



# RIDE WORLD WIDE

## Ride Kenya 2010

### Riding Safaris Information Sheet

These safaris take place in the remote Chyulu Hills of Southern Kenya. They are run by 'Ride Kenya' which is owned by Patrick Stanton and Nicola Young, who work in close association with Richard Bonham's 'Ol Donyo Wuas Lodge'. The Ride Kenya base is situated close to Ol Donyo Wuas on Mbirikani Group Ranch, which covers 300,000 acres belonging to the local Maasai people. Together with Ol Donyo Wuas Lodge, Ride Kenya has exclusive access to this land. Safari routes also venture off into the surrounding Amboseli eco-system and the wider Chyulu Hills and all in all there is over 1.4 million acres of wilderness to explore. Mount Kilimanjaro stands as a back-drop for all safaris.



**Dates** Safaris operate year round except in November and May, Kenya's usual rainy seasons. There are a number of set departures (listed overleaf) for 6 night mobile tented safaris and tailor-made safaris of 2 to 7 nights for private groups, (combined with a few nights at Ol Donyo Wuas Lodge if you wish), can be organised on request. Please contact us to discuss your plans and availability.

**The Horses** There are about twenty horses, based in purpose built stables about ¼ mile from Ol Donyo Wuas Lodge. They are mostly between about 14hh and 16.1hh (there are also a few smaller ponies that are ideal for children), are of varying breeds and include thoroughbred ex-racehorses, South African Boerpedes and Somali cross ponies. They are all well-schooled, responsive and enjoyable to ride as well as being sensible to handle, used to game and at home in the bush. They are ridden in English tack, usually snaffle bridles and either general-purpose English saddles (leather or good quality Wintecs), endurance saddles or a limited number of comfortable Maclellan saddles ('cavalry type' saddles that are a cross between an English and Western style). Seat savers are provided and the horses have saddle blankets with pockets in which to carry a water bottle (supplied) and small personal possessions when riding (eg sun cream, small camera etc.). The horses are looked after with great care by Patrick and Nicola and grooms are on hand at all times to prepare them for rides and look after them at the stables and when staying in tented camps. There is a rider weight limit of 95kg (15 stone) for experienced riders and 90kg (14 stone 2lbs) for more novice riders although there is some flexibility as long as prior notice is given. If you are close to these weight limits please contact us to discuss and to check if suitable horses are available.

**Riding** Safari itineraries are flexible and can be tailored to suit, but standard itineraries for mobile safaris generally include 4 to 6 hours riding each day. This is broken up either into a long morning ride with a late lunch eaten in camp and the afternoon for a guided walk or game drive; or there may be a full day ride from camp to camp broken with stops en-route for refreshments.

**cont. over**

**Riding cont.** Rides are normally lead by Patrick or Nicola or by a local guide trained by them, accompanied by a back-up rider. Nicola, who is English, has lived in Kenya for several years, has a degree in Swahili and also BHS qualifications. She has worked at several eventing yards and for professional polo teams, as well as playing polo herself. Patrick is originally from the US and is an excellent horseman. His varied experience includes an apprenticeship as a farrier, a brief stint as a rodeo rider and several years playing varsity polo. Both he and Nicola also spent several seasons breaking, schooling horses and guiding riding holidays in New Zealand and Australia before they moved to Kenya. They take great care of their horses and are fun, enthusiastic and easy-going company, who will look after you very well. Those joining a safari will be required to wear a hard hat when riding.

**Pace** The pace on safari depends on the terrain, weather and riders' ability (it can be tailored to suit more novice riders), but there are generally good opportunities for long canters and there is good going on the open, acacia studded plains and sandy tracks that lead away from the Chyulus. In the hills there are places where the ground is quite rocky and the bush thick and here the pace has to be slow and you might also need to get off and lead your horse from time to time. Overall the pace on safari is varied and there are usually plenty of chances for long trots and canters and also to jump small fallen logs and trees. Experienced riders might also be able to try the purpose built cross-country course close to the stables.

