

Experience the raw beauty of Kenya's northern frontier with this "Samburu Special" 4-day safari. This journey takes you beyond the typical savannahs into a dramatic landscape of red earth, doum palms, and the life-giving Ewaso Nyiro River. Centered around the iconic **Samburu Sopa Lodge**, this itinerary is designed to showcase the rare "Special Five" wildlife species found nowhere else in the country, while offering a deep dive into the vibrant culture of the Samburu people.

## **Day 1: Journey to the Arid North**

Your adventure begins with a scenic drive from Nairobi, traveling through the lush agricultural highlands of

central Kenya before the landscape transforms into the dramatic, semi-arid plains of the north. After crossing the Equator at Nanyuki, you will arrive at **Samburu Sopa Lodge** in time for a warm welcome and a late lunch. Built atop a hill overlooking a natural waterhole, the lodge offers immediate wildlife viewing from the comfort of the lounge. In the late afternoon, set out for your first game drive along the banks of the Ewaso Nyiro River, where massive herds of elephants often gather to drink and bathe. As dusk falls, return to the lodge for dinner and a quiet evening watching animals visit the floodlit waterhole just a few feet from the deck.

## Day 2: Tracking the Samburu Special Five

The second day is dedicated to discovering the rare species that make this ecosystem unique. An early morning game drive offers the best chance to spot leopards draped over acacia branches or lions returning from a night hunt. You will focus on finding the "Samburu Special Five": the Reticulated Giraffe, Grevy's Zebra, Beisa Oryx, Somali Ostrich, and the remarkable Gerenuk. After a hearty breakfast back at the lodge, spend the heat of the day relaxing by the swimming pool, which offers a panoramic view of the plains. A late afternoon safari takes you deeper into the reserve to witness the golden hour

light hitting the red earth, concluding with a sunset view over the distant Koitogor Hill before returning for a traditional lodge dinner.

### **Day 3: Culture and the Springs of Buffalo**

After breakfast, your third day transitions from wildlife to the rich heritage of the local people with a visit to a traditional Samburu *Manyatta*. Here, you will engage with the community, learning about their nomadic traditions, intricate beadwork, and vibrant warrior dances. Following lunch at the lodge, cross over into the neighboring Buffalo Springs National Reserve. This area is famous for its crystal-clear volcanic

springs, which provide a stark, beautiful contrast to the surrounding desert and serve as a magnet for wildlife during the dry season. Your final evening at the lodge is marked by a farewell dinner, often accompanied by storytelling around the fire and the sounds of the African night.

## **Day 4: Sunrise Safari and the Return South**

Your final day begins with a sunrise game drive, catching the predators at their most active before the equatorial sun climbs high. This is the perfect time for last-minute photography of the unique birdlife and the rugged landscape. After returning to the lodge for a final breakfast and

checking out, you will begin the drive back toward Nairobi. The route offers one last look at the vast northern horizon before you ascend back into the cooler highlands. A brief stop for lunch in Nanyuki provides a chance to stretch your legs before arriving in the capital by late afternoon, marking the end of an unforgettable northern circuit safari.

