but always treated us with exceptional consideration. I just can't even offer words that would adequately describe my appreciation to all of the people at JAO and I hope that you can pass that message on to them. I hope to return to JAO Camp often (in 2012, in fact).

The game at Mombo was all that it's touted to be. I saw lion's eating a baby giraffe for breakfast ( a baby that we had just seen with it's mom the day before ) and rhino and just about every animal that I could have imagined – and some that I couldn't imagine ( e.g., a female lion with a mane )...

So, please know that you did an excellent job for us again and we appreciate it. We look forward to returning to Botswana in 2012 – and many times after that.

Thank you,

**Denise Dockendorf, May 2010**

### **Mobile Tented Safari to Kalahari Desert, Moremi and the Okavango Delta Houseboat fishing excursion on the Okavango River**

I'm sorry for the delay in getting back to you --- the excitement of our trip is just now beginning to subside so I can hold a steady pen. In a nutshell we had a wonderful safari, unforgettable really with all the sights and sounds and smells. And we were so pampered by Nic and the Capture Africa staff that we are now so spoiled and unfit for functioning in normal society.

The trip over to Johannesburg, dinner in the Quills, and overnight was easy and uneventful. Good connections the next morning to Maun and then to dirt airstrip where Nic Polenakis was waiting. It's a good thing we were rested because Nic was raring to go and his enthusiasm is infectious. I don't think we could have arrived at Deception Valley camp at a better time, just after some nice rains, weather cool in the mornings and evenings, not too hot mid day. Everything was green with oryx and springbok by the hundreds, plus Steenbok and Hartebeest. We had an unforgettable encounter with Larry the leopard who wanted to follow us back to camp, and a great meeting with a big male Kalahari lion. We got a first good look at a crimson breasted shrike, plus lots of other birds, and an African wildcat. In short the game viewing was fabulous, the weather and scenic vistas close to perfect.

Then an overnight in Meno a Kwena camp, a very interesting place on the now flowing Boteti River. David was an engaging and intriguing host and we could have spent a lot of time in his library. We were there just one night, weather was too hot, food and conversation were excellent.

We continued on to Nxai Pan and luckily found the weather excellent for game drives. Everything was green with water standing and zebra and springbok everywhere. We saw cheetah, leopard, lion, elephant, giraffe, jackal, along with birds and baobabs. Wonderful! And I was a little worried beforehand that we may find it dried up and devoid of game.

We had a nice flight over the Delta to Shakawe and the Kubu Queen. Which reminds me, high marks to Mack Air for prompt, efficient, courteous, and professional flight service. Greg Thompson took us Tigerfishing on the Okavango River for two days. We loved our stay with Greg even though the fishing wasn't great for us amateurs. We had some on -- what a thrill! But most of the catching was by Greg and Nic. The river was so pretty and peaceful, mesmerizingly tranquil might be a good description. The weather was too hot for sleep in the small lower cabins, up stairs would have been better but the ladies wanted to be near the bathroom. We had excellent food, good fishing equipment, and there is no doubt Greg is a superlative fisherman.

Another beautiful flight back over the Delta for our next mobile camps at Bodamatu, Xakanaxa, and finally Khwai. With the recent rains everything was lush and green, tall grass, visually stunning. We will have forever a visual picture of a peaceful elephant family, with babies, serenely feeding through a luxuriant green garden of eden, a beautiful park like setting bordered by trees with birds calling and twittering about. Wow!

We were in almost continual sight of game animals of one sort or another, and without trying to make an exhaustive list we saw impala, lechwe, reedbuck, waterbuck, kudu, wildebeest, buffalo, giraffe, warthog, zebra, hippo, and many wonderful birds including carmine bee-eater, woodland kingfisher, and African whoopoe. A particular hippo we called Hot Rod was a source of much amusement and pleasure as she demonstrated for us at every opportunity with gaping mouth and tremendous water splashing. She wouldn't let the camp staff down to the water to wash the vehicle -- it was her pond! We had two good encounters with cheetah and another great big male lion, coming right to us through the grass with the morning sun high - lighting his magnificent mane. Later that day we were astounded by this lion's roars at close quarters.

