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Africa Travel Association Celebrates 33rd Annual Congress in Tanzania

Showcasing Africa’s competitive edge in tourism as a rising world-class destination brand ATA holds its annual congress and marketing conference Tanzania's safari-gateway town, Arusha.

MARY ELLEN SCHULTZ

Africa Travel Association (ATA) sponsored its 33rd Annual World Congress in the East African country of Tanzania, May 19–23. More than 300 delegates, including tourism ministers and industry experts from 20 African countries, North America, Europe, the Middle East and Asia gathered in Tanzania’s legendary “Safari Capital,” Arusha. Themed “Exploring Africa’s Competitive Edge in the Tourism,” the weeklong gathering at the Arusha International Conference Center comprised meetings, panel discussions, gala receptions and exuberant cultural performances. Ethiopian Airlines served as official congress carrier, with the Naura Springs, Kibo Palace, Impala Hotel, New Safari Hotel and East African Hotel & Suites serving as congress lodgings.

Tanzania’s president and congress keynote speaker, H.E. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, launched proceedings at the conference center by citing impressive World Tourism Organization (WTO) statistics: between 2005–2007, international tourist arrivals increased approximately 6%, from 800m to nearly 900m; of these, Africa outperformed other destinations, registering an impressive 8% arrivals growth in 2007. Between 2005–2006, international industry income generation rose

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8.4%, from US$678bn to US$735bn.

Noting tourism’s essential role in Africa’s socio-economic development, Kikwete cautioned that while “tourism is a sector whose importance in the economies of African countries is ever-increasing, many of our countries have yet to benefit proportionately to their resource endowments.”

Signaling improved long- and short-haul air access; transport infrastructure; regulated standards and services, expanded tour/travel experiences, and positive media promotion as essential tools for success, he continued, “We also hope to see more investments flowing into the African countries, teaming up with the African private sector to build the tourism infrastructure — which is the critical missing link at the moment.”

ATA executive director Edward Bergman laid out the association’s vision: Bringing the world to Africa and Africa to the world. How? “By marketing and brand the continent as a whole, along with each individual nation as unique travel destination ATAs annual congress is an essential part of this vision.” How? “By presenting Africa and its 53 nations as both ready and actively engaging the global tourism marketplaces…and ripe for global investment and business exploration within this industry.” Bergman then spotlighted Tanzania as an example of successful national tourism strategy development/implementation. Noting the major change since Tanzania first hosted the congress ten years ago, he said, “Tourism is now the country’s leading economic sector, expected to earn US$1bn this year.” Per Bergman, “Since last year, ATA has embarked on a global effort to market Africa as a unified travel destination and to mobilize resources and partnerships for the campaign …[we’ve] devoted significant attention to four strategic areas: international events, media and communications, membership services and global partnerships.” Dubai World Africa is ATAs global premier partner, a direct result the company’s participation in our 11th annual eco and cultural tourism symposium (January 2008).”

Luis Pinheiro, Dubai World Africa’s (DWA) director of hospitality operations, Africa and the Indian Ocean, commented, “DWA has long held in high regard the work ATA does in Africa, and it is for this reason that we are proud to be associated with ATA. Since day one of DWA’s creation, we searched for an organization that continues to promote Africa. ATA is ensuring that the marketing of our beautiful continent is met with the support which our organization can provide through our presence in Africa…we are honored to become ATA’s first premier partner.”

Hon. Shamsa Selengia Mwangunga, MP, Tanzania’s minister of natural resources and tourism, reported that the tourist industry has overtaken agriculture as the country’s number one foreign exchange earner. Noting the country’s significant 2007 arrivals — at 719,200, 17% over 2006 (with the U.S. now ranking for the first time as #1 in arrivals) — she predicted growth to 1 million visitors by 2010. Mwangunga stressed supporting responsible tourism development and conservation via economic growth that minimizes its all-too-often negative impact, saying, “In Tanzania, we believe in sustainable tourism development and are strong advocates of nature conservation [nearly 25% of the country is set aside for wildlife and forest conservation]…. we have taken deliberate efforts at a national level to involve local communities in natural resource management, at the same time strengthening private-public sector partnerships.” With an eye to attracting ever-more visitors, she closed St. Augustine’s popular travel quote: “The world is a book and those who do not travel read only one page.”

