



SERENA HOTELS

SAFARI LODGES AND CAMPS  
HOTELS • RESORTS

## Serena News – Nov/Dec 2019

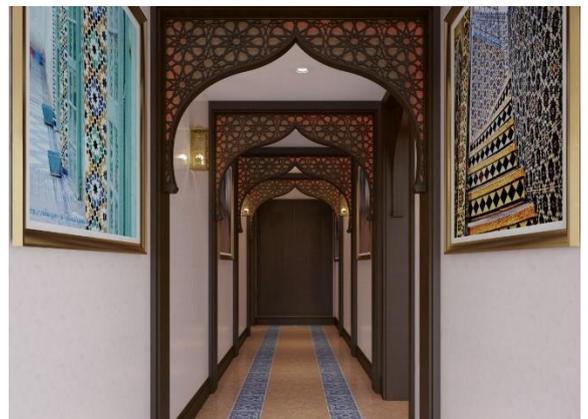
### CONGO NEWS – NEW GOMA SERENA

The DR Congo is known as the “Heart of Africa”. It is roughly the size of Western Europe, has the second largest rainforest after the Amazon and is home to many rare endemic species such as the bonobos, okapi and mountain gorillas. It boasts incredibly diverse landscapes - including rainforests, mighty rivers, active volcanos and incredible mountains.

“Bucket List” experiences include trekking mountain gorillas, scaling the active Mt. Nyirangongo, water sports on Lake Kivu and connecting with locals through their rich song and dance culture.

Serena Hotels is delighted to be launching its brand-new Goma Serena Hotel in early 2020 in Northern Kivu. The new beachfront hotel will offer 109 rooms with views over the fresh-water Lake Kivu - Africa’s 8th largest lake. It will be the only five-star hotel in this cosmopolitan city and is just 10 minutes from Goma International Airport. It will boast an Olympic-size swimming pool that is family friendly and incredible spa packages. For more information on booking it, email [Goma@serenahotels.com](mailto:Goma@serenahotels.com)

All you need to know about the DRC / Congo can be found on the [Serena Experience Blog](#) here.



### VILLAS MAR BY THE POLANA SERENA



The Polana Serena Hotel in Maputo is set to launch Villas Mar comprising eight brand new private villas overlooking the Indian Ocean. The villas will offer either one or two bedrooms with open plan living and dining areas connected to a kitchenette. All villas will have a patio leading to outdoor shaded seating and dining areas and secluded gardens. Guests staying in these self-catering villas will also enjoy special discounts if they wish to use the hotel's facilities including dining, spa treatments and even laundry services. Check out the [new video here](#).

## SPICING THINGS UP IN ZANZIBAR



Zanzibar is known as the “Spice Island” as it has been growing and trading native spices such as cloves, cardamon, cinnamon and tumeric since the 16th century. Visitors to the island should definitely do a Spice Farm Tour to learn more about the botanical heritage and food culture – as well as taste some of the island’s exotic fruits such as red banana, guava and jack fruits.

Ancient Stone Town is known for its fascinating walking tours to learn about the history - but did you know it is also fabulous for foodies? Forodhani Gardens is a great market place to start your culinary journey - sampling fresh seafood, local delicacies such as Zanzibar pizza and other street food, with beautiful views of the ocean as you watch the sun set. You can even haggle for fresh fish at the Darajani market. Zanzibar Serena Hotel is also not to be missed for foodies - offering a new delectable Swahili inspired menu at Baharia Restaurant with live Taarab music – or a choice of fresh seafood on the hotel’s rooftop Terrace Restaurant.



