

Activities offered when staying at these Saruni Basecamp properties:
Basecamp Masai Mara / Basecamp Adventure

TALEK RIVER IN THE MASAI MARA NATIONAL RESERVE

Each region of Kenya offers different surprises and delights. We've grouped the camps and lodges in the Saruni Basecamp by region (or geolocation); within each geolocation, some activities are available at all properties, while others are exclusive to specific properties (as indicated).

The Talek River (Talek geolocation) features two properties: **Basecamp Masai Mara** and **Basecamp Adventure**. Many of the activities listed and described below are available at both of these camps, while some may be unique to specific properties (as indicated).

Each day during your safari, your guide and the lodge team will recommend activities based on your specific interests, and factors such as the season, weather, recent sightings, and any special occasions.

| ACTIVITY / EXPERIENCE | | Basecamp Masai Mara | | | | Basecamp Adventure | | | |
|---|--|---------------------|---------------|--------------------|---------------|--------------------|---------------|--------------------|---------------|
| | | Ground Package | | Full-Board Package | | Ground Package | | Full-Board Package | |
| | | Included | Payable extra | Included | Payable extra | Included | Payable extra | Included | Payable extra |
| Game Drives & Wildlife | Guided Shared Day Game Drives | ✓ | x | x | ✓ | ✓ | x | x | ✓ |
| | Migration River Crossings/Masai Mara National Reserve Visits | x | ✓ | x | ✓ | x | ✓ | x | ✓ |
| | Bird Walks Along the Talek Trail | ✓ | x | x | ✓ | ✓ | x | ✓ | x |
| | Picnic Excursions | ✓ | x | x | ✓ | ✓ | x | x | ✓ |
| | Bush Meals & Sundowners | x | ✓ | x | ✓ | x | ✓ | x | ✓ |
| Educational, Family, Cultural & Community Awareness | Tribal Storytelling Through Song & Dance / Fireside Chats | ✓ | x | ✓ | x | ✓ | x | ✓ | x |
| | Young Explorers Club - Children's Activities | ✓ | x | ✓ | x | ✓ | x | ✓ | x |
| | Local Talek Market Visit | ✓ | x | ✓ | x | ✓ | x | ✓ | x |
| | Cultural Walk Through Talek Town | ✓ | x | ✓ | x | ✓ | x | ✓ | x |
| | Local Maasai Manyatta Visit | x | ✓ | x | ✓ | x | ✓ | x | ✓ |
| | Enjoolata Awareness Centre | ✓ | x | ✓ | x | ✓ | x | ✓ | x |
| | Basecamp Maasai Brand (BMB) | ✓ | x | ✓ | x | ✓ | x | ✓ | x |
| | Organic vegetable garden visit | ✓ | x | ✓ | x | ✓ | x | ✓ | x |
| | Tree Nursery Tour with Tree-Planting* | ✓ | x | ✓ | x | ✓ | x | ✓ | x |
| Specialist | Hot Air Balloon Safari | ✓ | x | ✓ | x | ✓ | x | ✓ | x |



Game Drives & Wildlife

Guided, Shared Day Game Drives (in open-sided vehicles)

Led by knowledgeable Maasai guides who grew up in the Talek River area, game drives are the best way to explore the Mara and to encounter the majestic wildlife that has made this area world-famous. From iconic species you'll recognise immediately to less familiar creatures, our guides will introduce you to the residents of the Mara, and share their incredible knowledge. You'll also get to witness firsthand how our guides make use of tracks, signs and calls to find animals and birds, with the vast landscape and skylines of the Mara as an ever-changing backdrop to the ultimate safari adventure.

Migration River Crossings & Masai Mara National Reserve Visits

The most dramatic moments of the seasonal Great Wildebeest Migration are undoubtedly when the massed herds have to cross the Mara and Talek Rivers. The combination of steep banks and waiting crocodiles make this a particularly hazardous event for the wildebeest and zebra, but also lead to compelling viewing and spectacular photographic opportunities as galloping hooves kick up spray, and crocodile jaws snap. While the timing of Migration River Crossings varies from year to year due to factors outside our control and therefore cannot be guaranteed during your safari, our guides will use all their skill and experience to try and get you in the right place, at the right time.