**Riding Experience** To participate in a safari you must be a reasonably competent, confident rider as you will be riding in an open area where there is big (- and potentially dangerous -) game including elephant and lion. Although you don't have to be an expert over jumps or in competition, you should be comfortable and in control on a horse at all paces (including long trots and canters) and used to riding in open country and over varied terrain. You should also be relaxed and secure in the saddle so you are able to stay on your horse if it reacts suddenly, or needs to move quickly out of trouble. Accompanied children are accepted on safari at Ride Kenya's discretion but must be strong, competent riders (a pony club C certificate may be required). In any case, if you do not ride regularly at home, you should accustom yourself to the time you will spend in the saddle with concentrated training in the months before you go. Non-riders are welcome to join a safari, meeting riders for lunch and in the evenings, with days filled with other game viewing activities (game drives, walks etc).



**The Terrain** The low country around the Chyulus consists of semi-desert, rolling savannah plains. Climbing away from the plains, there are acacia woodlands and above them the Chyulu Hills themselves. The hills, which run for 40 miles and rise to over 7000 feet, consist of a series of volcanic craters with the peaks covered in a jungle-like mist forest, unique to this area. The slopes of the Chyulus are dotted with thick acacia woodland and jutting rocky 'Kopjes' (small hills); higher still, the vegetation changes to open grassland and finally to the evergreen, mist forest. The going underfoot varies, ranging from dry savannah plains, gentle grassy slopes and rough paths winding around the hillsides, to soft peaty tracks through shady forest. There are many wonderful views and some sharp ascents and descents where the horses need to be lead over rough ground. The plains below the hills stretch south to Amboseli and the Tanzanian border. Unbroken except for the odd rocky outcrop these grasslands often host large numbers of game and Masai cattle. Kilimanjaro stands as a back-drop for all safaris.

**Accommodation** Accommodation on safari is in a comfortable tented camp that is transported and set up ahead by back-up staff and vehicle, with some nights perhaps spent at Ol Donyo Wuas Lodge (depends on individual itinerary). Tented camps use spacious East African walk-in safari tents (you can easily stand up inside), furnished with proper (wrought iron) beds made up with cotton sheets, duvets and pillows. There are bed-side tables and a wash basin and chairs set up outside each tent which also has its own shower room attached at the back, with traditional bucket and pulley shower and 'short drop' loo. There is also a separate 'mess' / dining tent in each camp with a bar area and a long dining table and chairs for meals. A cook, waiter, general staff and grooms travel with the camp and take care of all the chores, heating water for showers, cooking, feeding, grooming and tacking up horses etc. Lighting is by kerosene lamps, torches and other extras such as soap, towels and ice for drinks, are all provided. The first and / or last night of many safaris may be spent at Ol Donyo Wuas lodge, a wonderfully comfortable wood and thatch safari lodge perched on a hillside with lovely views over the plains to Mount Kilimanjaro. Ol Donyo Wuas has a main living and dining area, with long dining table, bar, open fireplace, sofas and comfortable chairs; a second dining area under thatch and the shade of an acacia tree overlooking a stone terrace and 'infinity' swimming pool and seven individual stone and thatch guest cottages, all elevated on stilts and well situated for privacy and seclusion. The cottages are all extremely spacious with private bathrooms and are individually furnished to the highest standards - a major refurbishment was completed in 2007 (for more detail see our Ol Donyo Wuas Ride Information Sheet). Accommodation on safari is based on two sharing and a single supplement is payable if you are not prepared to share a tent / room with another guest of the same sex if requested.



**Meals** Meals on safari are delicious and plentiful. Ingredients are always fresh and bread is baked every day. Days usually start with a good breakfast and your choice of fruit, perhaps porridge, toast and a full cooked breakfast for those who wish. Alternatively you may be woken with tea, coffee and biscuits brought to your room/tent before going on an early morning ride and stopping half way for a delicious breakfast, cooked and served at tables set up out in the bush. Lunch is a picnic out riding or is served in camp, on your return. If a picnic, it is substantial, often with various salads and cold meat as well as bread, fruit, biscuits and hot and cold drinks. After riding or a late afternoon game activity, evening drinks are accompanied by appetising snacks and dinner is three courses served by candlelight. Meals are served in the mess tent or outside if it is fine and there is a varied bar with a selection of spirits, wine, beer and soft drinks (with plenty of ice) all included.