**Congress Proceedings**

The jam-packed roster of sessions included:

– A Decade of Progress: Showcasing Tanzania. Chaired by Peter Mwengu, Tanzania Tourist Board’s managing director, the panel covered hotel industry opportunities and challenges, successful national parks promotion, information & communications technology (ICT) development and industry growth/empowerment in Tanzania, and business travel.

– Branding Destination Africa. Chaired and moderated by Ethiopian Culture and Tourism Minister Ambassador Mohamoud Dirir Gheddi, panel featured Hon. Issouf Okouilou-Kantchali, Togo’s minister of environment, tourism and forestry management and David Mkobo, ATAs Kenya chapter president and director of Tambo Tours. Stressed was the continuing need to brand destination Africa in a way that benefits both individual countries and the continent as a whole. Suggested solutions: consolidating and capitalizing on common regional attractions (i.e. Slave Route, Diamond, Coffee Routes and Trans-Sahara Routes, in addition to the
more well-known Safari), developing joint tourism offices promotional efforts, combined training resources and facilitating cross-border/cross-region movement via single-region visas and open skies.

– Trends in Africa Tourism. Chaired and moderated by Amb. Daudi Mwakawago, former Tanzanian ambassador the United Nations & former special UN representative to Sierra Leone. Participants included Prof. Pius Yanda, of Dar es Salaam University and joint recipient (along with former U.S. vice president Al Gore) of 2007’s Nobel Peace Prize for their study on the impacts of climate change in Africa; Dr. Chika Onyeani, chairman & ceo of Africa Telecom; Darol Kubacz, founder of Freedom for Life and organizer of the Uhuru Ascent; and Eliseo Neuman, director of American Jewish Community’s (AJC) Africa Institute.

– A Decade of Progress: Showcasing Tanzania. Chaired by Peter Mwenguo, Tanzania Tourist Board’s managing director, the panel covered hotel industry opportunities and challenges, national parks, information & communications technology (ICT) development and business travel.

– Destination Africa: Nonstop Airline Highways. Moderated by Hon. Eduardo Chingunji, Angola’s minister of hotels and tourism, participants included Ato Busera Awel, vice president of Ethiopian Airlines and David Mattaka, chief executive officer of Air Tanzania. Noting tourism’s reliance on attractions and the ability to reach destinations, discussion focused on the continent’s underdeveloped air network and challenges airlines face that affect tourism growth, such as profitability — and the need to think outside the box and foster inter-country synergy.

Other panels featured successful models of community-benefit tourism; packaging Africa from travel agents’ and tour operators’ perspectives and Africa’s accommodations – issues in hospitality and lodging. Delegates also participated in roundtable discussions and a marketplace expo.

Awards & Kudos
During the Tanzania Night Gala dinner, ATAs annual awards presentation honored the following:

– For Outstanding Service to Africa Travel Association: The Tanzanian government, under the leadership of President Kikwete, alongside the Bradford Group (Tanzania’s public relations representative in the U.S.)

– For Outstanding Leadership in ATA: Tanzanian ambassador Daudi N. Mwakawago.

– For Outstanding Achievement in the Promotion of Responsible Achievement to the Continent: New York University’s Africa House; Peter K. Muiriri, president of Hotel Adventures Travel in Nairobi, Kenya; Dr. Chika Onyeani of The African Sun Times newspaper.


More kudos were bestowed during the Gala Tanzania Evening. Tanzania Tourism Board (TTB)’s 8th Annual

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Tourism Awards were presented by Min. Mwangunga. The 2008 Honorees are: Diana Williams, WABC-TV New York, Media Award; G.A.P. Adventures, Tour Operator Humanitarian Award; African Dream Safaris, Tour Operator Conservation Award; Cox and Kings, Tour Operator Southern Circuit Award; Foxes Safari Camps, Tour Operator Southern and Western Circuits Award; Sunny Safaris, Tanzanian Tour Operator Award; and Breezes Beach Club & Spa, Hotel Award. TTB also presented its first-ever World Climate Change Award to Prof. Pius Zebbe Yanda, Ph.D., University of Dar es Salaam, for his Nobel Peace Prize as part of Al Gore’s team. As part of the Award Ceremony, Tanzania also recognized ATA’s Premier Partner, Dubai World Africa. [Note: For more details, please see the full-story article in this issue’s Africa section.]

