



Maasai Tribal Immersion in Tanzania



Learn about the proud Maasai people! Immerse yourself in their traditional customs, daily routines and enjoy every second of this unforgettable experience! This homestay provides insight into the culture of this amazing African tribe. Today the Maasai are famed for their traditional clothes, fantastic storytelling, herding methods, and nomadic lifestyle. Although authorities have encouraged the Maasai to abandon their way of life, these proud people have held fast to their age-old customs.

Program Description

To learn about the Maasai culture is one thing... but why not be a part of it! This is your chance to learn from the experience of being and doing. You can see the Maasai way of life up close and participate in the many activities that are typical of their daily life.

During this Maasai Village Homestay, you will be welcomed to stay within their village, learn about their culture, and participate in their daily tasks. Tasks are always divided, with men usually taking care of and/or selling the tribe's cattle, while women will take part in milking, cooking, finding firewood and taking care of babies and even constructing the houses in the boma. You will find that there will be plenty of opportunities to explore Maasai culture more, in the way of interaction, and communication, as well as, exchanges of ideas and experiences. You will even have a chance to learn beadwork with the women in the village or how to make Maasai sandals from the men or to teach the village children some basic English and/or teach/play sports with them.

The Maasai are a proud people, who do their best to preserve their unique culture, and yes, different tribes in Africa can have very distinct characteristics and customs! They are quite possibly one of the most emblematic tribes of East Africa. With a Nilotic ethnic background, they live in the northern Tanzanian and southern Kenya regions. The Maasai are known for their nomadic lifestyle (although, since the '90s, the Tanzanian government passed a bill in which they were forced to settle in a single place), their colorful dress code, their beaded jewelry, and awe-inspiring traditions.

The Maasai people have a very traditional way of living, with most relatives all living in the same family compound, which is traditionally known as a *boma*. They were nomadic people, as traditionally Maasai would move with their cattle from one grazing place to another. Today, these animals are still how they earn their income. Through the sale of their cattle and cattle products, they would make just enough money to survive and move on. Interestingly, the NGO, Oxfam, claims that the lifestyle of the Maasai should be embraced as a response to climate change because of their ability to farm in deserts and scrublands.

Maasai culture can seem very different to Westerners. For example, men can be married to several women depending on how rich the man is, this status usually dependent on how many cattle he owns! There are actually financial reasons for a Maasai family to have many wives, as a larger family allows more hands to take care of their cattle, cows, goats, sheep, and donkeys.

Due to the remote location of this program and limited local transportation, Participants may need to stay the first night in Monduli and travel the next morning to the village. Additionally, placement is in a Maasai village in Arusha, but to increase immersion you may get spread across various villages.

Aims & Objectives

- Provides you with the unique experience of living as one of the Maasai tribespeople
- Share your experiences and ideas with the local community
- Gain valuable insight into the culture, traditions, and landscape of Tanzania

Schedule

Monday

We will start the day with an introduction to the village, as well as Maasai culture. In the morning, you will be taught useful phrases in Maasai language that you will be able to use throughout the week. Moreover, you will get to learn about the lifestyle of the Maasai people through an introduction to their cultural rules, the dos and don'ts, etc.

After lunch, we will take a trek through the wilderness that surrounds the village. During this hike, you will be able to see Tanzania's nature at its best. Visit a local caldera and enjoy the view.

Tuesday

The Maasai are a tribe well known for their herding traditions. Today, it will be all about grazing the livestock! You will join a Maasai warrior on his grazing activities through the bush - be prepared for several hours of walking!

During the dry season (June to October), this activity involves even more work: the nearest river to the village gets completely dried up, so the villagers are forced to walk further or dig holes in order to get to the water that is underground so their livestock can drink - don't be surprised if you are invited to participate!

Wednesday

In the morning hours, we will join the women of a boma in their traditional activities, you can expect to participate in activities such as milking cows, walking to the river with donkeys to fetch water, etc.