**Game** Due to the lack of water in the hills, wildlife is more prolific in the low country where there are 38 recorded species of large mammals including the "big five" - Elephant, Rhino, Lion, Leopard and Buffalo. On the lower plains you can normally expect to see elephant (including some of the big Amboseli bulls, with their enormous tusks, that frequent the area), giraffe, zebra and many species of antelope including eland, oryx, gerenuk, wildebeest, Thompson's and Grant's Gazelle, reedbuck and duiker. You may also see rarer antelope such as kudu, cats such as cheetah, lion and leopard, other predators such as hyena, jackal and bat-eared fox. There is also a huge variety of wonderful birds from ostriches to tiny sunbirds. There are both white and black rhino in the Chyulus and although water is very limited, buffalo are quite often seen in the mist forest. Game is also often seen on the move from its water sources on lower ground to the good grazing in the hills and with waterholes just outside Ol Donyo Wuas lodge fed by excess water from showers, there is often very good game viewing from the comfort of the lodge itself.

**Safety** Rides are lead by an experienced guide, accompanied by a groom / back up rider. The guide carries a hand held radio for communication with the lodge, a mobile 'phone is also carried (although these only work at certain points in the Chyulus) and a satellite 'phone is carried on mobile safaris. A first aid kit is taken in saddle-bags, with a more comprehensive kit kept at Ol Donyo Wuas lodge. Flying Doctor air ambulance cover is recommended for all guests (as well as standard travel insurance) in case of an emergency - this is normally automatically included in the safari cost.

**Other activities** Safari itineraries can be tailored to suit and as well as riding, optional activities include game drives (both day and night drives with a spot light) and walks with an experienced guide and local trackers. Picnics, barbecues, visits to a Masai village ("manyatta") and to community / conservation projects are often organised and day trips to Amboseli or Tsavo National Parks can be arranged on request. Clay pigeon shooting is another option and bird shooting can be arranged on request at certain times of year.

**Weather and Seasons** Daytime temperatures in the Chyulu Hills are generally very pleasant for riding at around 20 to 25 degrees Centigrade year round. The wet seasons (as in the whole of East Africa) are late March to May when there may be intermittent downpours with sunshine in between, and November to early / mid December when there may be short, but sometimes heavy, bursts of rain. Ol Donyo Wuas is at about 5000 feet and the Chyulus rise up to about 7000 feet and it can be quite cold during the rains (or at any time of year if it clouds over) due to the altitude. It is usually hottest in late January and February but even then temperatures are generally pleasant and there is often a breeze on the plains so it never really gets too hot. June to August are the coolest months, although nights can be cool year round, especially in the hills.

**What to bring** We will send you a list of what to bring when your booking is confirmed.

### Example itinerary - Chyulu Hills Safari (6 night mobile safari)

**Day 1** - [Collected from your Nairobi hotel and transferred to the domestic airport for an early morning scheduled flight to Ol Donyo Wuas in Southern Kenya's Chyulu Hills]. You will be met on arrival at the Chyulus airstrip by your guides, Patrick Stanton or Nicola Young and transferred to Lenkiliriti Camp where the first night is spent. Shown to your tents and time to relax over lunch in camp and then for a siesta before tea. Meet the horses after tea and set off on an afternoon ride, designed to give you a taste of the safari to come and to ensure a perfect match between horse and rider before the safari departs. Dinner and overnight Lenkiliriti Camp. (L, D)



**Day 2** - After a delicious breakfast in camp, set out on a five or six hour ride through an area of Chyulu East National Park, known as Macaruru. This is a wild and untouched area of Kenya, and you will ride through a spectacular untamed landscape. You might be lucky enough to come across signs of mountain reedbeek, a rare antelope which resides in the hills around the Park or perhaps even signs of black rhino. These are the last truly wild black rhino in Kenya, and occasionally there are fresh tracks to follow on the safari. Other wildlife you may see includes eland, kudu, giraffe, impala, zebra, wildebeest and coke's hartebeest A vehicle will meet you with a picnic lunch and cold drinks under the shade of a sprawling acacia tree and after a leisurely lunch and rest, ride back to the Lenkiliriti camp by a different route. Dinner and overnight Lenkiliriti Camp. (B,L,D)

[5]