Host Country Day
Tanzania’s Host Country Day treated delegates to a daylong excursion to the world-famous Ngorongoro Crater—often called the “8th Natural Wonder of the World”—located in the 8300 sq km protected Ngorongoro Conservation Area. Descending into the collapsed crater along its rim, visitors passed through lush rainforest and thick vegetation into grassy plains filled with wildebeest, black rhinos, lions, zebras and elephants, and flamingo-filled lakes for a truly unique safari experience. That night, a gala dinner and Nigeria-designed fashion show rounded out the festivities.

In Closing
During the closing ceremony, Zanzibar’s president H.E. Dr. Amani Abeid Karume, lauded delegates for their critical deliberations of the many challenges and various initiatives for unlocking the continent’s unparalleled tourism development potential and pointed out the direct co-relation of the travel industry to countries’ infrastructure development. Noting ATAs efforts to tap lucrative Asian and Middle East markets, he also urged more aggressive strategies targeting America’s African Diaspora sector. “I, having just visited the United States of America recently, found a lot of interest from African-Americans and others to visit Africa...which needs to be cultivated and developed,” he said. Calling for increased intra-African and domestic tourism, Karume noted “domestic tourism will generate greater awareness of the value and importance of tourism in our respective countries, thereby winning support of local people to the industry…and help develop a true continental tourism brand.”

ATA executive director Bergman thanked participants, saying, “I expect this next year to be transformational for ATA as we continue to create new initiatives and partnerships dedicated to developing travel products the world can enjoy...in particular, we look forward to advancing our partnership with the African Union in our goal to have 100% Africa country membership and to market ‘Destination Africa’ worldwide.”

Upcoming ATA events include the 12th Annual Eco and Cultural Tourism Symposium later this year and the 34th Annual Congress in spring 2009 (details to be announced).
Keys Hotels Travel & Tours is a Tanzanian family-run company situated literally on the slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro. The 25-year-old tour operator operates from two locations: one near Arusha in Moshi and one in Dar es Salaam. At the gateway to the legendary roof of Africa, these are ideal centers from which to explore Tanzania.

Arusha-born, managing director Lucy Ndesamburo is the founder’s daughter, and is passionate about maintaining the same high standards set by her father. Clients are treated with the same consideration reserved for respected family members, and she promises, “we work on the principal of total customer satisfaction and go out of our way to make sure that they go home having had the experience of a lifetime… and then hope that they come back to do it again!”

Keys offers guided tours for climbing Kilimanjaro or Meru, Northern and Southern Circuit safaris, cultural tours to local tribes, and trips to Bagamoyo, and Zanzibar’s islands. A unique aspect of Keys’ operation is that they also own four hotels countrywide to provide a complete “Keys” safari.

Tanzania’s Northern Safari Circuit takes in some of the most famous national parks and landmarks in the world including Serengeti National Park, Ngorongoro National Park, Lake Manyara National Park, Tarangire National Park and “mankind’s cradle,” Olduvai Gorge.

For many of your adventurous clients, climbing iconic Mr. Kilimanjaro will be a memory to treasure — tell them no mountaineering experience is needed to climb the Marangu Route to the summit and that more challenging routes are doable (guides/fees/accommodations all included).

Keys works with a globe-spanning network of travel agents and tour operators. In addition to their standard itineraries, they offer fully customized FIT programs at competitive, negotiable rates, all of which are agent-commissionable. In addition to ensuring that all the company’s guides are Tanzania National Park-certified, Ms. Ndesamburo trains her staff on a regular basis, noting, “We believe that staff performance is key (no pun intended!) to the entire client experience.”