## MONKEY BUSINESS - COLOBUS RELOCATION

In July and August 2018, twenty-three Mount Kenya Guereza Colobus Monkeys were successfully relocated as two different family groups from the farmlands at Kipipiri to the Soysambu Conservancy for their own protection. Now, a year down the line, the two families have settled in and habituated successfully and established their territories along the river – with no conflicts with the three families already living in the reserve. They have settled in so well that there has even been a new birth which is quite unusual so quickly after a relocation. With such great results and the new residents thriving the Soysambu Conservancy in collaboration with the Institute of Primate Research and Kenya Wildlife Service plans to now translocate the remaining 37 individuals – bringing the total up to 60. With just 2000 individuals left in Kenya, this project is vital for the species, which is now listed as threatened on the I.U.C.N red list.

## TANZANIAN VISAS AT KILI - ONLINE WINS!

Please note that Kilimanjaro Airport has changed its process of issuing Visas on arrival. Clients arriving without a Visa will now need to stand in three separate queues which can take up to 2 hours – first for a Government Control Number, then to pay at the bank and then finally go through Immigration to check and issue the Visa. We therefore strongly recommend applying online at least three weeks before travel at [www.immigration.go.tz](http://www.immigration.go.tz). They need a bit more info online than on arrival but it is totally worth it!



## THE NAIROBI SERENA

Nairobi has seen a lot of development in recent years with a plethora of new hotels. However, The [Nairobi Serena Hotel](#) remains a true gem in the heart of the city, offering a truly authentic Pan-African experience. A lot of changes and upgrades have been made over the past couple of years to ensure the hotel maintains its reputation as “the place to be seen” with all the latest mod-cons, a new wing of accommodation and its brand-new restaurant Herbs & Spices. The Nairobi Serena has however maintained its warm African atmosphere – with its focus firmly on showcasing the rich art and culture of Africa. Guests can even enjoy an Art and Cultural Tour of the hotel to learn more about the history as well as the artefacts - some of which are very rare - dotted around the guest areas.



In this video you can meet Felix, Concierge at The Nairobi Serena Hotel, who shares some interesting facts about the hotel and its artworks ... [https://youtu.be/IrC9Yx\\_Is6U](https://youtu.be/IrC9Yx_Is6U)



## SELOUS 2020 PACKAGES

A World Heritage Site and the largest game reserve in Africa, Selous is four times bigger than the Serengeti and larger than Switzerland. It is also home to the largest concentrations of elephants in the world – and the lovely Selous Serena Camp and Serena Mivumo River Lodge! While game drives are a popular way to explore Selous, boat safaris give guests an added opportunity to discover the mighty Rufiji River as they spot the aquatic and terrestrial wildlife. Contact [info@ethosmarketing.co.uk](mailto:info@ethosmarketing.co.uk) for the 2020 Selous packages.



## JUST CLIMBING TREES & “LION” ABOUT

Amazing news from Lake Manyara Serena Safari Lodge is that the tree climbing lions are back!

Lions generally do not climb trees - but there are a few exceptions! There are populations of tree climbing lions at Queen Elizabeth National Park in Ishasha Western Uganda, around Tarangire National Park and at Lake Manyara National Park in Southern Tanzania. This phenomenon is attributed to behavioural adaptation of the lions to escape heat on the ground or insects while lazing on the ground.

## OL PEJETA – SAVING RHINOS & CHIMPS

Oi Pejeta is one of Kenya’s most noteworthy conservancies and home to the ‘Big Five’ (elephant, rhino, lion, buffalo and leopard). Activities include day and night guided game drives, lion tracking and horse riding with rhinos. Also not to be missed are visits to the rhino info centre and Chimpanzee sanctuary.

### OL PEJETA HOUSE NEWS...

Please note that as of 1st January 2020, Oi Pejeta House will no longer fall under Serena’s portfolio but will be returned to be managed by the Oi Pejeta Conservancy. Please note that all confirmed bookings for 2020 are being transferred to the Morani Deluxe Wing at [Sweetwaters Serena Camp](#)

### NORTHERN WHITE RHINOS...

Exciting developments have been made at Old Pejeta in the mission to save the northern white rhinoceros species. When only two female rhinos, Najin and Fatu, were left in 2018, it seemed their extinction was inevitable – but scientists have just successfully created two northern white rhino embryos using eggs collected from Fatu fertilised with frozen sperm from deceased male, Suni. Fatu’s precious embryos are now stored in liquid nitrogen to be transferred into a surrogate mother in the near future.



