

Singita Mara River Tented Camp opens in far-northern Serengeti

Singita Mara River Tented Camp has opened in the Lamai triangle, the northernmost tip of the Serengeti National Park, Tanzania. The camp has six guest tents and offers a pared-down approach to the Singita experience without compromising on creature comforts and is run entirely on solar power.

Singita Mara River Tented Camp's remote location in the Lamai triangle epitomises the company's eco-driven philosophy of preserving iconic locations by offering "fewer beds in larger areas". Forming part of the Mara ecosystem, the Lamai triangle is sandwiched between the Masai Mara National Park in Kenya, and the Mara River in the south. It is a wildlife viewing area with abundant year-round concentrations of resident plains game, big cats and elephant, in addition to the Mara River's large populations of crocodile and hippo. The camp is located on a sharp bend in the Mara River, providing viewing of the wildebeest river crossings during the annual migration. With 16 beds surrounded by 40 000 hectares (98 000 acres), it is one of very few permanent camps in the northern corner of the Serengeti. From August through to October, the area is renowned for unique up-close viewing of the annual migration; out of season it continues to abound with resident game, making this a year-round safari destination.

Constant engagement with nature

Remote and unspoilt, Singita Mara River Tented Camp meets the demands of an increasingly discerning traveller for an authentic and meaningful connection with nature that leaves behind a lighter footprint. Close to the ground and off the grid, the concept and design of the camp encourages constant engagement with nature. The six tents are positioned on the edge of generous shaded decks to make the most of the river views. Two of the tents have been designed as unique family suites, each comprising two tents linked by a covered canvas walkway.

Conceptualised and designed by Cécile & Boyd's, there is subtle attention to detail throughout the camp - given the overall theme of pared-down simplicity. The boundaries between inside and outside have been blurred, eliminating that feeling of being separated from nature despite being in the midst of it. When the tent flaps are opened up, the only barrier between guests and the surrounding wilderness are insect-proof fly sheets. Beds are positioned to face eastwards so that the rising sun acts as a natural alarm clock in the early morning.

Resourcefulness and sustainability

The look is cool, modern, edgy and fun without losing the elegant yet relaxed feet-up style that defines the Singita brand. Strong contemporary design puts a fresh spin on local creativity, with inspiration coming from traditional, everyday African objects like baskets, beads and pots, reworked and repurposed by young African designers and craftspeople. Resourcefulness and sustainability are the watchwords. Wooden turned lights were fashioned from sustainable jacaranda wood, while decorative wire baskets echo the exact shape and design of traditional grain-sorting baskets. Natural, textured, layered, neutral interiors are injected here and there with splashes of primary red and blue and black Masai-inspired patterns.

In the Lamai's harsh, hot climate guests are kept cool with healthy, light cuisine conducive to refreshing and reenergising the body. Restorative fresh fruit smoothies, iced Fair Trade coffees and teas, crunchy salads and ethically sourced ingredients, such as organic eggs and grass-fed meat, are the order of the day with luscious desserts and homemade ice cream. Bamboo-handled cutlery, wonky crockery, wobbly glassware, and pure linen napkins enhance the authentic, natural style of dining.

Sustainable living extends to every aspect of Singita Mara River Tented Camp, as Singita consciously seeks to eliminate the use of unnecessary energy and non-biodegradable materials. In keeping with this concept, the camp is built from natural and recycled materials, including wood, stone, canvas and raw leather. It is 100% "off the grid", relying entirely on a central, custom-designed solar power array using photovoltaic technology - a system that uses solar panels to convert sunlight into electricity. The solar array comprises a quarter of an acre of solar panels capable of generating power efficiently even on cloudy days.

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