Keys Hotels Travel & Tours, info@keys-hotel-tours.com, www.keys-hotel-tours.com
Zamani Zanzibar Kempinski Hotel Redefines Luxury

The Spice Island’s leading international luxury resort welcomes guests to the mystical island of Zanzibar to rejuvenate body, mind and soul.

JENNIFER M. LANE

Enjoying a commanding oceanfront position on exotic Zanzibar’s prestigious north east coast, the Zamani Zanzibar Kempinski is designed to blend in harmoniously with the beauty of its natural surroundings. The combination of an elegant design, the tropical climate and warm African hospitality guarantees an experience that will last a lifetime. With 30 acres of surface, each guest enjoys more than 500 square meters of lush, tropical gardens and white sandy beaches.

The resort boasts 110 guest rooms and suites, each with their own private terrace and courtyard, a Presidential villa, and six private villas. All accommodations at the resort have complete, uninterrupted views of the Indian Ocean. All rooms, suites and villas are contemporary in style with exceptional attention to comfort, privacy and relaxation.

The resort offers five-star services and facilities including a choice of restaurants, a beach club, a dedicated relaxation area for guests, two boutiques, Anantara Spa Zanzibar, a fitness center, tennis court, and children’s play area, as well as a wide range of indoor and outdoor leisure facilities.

The hotel’s 60-meter infinity pool is perched on the cliff and is ideal to lounge around or swim in. Airport/sea-port transfers, business center services, and wireless Internet access are also offered.

There is also a multi-lingual staff, 24-hour concierge, 24-hour room service, laundry and dry-cleaning services, limousine service, tour desk, currency exchange, and a doctor on call 24 hours. A specialized banquet and meeting area for up to 150 guests, with state of the art telecommunications and audio visual equipment is available.

Restaurants and Dining

Zamani’s cuisine leans directly on the rich and colorful local specialties, particularly Zanzibar’s array of fresh spices and, of course, the Indian Ocean on its doorstep that provides daily fresh fish and seafood.

A choice of international dining options are available including The Red Snapper, specializing in local seafood; Cloves, offering all day casual dining and Mediterranean cuisine; The Zanzi Bar, the perfect place to enjoy a refreshing drink or light snack; The Pool Bar, serving a variety of alcoholic beverages, freshly squeezed fruit juices, iced teas, smoothies and light snacks; the Jetty Bar, for relaxing during the day and star gazing at night; and the Zamani Beach Club Grill & Bar, offering light snacks from the grill.

The Anantara Spa

Located within the resort is a sanctuary for the mind, body and soul. Anantara Spa Zanzibar is managed and operated by world-renowned Mandara Spas of Thailand. This modern day spa is the most luxurious in Zanzibar and encompasses both health and wellness elements and specializes in a wide range of massages and treatments.

The Anantara Spa Zanzibar consists of six private treatment rooms and two outdoor Thai massage pavilions, a magnificent outdoor swimming pool with sun deck and pool bar, a fully equipped
A fitness center with yoga and aerobics rooms, and an outdoor lap pool.

Feel-good therapies and natural healing are the lifestyle mantras of the new millennium, and the combination of luxurious facilities and tropical surroundings, together with professional therapists will ensure a relaxing and pleasurable experience.

Excursions in Zanzibar

There is plenty for the activity enthusiast to do while visiting Zanzibar. A wide variety of water sports on offer include sailing, snorkeling, surfboarding, deep sea fishing and water skiing, and it is the ideal location for scuba diving.

Zanzibar is reputed to have some of the best diving in the world, and the coral reef structures that surround ensure that the marine life is abundant.

There are several dive centers on the island and most run courses using the international PADI system of diver education. In this way, the certification you gain in Zanzibar can be used anywhere in the world.

Diving in Zanzibar is not restricted to beginners. Experienced scuba divers can enjoy exciting wall dives, night dives and drift dives.

In deeper waters, lush coral gardens often stretch as far as the eye can see, and large game fish (barracuda, kingfish, tuna and wahoo) hunt together with large Napoleon wrasse, graceful manta rays and sharks. Shallower waters are the playground of tropical fish, including a huge variety of Indo-Pacific marine fauna.

