



FOR THE LOVE OF THE WILD

After being a professional wildlife photographer, experiential nature travel company owner one could imagine what would come next for Alankar Chandra (PGP 2009). His multiple visits to Maasai Mara National Reserve in Kenya and love for the African wild culminated in him setting up a tented camp in the famed national reserve since September of 2019.

MASAI MARA & THE CAMP Speaking of it, Alankar says “At Wild Voyager (his travel company), Africa as a whole was always the pièce de resistance of our unique nature experiences, and in particular I was in love with Masai Mara much before I had even dreamt of starting a travel company. The diversity of wildlife and the abundance of it here is at a scale which is simply unmatched by any other safari park in Africa or the world. As a wildlife photographer it used to be my favorite hunting ground. So for me when this opportunity came to acquire a tented camp right in the heart of this huge park, I decided to lap it up at an instant. We are in middle of a 1500 sq km wild savannah, with the nearest village being 1 hour away. We decided to call it Olgatuni Camp, which is the Maasai word for Lion and are currently operating with 14 self-contained tents”.



One of the 14 self-contained tents



Classic leopard hunt



Lions in the Savannahs



Classic Mara sunset

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM While a park like Masai Mara is famous for its Big Cat sightings and the great migration, which is said to be the greatest natural spectacle on the planet, however there is a deeper story of how the man and the wild co-exist and how this precious wildlife are conserved for the future generations. Speaking of it, he says “The beauty of wildlife conservation in a country like Kenya is that everyone realizes the value of tourism and the local employment it generates, and the locals will give their all to protect the wildlife. We ourselves participate in a few local conservation initiatives as a responsible denizen of this ecosystem. We are located in one of the richest patch of wildlife within Mara with 3 Lion prides, 2 Cheetah families and a handful of Leopards surrounding us, so it becomes our responsibility to adapt all kinds of eco-friendly measures to ensure that the environment is not harmed in any way. Actually over 95% of our 30 acres’ area is a dense natural forest and we plan to retain it that way.”

THE MAASAI TRIBE However, there is more to Mara than just the wildlife, there are multitude of experiences in the bushes like a bush dinner, sundowner, balloon safari and then there is interaction with the famed Maasai tribes. Speaking of it he says “The land where Masai Mara stands today, the 3000 sq km of it, belonged to the local Maasai tribes. About 50% of it was taken by the govt. and built into Masai Mara national reserve, where we are located and the other half is split into many private conservancies, which are privately managed land but conserved well for tourism. The entire tourism eco-system is built in a way that the locals benefit in terms of employment, sponsorships or some lease rental share from the hotels. Most of our staffs are Maasais employed from local villages, but they have been trained to international hospitality standards. Staying with us feels like you are staying in a Maasai village with endless stories about their culture and traditions, while you enjoy modern day hospitality and creature comforts. The evening bonfire with Maasai traditional dances is an experience the guests cherish”.



Cheetahs hunting in coalition



Battle of hippos



Aerial view of the camp



A typical river crossing