Khwai, our last camp, was beautifully situated on water and although the weather was excessively hot it was a wonderful headquarters to hear lions calling all night. Right away Nic was on the trail and we spent much of two days watching and photographing two big male lions mating with a huge female. This was a unique situation which we greatly appreciated...

*Quick overall summary:*

Guide Nic Polenakis. An awesome people-person, I marvel at his skills shepherding us old tourists through the African wilderness. He has the wonderful knack to relate his great knowledge of the flora and fauna in an interesting and enthusiastic manner. And he has that feel for his clients' wants and needs. Any problem he makes small. What a joy to be guided by someone so upbeat, positive, and knowledgeable. Someone we can call our friend. Nic is reason enough to go on safari.

Mobile camping in Botswana. Excellent food and service, friendly and caring staff. Special people, we got to know and enjoy. Some minor equipment glitches were promptly attended to --- like when the front wheel bearing of the big camp truck went out. Brian's father drove out to camp from Maun with spare parts and a mechanic, it was fixed without adversely affecting our safari in the least. Admirable! We especially liked our chef Florence and helper Madu, but all the staff were obviously hand-picked and excellent.

We enjoyed all the game reserves and parks, they were beautiful and unspoiled, except for the before mentioned crowding in Khwai, which definitely depreciates the experience.

I apologize for this tedious tirade, thank you for wading through it, hopefully it has been of some small interest. And **THANK YOU AGAIN**, for your careful and accurate arrangements. We really did experience a safari of a lifetime.

Respectfully,

**Fred and Karen Peters, Feb 2010**

**Visit to two Private Game Reserves near Kruger/Mpumalanga  
Safari to Chobe Game Park  
Visit to Victoria Falls**

Hi Lynne!

Well, where can I begin? Thanks you so much for arranging this fantastic trip --I have fallen in love with Africa--the trip exceeded our expectations in so many ways --the sights were so incredible--we actually took over 2200 pictures and I don't feel like I missed looking at things in order to take pictures either.

Starting with the things I totally loved--Simbambili--so glad we upgraded to this beautiful lodge --the rooms were fantastic, food was creative and delicious and we had the best guide of the whole trip--Lazarus--I call him the Fabrizio of the bush as Fabrizio was a wine connoisseur in Tuscany who gave us a wine tasting 4 years ago and his enthusiasm and joy about wine got me to begin drinking wine and learning about it. Lazarus is like that. He clearly loves his job and the bush and the animals --Simbambili has a treasure in him. We actually met people who had him as guide 2 years earlier and still talked about him. I will not forget him.

We had great variety in game viewing--at Simbambili it was necessary to track the animals to find them --but we saw everything except lions --including wild dogs (just after before and after the kill --not during, thank goodness because that's something I would rather not witness!). We also saw cheetahs there--we had no idea the animals would be right next to our landrover!! We thought we would need binoculars to see them.

Mala Mala did not need trackers because all of the animals were right there --right away when we got there we saw a pride of lions--the next day a male came up and pee'd on the wheel of our landrover and went to sleep in the shade of the vehicle. The only animal we didn't see at Mala Mala was the cheetah which this other couple in our truck really wanted to see --but we already had at Simbambili. If I were going to do Mala Mala again--I would have upgraded to Rattray's on Mala Mala because although the room was spacious and beautiful, the bathrooms really needed an upgrade --I had read that about Mala Mala on line and it is true. The food was good and plentiful but not as imaginative as at other places.