Tours of Zanzibar Island are a rewarding experience with cultural sights and natural beauty on the itinerary. The Guest Relations Manager can arrange tours with knowledgeable guides. Popular tours of Zanzibar Island include: Stone Town, a fascinating look at the essence of Zanzibar; Spice Plantations, illustrating the rich history of Zanzibar; Jozani Forest, home to the rare Red Colobus Monkey, which is endemic to Zanzibar; North Coast, the dhow building capital of Zanzibar; Kizimkazi Mosque & Dolphin Tour, worth a visit for both natural and cultural reasons; and Prison Island, ideal for a day-trip.

Zamani Zanzibar Kempinski is a perfect destination for honeymoon or wedding vacations as well as meetings and incentives.

After being voted in 2007 as the best hotel in category "Luxury Villa Resort" at the World Luxury Hotel Awards and Leading Resort in Tanzania at the World Travel Awards, Zamani has once again been nominated for the World Luxury Awards in 2008.

Rates and Packages

Rates at Zamani Zanzibar Kempinski are from $230 on half-board. From now until September 2008, enjoy their “Easy Zanzibar Package” which includes airport pick up, welcome drink, buffet breakfast, daily changing dinner at Cloves Restaurant, and service charge and tax. Rates start from EUR 681 (approximately $1,070) for three nights.

Zamani Zanzibar Kempinski, sales.zanzibar@kempinski.com, www.kempinski-zanzibar.com

“THE BEST OF TANZANIA NATIONAL PARKS” FROM HLO TOURS, INC.

HLO Tours, Inc. presents “The Best of Tanzania National Parks“ FAM trip via Cairo, Egypt and Nairobi, Kenya, 12-days/11-nights, October 30 – November 10, 2008. FAM is available when you join HLO Tours, Inc. 20th Anniversary Celebration on another Tanzania safari adventure with a taste of ancient Egyptian history.

In Tanzania, enjoy Africa’s most dense population of wildlife in the most breathtaking national parks. Relive the enchantment of an ageless continent while still enjoying all the comfort and luxuries of modern life. A brief stay in Egypt is highlighted by a visit to the world famous Great Pyramids of Giza and the legendary Sphinx. An adventure to the Land of the Pharaohs is a thrilling look into the history of Egyptian culture.

Price is $3,638 for IATA approved agents and $3,963 for spouse/companion. The price includes 12-days /11-nights; air and land package from New York (JFK); all transfers and domestic air within Tanzania; most meals; deluxe accommodations in hotels and lodges; game drives daily in Tanzania; and guided tours in Cairo, Egypt. FAM is limited to 15 participants.

HLO Tours, 800-736-4456, hlotours@yahoo.com
During Africa Travel’s (ATA) 33rd Annual Congress, held recently in Arusha, Tanzania, TWN sat down with Tanzania Tourism Board’s (TTB) managing director Peter Mwenguo and marketing director Amant Macha, to get a first-hand update on the industry in their country.

No doubt about it. Tanzania’s tourism star is rising. Its iconic, snow-capped Mt. Kilimanjaro (Africa’s highest and the world’s tallest free-standing mountain) was named the “Top Exotic Adventure” destination by USA Today in 2008. And Zanzibar’s Chumbe Island Coral Park was singled out by Islands magazine as one of world’s “most offbeat, eco-conscious travel adventures.”

More than 750,000 international tourists are expected this year (up from 2007’s 719,031 arrivals), predicted to generate record-beating revenues of about US$1bn — surpassing agriculture as Tanzania’s leading economic sector. The country’s first-ever U.S.television tourism campaign debuted late last year with the tagline “Tanzania: Land of Kilimanjaro, Zanzibar and The Serengeti.” Part of an aggressive worldwide promotional effort to highlight the country as a world-class destination, the campaign has been working. American visitors now represent Tanzania’s largest single tourism market, attracting a record high total of 58,379 — 83,930 when combined with Canada as the North American total in 2007 — overtaking the traditional high held by the UK.

Tanzania’s tourism policy stipulates the promotion of a high-yield, low-volume, longer-stay product, and targeting this sector remains top priority.