**Day 3** - Mount up and set off riding through the acacia forest up towards Chyulu East National Park. You will pass through seemingly endless stands of whistling thorn acacia as you begin your ascent into the Chyulu Hills, possibly encountering some of the area's exceptionally large resident bull elephants peacefully browsing. Other game in the area includes zebra, wildebeest, giraffe, oryx, gazelle, cheetah and even lion. Over the course of the day, the ride ascends about 2,000 feet above the plains with stunning views stretching for 90 miles on a clear day. There are ample opportunities to canter, gallop and jump along the way. Stop for a picnic lunch before making the final ascent to camp which is nestled in the forest next to a large volcanic crater. It is situated overlooking the quintessential East African plains that lead up to Mt. Kilimanjaro. In the late afternoon you can climb the volcanic crater to look for the very rare Verreaux's Eagle which nests in the inaccessible rocky outcrops that line the rim of the crater, or explore the lava tubes that lie within walking distance of the camp. These jagged caves stretch for miles as they lead away from the crater and have been used by hunter gatherers as shelter for generations. Return to camp for drinks before dinner and the night at Crater Camp. (B,L,D)



**Day 4** - An early breakfast before mounting up and ascending 2000 feet higher into the Chyulu Hills, with incredible views of the vast wildernesses of Tsavo East National Park to the east and Mount Kilimanjaro and Amboseli National Park to the west. The ride traverses steep slopes and valleys and it may be necessary to lead your horse at times. There will be a noticeable change in climate and temperature as you reach over 7,000 feet above sea level. Due to the altitude of the area, clouds often sit on the top of the Chyulu Hills and this consistent moisture has given rise to miniature jungles that dot the summits of the hills. The ride will take about 4 hours and ends at one of the largest mist forests in the hills. Here you dismount and, while the horses are sent back to Crater Camp with a groom, there is an opportunity to walk through the forest looking for buffalo, leopard, syke's monkey and giant forest hog which can be found here. A picnic lunch on the edge of the mist forest, overlooking the vast landscape below and then driven back to camp for sundowners and dinner. Overnight Crater Camp. (B,L,D)

**Day 5** - Mount up and start the descent from the hills, through a sprawling acacia forest and on into a large, open, sandy lugga (dry river bed). Over the years, wind erosion has exposed these ancient soils in which archaeologists have discovered stone tools made by some of the first hominids to walk the earth. Stone chips and simple stone tools known as hand axes have been collected in this region so it is worth looking out for signs of artifacts used by our ancient ancestors. This is lion country and although it is highly likely that the lions will be fast asleep deep inside the shady lava flows, it is possible to get a picture of their most recent activity by the tracks they have left the night before and you might use this information to come back after dark, in a vehicle with a spotlight, to try and locate them as they come out to hunt. After about a 5 hour ride arrive at the new camp set up on the plains, with a view of some spectacular granite outcrops, known as 'Kopjes'. Sundowners on top of a Kopje, with stunning views of Mount Kilimanjaro. Dinner and overnight Kopje Camp. (B,L,D)

**Day 6** - Breakfast before dawn and mount up for a final day's ride exploring the vast wilderness out behind the Kopjes, enjoying the wildlife early in the morning, and watching the sunlight catch on the summit of Kilimanjaro as the sun rises over the Chyulu Hills. Head for a dry riverbed where it is often possible to see large groups of elephant digging for water. There should be a chance to canter up and down the banks of the riverbed and let your horse gallop through the soft sand. You may also encounter some local Maasai herdsman, who also survive in this area by digging into the dry riverbed for water. After about 5 hours riding, return to camp for lunch, and then an afternoon game drive or walk - or both. Dinner and overnight Kopje camp. (B,L,D)

**Day 7** - After breakfast you will be driven to the Chyulus airstrip for the Safarilink scheduled flight, due to depart around 08.30, (or private charter) to Wilson airport in Nairobi and onward travel. (B)

