

## **Discover the Untouched Beauty of the Wild, Olare Mara Kempinski**

**By Mary Mwendwa**

In the heart of the expansive Olare Motorogi Conservancy in Maasai Mara National Reserve, an alluring and exquisite tented camp offers guests an opportunity to interact with rare wildlife species in their natural habitats.

Olare Mara Kempinski, located a 45 minute drive from Olkiombo Airstrip, offers breathtaking experiences to guests that leave them yearning for more. Sights include savanna grasslands, distinctive acacia trees, large populations of lions, zebras, gazelles, elephants, cheetahs, buffaloes, wild beasts and a variety of bird species coupled with vibrant Maasai people who are welcoming and hold a unique culture of livestock rearing and dressing that no one can fail to appreciate.

Olare Mara, which overlooks the Ntiakitiak River, offers guests authentic African adventure in style and comfort. According to Fairman Muhingi, Manager, Olare Mara Kempinski, "The 12 tents have woven rugs, cosy beds which are made of wood from local forest trees that form part of the 35,000 acres of prime grass land of the Olare Motorogi Conservancy. The tents include one suite tent with a private plunge pool, four family tents and seven private tents, each have been given Maasai names with a special meaning relevant to the region. The tents are also equipped with ensuite bathrooms with rain showers, bath tubs, outdoor

showers, electric shaver sockets, hairdryers, intercom telephones and safe boxes for personal valuables. Our tents use solar energy and therefore we are able to mitigate on effects of climate change by using clean energy in our facilities. We believe in personalised services that will offer an exclusive feel at the Olare Mara Kempinski premises.”

Accommodation in the camp ranges from \$400 - \$800 dollars per person depending on the season. This comes with full board accommodation plus daily game drives with expert tour guides who will assist throughout the game drive. Peak seasons run from mid June to September and low seasons are seen from November to around April and May. 60 percent of the guests are international while locals cover 40 percent.

“We get guests from America, India, Japan and many other regions in the world. Guests are encouraged to mitigate on carbon footprints by being encouraged to plant a tree with their names written on a board next to their tree. This leaves a special feeling among them and they yearn to come again to check on their trees. We once hosted the President of Sri Lanka and that was a great boost to us and the community here who are involved in tourism activities,” Fairman says.

With vegetables grown in their own organic garden, the largest one in the reserve, guests can choose to enjoy their meals in culinary offerings in the dining area, by pool area amongst tall trees as they watch the sunrise over the horizon.

Fairman further says, “Our guests are welcomed by Maasai Morans, who sing and dance to Maasai tunes while dressed in their traditional attires. They also get to affiliate with the community through eco-friendly activities like beading among many others. We have a curio shop at our camp and all the artwork done by the community is exhibited and sold there. We have also employed some of the community members here who help in service delivery.”

Kenya is one of the world’s most popular tourism destinations attracting millions of tourists over the past years. The country is endowed with attractive tourist sites, rich culture, striking geographical diversity and landscapes ranging from beautiful beaches, to animal parks and archeological sites.

The World Travel and Tourism Council’s report on tourism trends in the world revealed in 2013, travel and tourism’s total contribution to the global economy rose to 9.5% of global GDP (US \$7 trillion) which not only outpaces the wider economy, but is also growing faster than other significant sectors such as financial and business services, transport and manufacturing. In total, nearly 266 million

jobs were supported by travel and tourism in 2013 - one in 11 of all jobs in the world. The sustained demand for travel and tourism, together with its ability to generate high levels of employment, continues to prove the importance and value of the sector as a tool for economic development and job creation.

Ends.