Mwenguo explains, “Our focus remains upmarket because we need to be competitive with our neighboring countries, but, we’re certainly not excluding mid- and lower-market visitors — there are plenty of extraordinary, very affordable adventures to be had here, no matter what your budget!”

Added to Tanzania’s product portfolio plans is the burgeoning sports tourism market. Timed to coincide with the approaching 2010 World Cup Tournament to held in South Africa, a US$55m state-of-the-art, 66,000-capacity sports stadium debuted in Dar es Salaam earlier this year as part of a national sports complex comprising warm-up grounds, indoor stadium, sports theater, Olympic-standard swimming pool, sports village/college and training grounds.

Tanzania: North, South, East & West

Along with promotion of two safari routes — the popular Northern Circuit and the lesser-known, “wilder” Southern Circuit — and the exotic delights of Zanzibar’s Spice Islands, is something new. Mwenguo reports, “We’re introducing two additional routes: the Slave Route (from Kigomo), which is our Western Circuit,” towards Bagamoyo and the palm-fringed Coastal Circuit, which explores Tanzania’s towns and villages along the way to the border with Kenya.

New properties around the country include the five-star, 120-room Naura Springs Hotel and the 40-room, all-suite East African Hotel in Arusha (jumping off point for the Northern Circuit); the four-star, 69-room Giraffe Ocean View Hotel in Dar es Salaam (starting point for the Southern Circuit); and on Zanzibar, the 76-room La Villa Beach Club and the luxurious Zanzibar Royal Beach Hotel.

Conservation is Key

Of all [of Africa’s] wildlife countries, Tanzania has the greatest percentage of protected land, with nearly 30% of the country dedicated to wildlife, fauna and flora conservation.

Conservation is more than key for Tanzania, with land and wildlife protection always top-of-mind.

Mwenguo continues, “Our primary mandate is conservation, with tourism an essential means to sustain our efforts...we’ve increased our operational costs and are constantly working on improving relationships with surrounding communities. This is paramount for developing creative alternative land uses...essential because we receive no government subsidies...our southern and western circuits don’t generate enough revenue to break even...yet!”

Revenue Maximization Strategies, based on “limits of acceptable use” (LAUs) are increasingly important growth tools, utilizing partnerships and coordination to promote low-volume/high-income tourism as TANAPA seeks to diversify activities and control visitor load. Ever-optimistic, Mwenguo remarked, “Success is measured by increased number of visitor days...tourists are realizing that we offer true, uncompromised wilderness experiences. In fact, our parks are increasingly becoming first-choice destinations.” He continued, “Even more encouraging is that whereas before Tanzania was
an add-on to, say, a Kenya or Uganda safari for U.S. operators, now, we’re becoming a single-destination choice!”

New Parks and Products
This year marks the exciting debut of Mkomazi as the newest national park. The 56-year-old former game reserve has been joined with the Umba Forest Reserve, and shares a border with Tsavo National Park and is another reason to explore the Southern Circuit. It’s a new safe-haven for the critically endangered black rhino and wild hunting dogs.

By 2009, Africa’s largest national park is expected to be announced in Tanzania: Ruaha National Park will be combined with Usangu Game Reserve, increasing its size by over15,000 sq mt (9,320 sq mi). Ruaha is home to over 10,000 elephants, the largest population in East Africa.

Tied to park viewing countrywide is an emerging niche — wildlife management training, which attracts both professional and amateur students from around the world. The Eastern Africa Wildlife Management Training College in Moshi accepts students; volunteers should contact the TTB, Department of Wildlife and Ministry of Wildlife and Fisheries for study-visits with lodging in local communities surrounding the various parks.

To complement traditional wildlife safari tourism, TTB has developed multi-day cultural safaris that traverse the country north to south, visiting local villages to provide opportunities for “one-on-one” interaction with various tribes.