### **Example itinerary - Amboseli Ride (6 nights)**

**Day 1** - [Collected from your Nairobi hotel and transferred to the domestic airport for an early morning (approx 08.15) 60 minute scheduled flight to Amboseli National Park]. You will be met on arrival at the airstrip by your guides, Patrick Stanton or Nicola Young and driven through the Park to Tall Tree Camp where the first night is spent. En route there is a great chance to see game such as elephant, zebra, giraffe, wildebeest, hippo and much more. Shown to your tents and time to relax over lunch in camp which is situated a few metres from the Kenya / Tanzania border. After lunch and a siesta meet the horses and a ride of about 2 to 3 hours to get used to them and explore the area around camp. (L, D)

**Day 2** - A cooked breakfast in camp and set out on a ride of about 4 hours to a huge outcrop of granite rocks. Lunch will be waiting when you arrive and you can relax under the overhanging boulders with views across Amboseli and of Mount Kilimanjaro, Mount Meru and Namanga. After lunch and a siesta, mount up for a ride of 2 to 3 hours by a different route back to Tall Tree Camp passing through acacia woodland at the base of Kilimanjaro where there are often elephant browsing and lion sleeping (the safari covers about 20 mile in all today). Dinner and night Tall Tree Camp. (B,L,D)



**Day 3** - An early wake up call at dawn and set off on a ride of 2 to 3 hours exploring the area north of camp where there are often nomadic Masai herdsman with their cattle. Stop for breakfast in the bush then ride back to camp for a leisurely lunch. A relaxing afternoon with a game drive for some close up viewing of Amboseli's game. Return to camp in the evening, for a delicious three course dinner and overnight. (B,L,D)

**Day 4** - After breakfast mount up and ride into Amboseli National Park. The ride is about 30 miles in all and you will traverse the secluded and game dense Enkongo Narok swamp with the chance of riding with large numbers of elephant, buffalo and plains game and perhaps even predators on the way. At one stage, you will cross a vast dry lake bed so there will be plenty of chances for a gallop and jumping some of the trees that have been pushed over by elephant. After 6-7 hours riding, reach camp, which has been set up on Olgulului Ranch, in an oasis of tall trees in the midst of vast open country with limitless views. Dinner and overnight in camp. (B,L,D)

**Day 5** - An early start and a ride of about 25-30 miles to Mbirikani Ranch at the northern end of the Chyulu Hills with a picnic lunch en route. The ride takes you through huge areas of Acacia woodland, with the opportunity to see eland, kudu, oryx, gerenuk, hartebeest, giraffe and even cheetah. Arrive in camp in the afternoon and after tea go for a sunset game drive or walk. Overnight Longeriti Camp. (B,L,D)

**Day 6** - After breakfast set off by 4 x 4 vehicle for the top of the Chyulu Hills. A noticeable change in climate and temperature occurs as you reach over 7,000 feet above sea level. The journey is dominated by incredible views of the vast wilderness of Tsavo East National Park to the east and Mount Kilimanjaro and Amboseli National Park to the west. On reaching the mist forest, which covers the top of the hills, a chance for a walk tracking the buffalo, giant forest hog, leopard and Sykes' monkeys that reside here. A picnic lunch outside the forest, with amazing views of the route you have taken over the past 5 days and then drive back to Longeriti camp for an afternoon ride, a walk or a game drive. End the day with a night drive to look for leopard and rhino. Dinner and overnight Longeriti Camp. (B,L,D)

**Day 7**- After breakfast you will be driven to the Chyulus airstrip for the Safarilink scheduled flight, due to depart around 08.30, (or private charter) to Wilson airport in Nairobi and onward travel. (B)

**DATES 2010****Chyulu Hills Ride (6 nights)**

6th to 12th January  
14th to 20th February

7th to 13th June  
12th to 18th July

20th to 26th September  
6th to 12th December

**Amboseli Ride (6 nights)**

28th June to 4th July  
2nd to 8th August

23rd to 29th August  
27th December to 2nd January 2011

**RATES 2010:**

**Rates are per person, are seasonal and assume twin shared accommodation**

**Set date 6 night Chyulu Hills Ride**

US\$ 4050 per person  
Single supplement US\$ 947

**6 night Amboseli Ride**

US\$ 4298 per person  
Single supplement US\$ 1005

**Please note that due to constantly fluctuating exchange rates, ride rates are now quoted in US\$. The sterling price will be the equivalent sterling rate using the US\$/sterling exchange rate in force when you book/pay.**

**Rates quoted INCLUDE** all riding and other available activities, guiding and equipment, twin accommodation (single tent only if paying supplement or if otherwise available), return Safarilink scheduled flights between Wilson Airport (Nairobi's domestic airport) and Chyulus or Amboseli airstrip, transfers between Jomo Kenyatta International Airport and Wilson Airport on arrival in Nairobi and departure, Conservancy fees, meals, drinks (except champagne, premium spirits and cellar wines), flying doctor service and laundry service.

