

# traveller

THE  
INDEPENDENT

Saturday 21 February 2012  
independent.co.uk/travel

## Cub scouts

The traveller's guide to family safaris



A cheetah looks out from a perch in Kenya's Maasai Mara.

### BUSH AND BEACH

A winning African combination – ideally with the beach coming second, so you can wash off all the dust:

#### Tanzania

W&O Rainbow Tours (020-7226 1004; rainbowtours.co.uk) offers a 10-night bush safari and beach experience, including three nights each at the Selous Safari Camp (Selous Game Reserve) and Jongomero Camp (Ruaha National Park), with daily game drives, and four nights at the exclusive beach retreat of Ras Kutan. The price of £3,445 per adult and £3,280 per teenager, includes all flights and is based on two adults and two children aged 12 to 16 sharing. Available July to October.

#### Kenya

Exodus (0845 805 9218; exodus.co.uk) offers a "Big Cat Safari and Coast" trip which includes three nights in the Maasai Mara, with game walks, game drives, a visit to a Maasai village and optional balloon trip, plus five nights at Galu beach

resort, with snorkelling and an optional visit to Kisite Marine Reserve. Also includes flamingoes at Lake Nakuru and Lake Elementaita. The 13-day trip costs from £3,290 (adult) and £2,849 (child), including flights. Available July to December.

#### Zambia/Malawi

Expert Africa (020-8232 9777; expertafrica.com) has a nine-night tour of the region available from April to December. It includes four nights at Robin's House – a private two-bedroom house in South Luangwa National Park, with plunge pool, chef, hostess, private game-viewing vehicle and guide.

Three nights at Pumulani beach lodge on Lake Malawi are also included, with pool, private beach and sailing, plus village walks and birdwatching. The price for adults starts at £3,442; £2,946 for those aged 12 to 16; and £2,445 for ages seven to 11, based on a family of four travelling together. Includes flights, meals, most drinks, all safari activities in Zambia and non-motorised water sports in Malawi.

### THE BITE STUFF

Malaria is prevalent in most sub-Saharan Africa parks, including the Kruger, and is the main concern for many parents contemplating a safari.

Children under five are at greatest risk. Consult your doctor about anti-malarial drugs, and be rigorous with repellent and covering up after dark.

If you prefer not to risk it, then South Africa offers malaria-free, family-friendly alternatives, including Addo and Shamwari (Eastern Cape) and Madikwe (North-West Province).

Imagine Africa (020-7622 5114; www.imagineafrica.co.uk) offers a four-night, malaria-free safari at Amakhala Woodbury Lodge in the Eastern Cape.

South Africa. The trip includes game drives, walking safaris and boat cruises on the Bushman's River. From the start of May to the end of September, prices start at £598 per adult and £323 per child under 12, including meals, house drinks, airport transfers and two safari activities per day (sharing in a family room), but excluding international flights.



Children under five are most at risk from mosquito bites



Up the creek: families try canoeing

### GETTING STUCK IN

Activity-based packages cater for more energetic families:

#### Kenya

Imagine Africa (020-7622 5114; imagineafrica.co.uk) runs a family safari in the remote Laikipia region which includes camel safaris, mountain biking, river bathing (croco-free), sleep-outs, and Big Five game drives. Five nights at Sosian Lodge, including all meals, drinks and activities, costs from £1,846 per adult and £1,306 per child under 16, excluding international flights.

#### Namibia

Responsible Travel (01273 600 032; responsibletravel.com) offers a 15-day family safari including boat trips to see dolphins and seals, an optional balloon ride and a visit to the Cheetah Conservation Project. The price of £2,238 per adult and £2,045 per child includes international flights to and from London. The next departures are 9 April, 21 July, 4 and 18 August.

#### Madagascar

Pioneer Expeditions (0645 0047801; pioneerexpeditions.com) offers activity-based packages for families with children aged over eight, exploring different regions of Madagascar. The accommodation ranges from camping to beach

### ALL TO YOURSELF

Splash out on a family house or tented camp in the heart of the bush, with child-friendly activities and not another tourist in sight. Expert Africa (020-8232 9777; expertafrica.com) offers a pair of interesting options:

#### Zambia

A nine-day trip to the South Luangwa and Lower Zambezi family safaris. These are private, four-bedroom cottages with plunge pool, chef, hostess, and private game-viewing vehicle and guide.

The safari combines six nights at Luangwa Safari House in South Luangwa National Park with three nights at Chongwe

air transfers, meals, most drinks, safari activities and fees. Available from 1 April to 15 November

#### Botswana

A nine-day Kalahari and Okavango exclusive family safari available from March to November. The trip includes three nights at Camp Kalahari beside Makgadikgadi Salt Pans where you can explore the local geology as well as the wildlife.

Nature drives, quad-bike excursions and walks led by Bushman trackers are also included. You then have three nights at Footsteps tented camp in the Okavango Delta, with guided walks and game tracking.

The price starts at £4,272 per