Marketing Tanzania
At press time, TTB’s advertising budget was not yet finalized, but Mr. Macha said that marketing plans for the coming year include expanded TV promotion, continued participation in tourism trade shows/travel industry roadshows, new collateral print material, a refreshed/re launched website with an e-newsletter signup and expanded e-marketing are key publicity tools, along with travel agent and media FAM trips. Complementing consumer reinforce-
Tanzania’s quintessentially African landscape encourages even the most timid traveler to take a walk on the wild side. Stepping out onto the endless plains of say, the Serengeti, makes you feel pretty small. Not surprising, since you’re now among one of the largest and wildest animals populations in the world. The Big Five (lion, elephant, buffalo, rhino and leopard), monkey, gazelle, flamingo, zebra — they’re all here!

One of Africa’s unique destinations yet to be discovered by many, Tanzania is a wonderland filled with an astounding diversity of flora and fauna. From Kilimanjaro, the highest permanently snow-capped freestanding mountain in Africa, to the marvelously game-filled sanctuaries of Serengeti, Lake Manyara, Tarangire, Ngorongoro Crater, Selous, Ruaha and Marine Park of Mafia, and the exotic spice-perfumed islands (and palm-fringed, sun-kissed beaches) of Zanzibar, adventures large and small abound.

But beyond its natural diversity, perhaps Tanzania’s prime asset is its warm and courteous people. While best-known are the cattle-herding Masai (colorfully garbed in traditional red plaid robes), there are 127 other tribes here, each with equally rich traditions, customs, beliefs and music. This combination of scenery, topography and friendly people are constantly evolving into super-shot photographic safari experiences, historical and archaeological explorations, fascinating cultural tourism and beach getaways.

Everybody in the jeep!

Tanzania’s four main Safari circuits are:

The **Northern Circuit** is the most-traveled and best known for two reasons. Names such as Ngorongoro Crater, Serengeti and Kilimanjaro are major attractions of this route and secondly, most of the destinations and local towns and attractions are fairly close in proximity.

The **Southern Circuit**’s parks and game reserves are gaining a reputation as the hidden treasures of Tanzania’s authentic Africa. These parks are enormous, with some of the highest concentration of animals anywhere on the continent. Selous, Mikumi, Saadani and Ruaha (soon to become Africa’s largest park) are some of the jewels in this circuit’s crown. Lodges and tented camps here are small and intimate, which means far fewer tourists than in the north. Travel times between parks are long, and so each may be visited independently or by combining several into one circuit.

Comprising the also lesser-known **Western Circuit** are the Great Rift Valley’s lovely inland lakes, including the mighty Lakes Victoria and Tanganyika. Parks include Mahale Mountains and Gombe Stream (home to some of Africa’s last remaining wild chimpanzees).

The habitats of these areas are where western and eastern Africa merge; therefore, the cultures, rainfall and flora are truly unique to this small corner of Africa. This circuit is seldom a single-safari destination, but is often combined the Northern or Southern ones.

The **Coastal Circuit** follows Tanzania’s 800 km (500 mi) history-steeped coastline — lined with the sugar-sand beaches and the ancient towns of Dar es Salaam, Bagamoyo, and Kilwa, Zanzibar, Pemba and Mafia Islands. Many explorers, slavers and sultans first stepped on African soil here, and the Swahili (from the Arabic world “sawahil”—“of the coast”) language and culture trace their roots to this fascinating Indian Ocean cultural blend.

**Going and Staying**

Easy air access from the United States via Europe and other

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**Situated on the slopes of Mountain Kilimanjaro**

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African countries, along with a wealth of multi-budget lodgings make getting to and staying in Tanzania an irresistible vacation. Following are several tour operator and hotels options to help you plan your clients’ first (or second, or more!) visit to “The Land of Kilimanjaro, Zanzibar and The Serengeti.” All prices quotes are agent-commissionable:

In Dar es Salaam, the commercial capital of Tanzania, eco-sensitive and socially responsible touches form just as much a part of the port city’s Southern Sun Dar es Salaam’s comfortable décor as the 152-room property’s prime, Indian Ocean-view location and sophisticated, up-market design (featuring stunning, hand-carved Zanzibar wood doors and Swahili artwork).