After lunch, we will join an exciting workshop in which you will be taught how to make gorgeous beaded Maasai jewellery - the kind that has made the Maasai such an emblematic and colourful tribe.

We will end the day with a cooking class led by one of our hosts. This will be your dinner, so pay close attention!

Thursday

Today is another day of grazing the livestock! Grazing days are filled with adventure as they involve long walks through the African bush.

Friday

We will take a hike through the African wilderness once again! After a few hours of adventurous roaming, we will enjoy a picnic with a view of the valley.

In the evening, we will set up a bonfire where you will get the chance to hear legendary tales about the Maasai and other stories from the village.

Location

You will be staying in a very simple, traditional, family home in a Maasai Village in Arusha. Located many kilometers away from the paved main road which leads into the nearest large city Arusha, with many smaller towns along the way. This village is quite a bit off the beaten path. The terrain is rough and scantily covered by grass, bushes, and trees. In the dry season inhabitants of the village must walk several kilometres to fetch water for cooking, drinking and occasionally for bathing.

Accommodation & Food

About the Accommodation

Expect a very 'back to nature' approach during your stay here! You will live as a visitor in a homestay residence which may include the traditional house made from wood, sticks, cow dung and clay-soil. The Maasai generally live without electricity, and though some houses have recently acquired solar cells, you should not expect it. There is no running tap water and no western toilets. You can expect squatting toilets will be available and the occasional showering is done by using a bucket. All participants are expected to be environmentally aware and to use all resources with extreme restraint, especially water, paper, and electricity. This accommodation is in a Maasai village in Arusha, but to increase immersion you may get spread across various villages.

Available Room Types

	Standard Room
All meals included	Yes *
Free beverages	No **
Persons per room	2-4
Wifi in public areas	No
Laundry facilities	No ***
Safety box	No
Lockable rooms	No
Hot shower	No
Private bathroom	No
Bed linen	No
Towels	No
Air conditioning	No
Fan	No
Mosquito protection	No

* 3 meals on weekdays, 2 on weekends

** Clean drinking water provided

*** Buckets and brushes available

Food Arrangements

Meals are inspired by the local cuisine and consist of a lot of corn, rice, potatoes, and bananas. Beef, goat meat, beans, and a few green leafy vegetables will help to add nutrients to your daily meals as well. There are no shops within walking distance, so if you are a picky eater or feel that you may not be amenable to the local style meals, please

feel free to bring supplemental food items with you from Monduli or Arusha, with the understanding that there is no refrigeration available.

Facilities

For stays in the Maasai villages, there are no ATM facilities, banks, post offices, or the local shops nearby. These can be around 60-150 minutes away depending on the mode of transportation (driving in a car, riding on a motorbike, or walking) being used.

Mandatory Orientation Day

On the Monday of your first week at this location, you will join our orientation day, to familiarise you with the surroundings as well as local culture. Your program will continue as usual from Tuesday onward throughout the rest of the week.

Schedule

- Introduction meeting, House rules, Setting Expectations, Health and Safety Advice and handling of documents.
- Tanzanian Do's and Don'ts, Culture introduction and country history and Intensive Swahili Language Lessons.
- Tour around the compound and local area; where to find local shops, and arrange a sim-card if necessary.
- Lunch
- Excursion to local area sites (may include a local crater or nature walk).

Sights & Surroundings

National Parks

There are many national parks not far from this location where you can explore the wildlife and environment or take a safari trip on the weekend. Lake Manyara, Mount Meru, Kilimanjaro, Serengeti, and Ngorongoro can be found nearby and are the wonders of the region. Speak to a coordinator about where you can access the internet to help you get this arranged!

Ngorongoro Conservation Area

Expanding over plains, forests, and savannas, Ngorongoro Conservation Area hosts Ngorongoro Crater, the world's largest caldera where incredible wildlife coexists with the Maasai. In here, you will be able to find wildlife... in a crater! A must when in Tanzania as it is one of the most emblematic locations of the continent.