I have to say that for the total experience --I loved Chobe Chilwero and I have to say I am glad we had the best for last--the lodge was beautiful, the rooms were gorgeous, beautiful bathrooms, attentive staff like at Simbambili where they met us with wet hand towels after the drives --the scenery looking out over the Chobe River was incredible--and I actually loved the game drives the best there --they did not drive through the bush and the animals seemed much calmer --because my favorite animals are not among the "big 5"--I felt I really got to see them doing their natural things at Chobe --we got right up next to 30 to 40 giraffes who were at a salt lick and bent to drink, totally disregarding us--the impala and warthogs also were not spooked by us in our vehicles. To me it seemed a gentler kinder way to look at the animals --and we saw more interesting animal behaviors there --2 male elephants fighting, male kudu trying to mate with a female right next to our car, etc. And Chobe Chilwero is an eco-friendly lodge--I would definitely stay at another Sanctuary lodge if I get up the nerve to fly in a small plane to the Okavango Delta.

I neglected to mention Highgrove House --which was lovely and just a perfect rest for an afternoon! The food was fantastic--and although we got there after lunch Rienie made us the best grilled cheese and tomato sandwiches I ever had.

I thought Victoria Falls was awesome and Esther was a very good knowledgeable guide--other than that, about the only thing I really liked about Zimbabwe was the beautiful visa stamp....

I will definitely have you arrange our next trip to Africa if we are lucky enough to be able to go again! In the meantime--I am already singing your praises to people I know--and one of the marketing consultants at my hospital asked for your email. We will definitely forward some pictures for your competition -- although I really can't take credit for the beauty of the sunset pictures in Botswana--that's just the way it looked!

Anyway--sorry this was so long--but thank you thank you thank you for a fabulous trip --  
**Michelle and Ed Ross, May 2010**

### **Okavango Delta/Central Kalahari Game Reserve**

Hi Mark,

My wife and I want to personally thank you for the outstanding Photo Safari you and your staff arranged for us in Botswana at Okavango Delta and The Kalahari Desert this past January 2010.

A few comments:

-Even though you get a little rain during this time period, the animal and bird life is very active and very visible. When it is not so hot, there is less "animal downtime" all of which is very good for photography!

-We were at Wilderness Camps for this trip and they all were excellent experiences. Your good judgment for us in this regard was much appreciated.

-We had the privilege of seeing leopard, a pack of 10 wild dog shortly after a kill at Little Vumbura as well as a 6 hour experience following a lengthy hunt by lionesses at Duba Plains. All this amid non stop bird and aquatic life including monitor lizards and crocs. In all instances we were often only feet away from the action which made for great shooting.

-Our private guides really knew their stuff. They knew what areas to check for the species we had identified wanting to see and were very good at positioning for photography. At Duba, we had Carlton, one of the best guides ever and also Sevara at Little Vumbura who worked tirelessly to find Wild Dogs!

-The desert is more than worth a trip this time of year as it is lush and full. We saw black mane lions, cheetah a few feet from the vehicle and honey badgers which can be hard to locate.

I could continue but shall close off by saying that the time of year was very good to be in Botswana and all arrangements were very well done. This was our 8th trip to Africa. Our expectations were high and they were exceeded!

Thanks!

Regards,

**Bruce and Patti Schadow, Jan 2010**

## **Flying safari to Selinda Reserve/Okavango Delta/Moremi**

Alison and Mark,

First, Chris was excellent in Cape Town. Do n't know what we would have done without him. Excellent knowledge and know just what do to in terms of weather appropriate activities.

What a piece of heaven we experienced. I could write a book on just our visit to Botswana between the animals, the high water (not a problem except for the staff and guides), and each camp being more spectacular than the last. The "Living with the Elephants", we all felt was an experience no one should miss. Brooks for the first 6 days was a treasure...great sense of humor, serious when he needed to be, and excellent guide skills to get us to the game we wanted to see. Reuben at Duba, Carter at Stanley were also very, very good. Pete at Mombo was another excellent guide with excellent skills and information. We have so many stories and unfortunately not enough time to tell. We are putting all our pictures together, best of the best, and hopefully putting them into a book...

Can't thank you all enough for such a terrific "trip of a lifetime"

Fondly,

**Anne Vallotton, May 2010**