Formerly a Holiday Inn property, it recently relaunched as a shining star in the Southern Sun Hotels’ South African property portfolio. General manager Adam Fuller oversaw the property’s award-winning “going green” program, including water-conserving toilets, recycling its “white” (polystyrene) rubbish and donating “gently worn” hotel bedding and food to the hospital next door.

Consider booking clients here en route to the country’s “wilder” Southern Circuit and/or exotic Zanzibar’s Spice Islands. Besides the more distant safari/sea destinations, closer attractions include UNESCO-nominated World Heritage Site of Bagamoyo, the Dar es Salaam Village Museum, Kunduchi Village ruins and traditional woodcarvers market. Mr. Fuller’s current promotional plans include Internet specials for the international market and local deals to attract domestic tourists.

Rack rates $233 (double) to $471 (executive queen); 10% agent commissionable; professional discounts available.

Southern Sun Dar es Salaam, www.southernsun.com

Opening late 2007 and combining “home comfort and African splendor,” the four-star East African All-Suites Hotel & Conference Center (a 45-minute drive from Kilimanjaro airport) is a new addition to the rapidly expanding lodgings choices in Arusha. Originally an apartment complex, the property was converted into the city’s only all-suites property, and provides a cozily elegant respite for your clients on the way to/from the popular Northern Circuit safari routes.

The 40-room hotel is a 10-minute walk from the town center’s clock tower (exactly mid-point between Capetown and Cairo). The on-site restaurant serves up award-winning local and international cuisine. Rates for the spacious suites range from $125 (single-room), $160 (loft) to $300 for the two-bedroom presidential suite.

East African All-Suite Hotel & Conference Center, www.eastafrican.com

Family-owned Cordial Tours has been designing both group and customized safaris for over 10 years, and father/son owners David and Anthony Kizito stress quality, reliability and absolute value as key components of their operation — continued on page 14
and pride themselves on helping making each client’s safari dream come true a top priority.

Both regularly scheduled departures, FIT safaris are welcomed. Cordial’s 9-day/8-night Northern Circuit safari uses Arusha as base and takes in Arusha National Park (Tanzania’s first park), Lake Manyara (home of the tree-climbing lions), vast Serengeti plains, Ngorongoro Crater’s unique habitat and Tarangire’s elephant-packed playground.

Price range $1,858–$2,444pp, depending on total participants. Their 9-day/8-night Southern Circuit takes off from Dar es Salaam and heads south to Mikumi (one of Tanzania’s most accessible and popular parks), then to divinely sprawling Ruaha (soon to be Africa’s largest park), ruggedly remote Selous and back to Dar. Approximate cost is $2,100–$2,500pp. An abbreviated, 5-day/4-night safari explores Lake Manyara, the Serengeti and Ngorongoro Crater; cost range $900–$1,326pp, and could be combined with a few relaxing days on Zanzibar.

Cordial Tours, www.cordialtours.com, info@cordialtours.com
An exciting paradise, a world Heritage site and an international Biosphere reserve a tourists rewarding destination, a home of Pastoralists, a source of water for neighbouring areas; and assets of national values and an area of international interest.

Where natural resources – flora and fauna; and domestic animals are all conserved and developed in order to preserve a maximum sustainable yield for the benefit of humans dependent thereon, without causing deterioration in the habitat-thus maintaining the area’s unique tourist attractions, aesthetic value and scientific interest.

For more Information contact:
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Website: www.ngorongoro-crater-africa.org
It is a land of superlatives and contrasts, something for everyone: from the majestic Mount Kilimanjaro to the fabled Islands of Zanzibar. The largest and most diverse wildlife concentrations on Earth, including the matchless Serengeti plains, Ngorongoro Crater, Katavi and the mighty Selous Game Reserve. The Legacy of the ancient Swahili civilizations, such as Kilwa Ruins once a city of the Arabian Nights. Wonderful places for swimming, snorkeling, scuba diving, fishing off thousands of kilometers of Indian Ocean coastline and around the Africa's Great Lakes. And then there is Tanzania’s greatest asset: its friendly people and cuisines. The country is among the world’s leaders in Cultural tourism. This indeed is AUTHENTIC AFRICA.