Tarangire National Park

Tarangire is famous for its population of elephants and the symbolic Baobab tree. During the dry season, wild animals inhabit the park and you will be able to find zebras, giraffes, buffaloes, elephants, wildebeests and more! While not as common, you might be able to find a lion here as well if you are lucky!

Serengeti National Park

Serengeti is probably the most worldwide known National Park in the world. It is believed to hold the largest population of lions in the world! Aside from that, cheetahs, buffaloes, zebras, giraffes, rhinos, hippos live here. Make sure you allow yourself at least two days to visit and stay overnight in either a campsite or a lodge. Serengeti cannot be done in just one day as it is so huge!

Arusha National Park and Mount Meru

The home of Mount Meru, the second largest peak in Tanzania after Kilimanjaro. While it is not the best place to spot wildlife compared to Ngorongoro or Serengeti, it is still the home of many species including giraffes, warthogs, Cape buffaloes, lions, elephants, flamingos and more! However, the main attractions here are the landscapes that line the park to every side: to the west, you will find Meru Crater and the Jekukumia River. To the south, you will find Ngurdoto Crater and to the north.east, Momelia Lakes, which vary in color due to algae and are made even brighter by many different species of birds who love to swim in the water!

Lake Manyara National Park

During the wet season, pink flamingos brighten up the lake, which makes it the go-to place for bird watchers. They do leave during the wet season, but Masai Lions, Leopards, hippos, giraffes, zebras, elephants, blue monkeys, gazelles and cheetahs can be found here year-round!

Moshi and Mount Kilimanjaro

Moshi is located about two and a half hours away from Monduli and can be easily reached from Monduli by taking a “dala dala” to Arusha and then another one to Moshi from there.

Moshi is a sleepy town with a Western vibe as it is the starting point of the Mount Kilimanjaro climb! On a clear day, you can get excellent views of the highest mountain in Africa (tip: head over to Moshi Train Station for a top-notch view. This station is no longer in use for transportation purposes, but the locals have made the most out of it by placing some chairs and selling drinks and snacks with a view!).

Kikuletwa Hot Springs

A lesser-known but still amazing attraction located between Arusha and Moshi are Kikuletwa Hot Springs. The water isn't actually hot, but its temperature is perfect for swimming and relaxing. It is known as an oasis as it is covered with jungle and the water here is so blue that you wouldn't believe! It is a favourite go-to place for locals and expats alike and there is even a rope you can use to dive into the water with style.

Arusha

Arusha is one of the main cities of Tanzania and is easy to reach from Monduli in less than an hour and a half. From here, most safari companies depart to many of the national

parks surrounding it, so it is your go-to place for wildlife! In Arusha you will be able to find a myriad of things to do - from Maasai markets selling crafts to bring back home, to cinemas, shopping malls, Western food, and more!

Hiking Around Monduli

Monduli is set amidst lush mountains that are a great opportunity for hiking off-the-beaten path. There are numerous trails, one of which leads to a gorgeous waterfall. Speak to our coordinator to arrange, as the government needs to grant you permission (for a fee) to visit beyond certain spots in order to conserve the area.

Iringa and Ruaha National Park

Not that close by, but an interesting place nonetheless if you have the time after finishing our programs! Ruaha National Park is a much lesser visited place for wildlife, but its few visitors are never disappointed by its beauty! In fact, it is the largest National Park in Tanzania and boasts cheetahs, the second largest population of Leopards in Africa, buffalos, hippos, and more!

Zanzibar

While a bit far, it is possible to fly to Zanzibar for a weekend from Arusha airstrip, a small airport that operates domestic flights and is not too far from our center! Zanzibar is known for its sandy white beaches and unique culture. While here, don't miss Stone Town, a place that is emblematic for its mazes and spices (take a spice tour for sure!). Another must is a visit to Prison Island, where you can spot dolphins and marine life. Travel north or east of the island for some of the best and cleanest beaches in the world and enjoy the Indian Ocean at its best!

Transportation

From this location we provide free transport to your next program at the following location(s):

- Monduli