**Rates EXCLUDE** international flights to Nairobi and taxes, local departure taxes, personal medical / travel insurance (which you must have), visa fees, personal items such as telephone calls etc and any tips you may wish to leave staff.

**Note - Single Supplements are** only payable if you are NOT prepared to share with another guest of the same sex if requested.

**Private Group Safari Rates 2010:****Chyulu Safaris**

For party of 5-8 US\$645 per person per night  
For party of 4 US\$705 per person per night  
For party of 2 US\$1135 per person per night

**Amboseli Safaris**

For party of 5-8 US\$770 per person per night  
For party of 4 US\$895 per person per night  
For party of 2 US\$1330 per person per night  
**(Please enquire for rates for groups of 3)**

**Private safari rates INCLUDE** all riding and other available activities, guiding and equipment, twin or single tented accommodation, Conservancy fees, meals, drinks (except champagne, premium spirits and cellar wines) and laundry service.

They **EXCLUDE** international flights to Nairobi and taxes, local departure taxes, safarilink or private charter flights to/from Ol Donyo Wuas, personal medical / travel insurance (which you must have), visa fees, personal items such as telephone calls etc, Amboseli Park Fees and transfer to Amboseli if required, exclusive use of vehicles (subject to availability) and any tips you may wish to leave.

**Travel arrangements / Flights** - The closest international airport to Ol Donyo Wuas is Nairobi, Jomo Kenyatta. Kenyan Airways and British Airways both have direct flights from London to Nairobi every day, either overnight flights departing London in the evening and arriving NBO early the next day or day flights arriving NBO in the evening. Several other airlines such as Air France and KLM also have flights via Europe although we strongly recommend a direct flight where possible to minimize the risk of delays and missed connections. Airfares vary with the airline and season but expect to pay around £550 to £750 per person for an economy return. **If you would like a quote for flights, advice or to book please contact us (our ATOL number for flight booking is ATOL 6213).** We can also book onward transfers, any extra nights accommodation you may require in Nairobi and additional activities or accommodation on the coast or at another safari lodge. There are lots of wonderful options and we would be delighted to advise.

Transfers between Nairobi and the Chyulus Hill are by private charter flight, by scheduled safari link flight and onward vehicle transfer or by private vehicle. Rates depend on the method of transfer, the number in your group and the dates. Please contact us ask for a quote. By way of example (NB charter rates vary from time to time and may increase with fuel costs etc.) a one way transfer between Nairobi and Chyulus airstrip in a Cessna 206 charter plane seating up to 4 guests is approximately \$850 US for the plane. A smaller Cessna 182 may also be available at a lower cost. Scheduled safari link flights are approximately \$150 US per person, each way, Nairobi / Ol Donyo Wuas, including taxes.

**General visa and health information** (NB this is a brief outline - further information will be sent to you if you make a confirmed booking.)

**Visas** As of 1st March 2001, if you hold a full British Passport a visa is required to visit Kenya as a tourist. The fee for a single entry visa, valid for 3 months from the date of issue, is currently £35. If bought on arrival in Kenya the fee is US\$25 cash only and no fee for children under 16.

**Health** The Hospital for Tropical Diseases in London recommends that if visiting Kenya you are up to date with **Yellow Fever** (a booster is needed after 10 years) and that you carry a valid yellow fever certificate with you - you may be required to show this when entering Kenya (generally only if entering from another tropical country) because of an episode of transmission of Yellow Fever in Kenya during the last five years. You are also recommended to ensure you are up to date with inoculations against **Polio, Tetanus, Typhoid and Hepatitis A** for travel to Kenya and will be advised to take anti-Malaria tablets for certain areas - you should consult a health professional for further and more detailed advice.

**Updated 10/11/09**