## MADARAKA MAGIC

The Madaraka Express has been a real game changer for East Africa. This year alone, [The Telegraph](#) and [The Times](#) featured it as one of the best things to happen for travellers who wish to traverse Southern Kenya. The Madaraka Express provides a link between some of Kenya’s diverse safari destinations – enabling its passengers to easily link Amboseli National Park and Tsavo National Park with the Coast. Serena’s Madaraka Express packages are well-coordinated to make this rail tour unforgettable. Guests can take note some of the pertinent updates on the Madaraka Express [here](#).



## BEACH BLISS - WITH A SWAHILI TWIST

Kenya is synonymous with safaris – but it also boasts some of the most beautiful coastlines in the world, with white sandy beaches lapped by the warm Indian Ocean!

Serena Beach Resort and Spa on Shanzu Beach, north of Mombasa, is very popular with families as it offers something for everyone - from the lovely kids swimming pool, ice-cream parlour and water sports centre - to the cool elegance of the Maisha Spa and Jahazi Seafood Grill restaurant. But this is not a typical beach resort that could literally be “anywhere”.

Serena Beach offers all the facilities you could ask for – but has a truly authentic Kenyan feel to it - designed to replicate the winding lanes and colourful marketplaces of a traditional 13th century town, Lamu. Guests can even enjoy a Cultural, Architectural and Conservation Tour of the resort to truly embrace its history and “sense of place”. Kids will also learn a lot with conservation projects on site including the Butterfly Centre and Turtle Hatchery. Read the full Serena Experience Beach blog [here](#).



## BIRDIES FOR AFRICA AT LAKE VICTORIA

“Birdies” and “eagles” on a golf course are always cause for celebration! But at Lake Victoria Serena Resort in Uganda we celebrate both the golfing and feathered varieties! The golf resort recently hosted players from 19 different countries during the Uganda Open – which is now a part of the Safari Tour. This year’s grey crowned crane trophy went, again, to Zambian Muthiya Madalitso.

Other “birdies” worth spotting at Lake Victoria include the Papyrus Gonolek, Papyrus Yellow Warbler, Papyrus Canary, Carruther's Cisticola, Swamp Flycatcher, Blue-headed Coucal, White-winged Swamp Warbler, and Greater Swamp Warbler. Other aquatic birds such as African Openbill and Egrets are also found around the lake.



## COFFEE TOURS IN RWANDA

Did you know that the simple act of drinking coffee can help Rwandan women farmers advance their expertise in coffee agronomy? With every cup served and every coffee pod supplied in the rooms, Kigali Serena Hotel and Lake Kivu support the Sustainable Growers Non-Profit Program, which trains 40,000 community women farmers to become professional suppliers of specialty coffee. Guests can also learn more about coffee by taking part in coffee farm tours and master classes offered by the Sustainable Growers, booked via the concierges at both hotels.

## SAVE WATER. PLANT A TREE. BE THE CHANGE

Serena Hotels is dedicated to improving and preserving the environment in which it operates in line with the goals set out by the UN Development Programme. Over the last 16 years, **Serena has planted 415,000 trees per annum which translates to 6.64 million trees across East Africa** - most of which are in Kenya. Serena also has an extensive range of sustainable water saving measures in place – including more efficient laundry and dishwashing formulations, phased investment in bio-digesters and phased installation of desalination plants at the Serena Lodges and Camps. The majority of the communities in which Serena operates lack access to clean drinking water and are thus, exposed to a wide range of water-borne diseases. Over the last 10 years, Serena has provided surrounding communities at Amboseli Serena (Kenya) and Lake Manyara (Tanzania) with clean drinking water. Approximately 23,765 beneficiaries and 12,500 of their livestock per annum have benefited from this initiative.

We invite you to join our initiatives to help save the environment.

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