Bird Walks Along the Talek Trail

Slow things down with a guided bird walk that will take you through the tropical forests along the banks of the Talek River. Our long-running reforestation project has restored this area to its former glory, and made it once again a very attractive habitat for many kinds of birds. In fact, some 300 bird species have been recorded in the Mara, so be prepared to take up the challenge of seeing how many different kinds you can spot. The quiet, relaxed settings of our camps are ideal for birdwatching, and our guides are all experts at spotting and identifying birds of all kinds.

Picnics, Bush Meals & Sundowners

Enjoying a meal in the bush is a quintessential safari experience: think stunning scenery, delicious food and passing wildlife. Our camp teams excel at creating special dining moments in secret locations chosen so that your meal becomes an integral part of your morning or afternoon game drive. The combination of fresh air and the excitement of wildlife viewing is sure to see you work up an appetite, whether for a bush breakfast on the banks of the Talek River (with hot, fresh Kenyan coffee of course) or a bush dinner illuminated by stars and lanterns. There's nothing quite like coming round a bend in the trail and finding your al fresco dining room laid out and ready for you.

Educational / Family / Cultural & Community Awareness

Tribal Storytelling Through Song & Dance / Fireside Chats

The Maasai have a rich storytelling heritage, and it's a treasure that they're happy to share. Like many African peoples, the Maasai use humour and proverbs to explain and draw examples from the world around them. As they do so, they pass on accumulated wisdom, identity and pride to future generations. As the flames flicker and the coals begin to glow, you can enjoy the rhythm of the warriors' retellings of stories that they themselves learned around campfires as children. They will be just as interested in stories about where you come from, and any songs or traditional tales you want to share. After all, this activity is best enjoyed as a conversation between equals.



Young Explorers Club – Children's Activities

As a family-oriented company, we have established the Young Explorers Club to ensure safaris in Masai Mara are more exciting for both parents and their children. We aim to teach children about the environment and nature while at the same time offering them an opportunity to have fun in and around the camp. From learning bush survival skills, shooting bows and arrows, beading lessons with local Maasai ladies, learning to track with the guides, to playing board games. If we have any budding young chefs, they are always welcome to get involved in the kitchen, baking cakes and bread! These activities will keep them entertained throughout their stay and you, as the parents, can enjoy some well-deserved downtime.



Local Talek Market Visit

The market at Talek Town happens every Wednesday, and it's a highlight of the week for Maasai from miles around. It's an opportunity to buy and sell, of course, but this market day is about so much more than just commerce. For the Maasai, it's a chance to dress in their finery, get all the latest news and gossip, and perhaps even meet a potential future husband or wife. As a visitor, you can experience a slice of authentic Maasai life, and purchase handmade items that each come with a story. Of course, you'll have to learn to haggle – the traders will expect you to try and strike a bargain. It's all part of the experience of visiting a local market.

Cultural Walk Through Talek Town

Talek Town is a Maasai settlement that is just 10 minutes on foot from Basecamp Masai Mara & Basecamp Adventure, and just outside the Masai Mara National Reserve. With a Maasai guide to make the introductions, you can meet the people of Talek Town, and get a glimpse of authentic contemporary Maasai life. You'll visit some of the most important locations in the town, including Talek Primary School and the Talek Health Centre, and learn how the Maasai are keeping their traditions alive whilst adapting to the opportunities and challenges of modern life. A cultural walk through Talek Town will give you a more rounded understanding of the human factors of the Mara ecosystem, and let you meet our friends and neighbours.



Local Maasai Manyatta Visit

Immerse yourself in the life of a Maasai family with a guided visit to a village and a tour of a manyatta (a series of homes for an extended family). See how the Maasai go about their daily chores, such as preparing food and washing clothes – with a Maasai guide as translator, you’ll be able to ask questions and learn more about how the local way of life has developed over countless generations to mesh with the Mara ecosystem in ways that ensure the Maasai can thrive without over-exploiting the resources of the area. The cost of this mutually respectful experience will be paid directly to the Maasai village that you visit.

Enjoolata Awareness Centre

At Basecamp Masai Mara, a 3-minute drive from Basecamp Adventure. This innovative centre lets you deepen your knowledge of Maasai culture and explore their relationship with their land and the wildlife they share it with. Multiple exhibits give you insights into every aspect of Maasai life, from daily tasks to important ceremonies that mark the major milestones in the lives of men and women. You’ll also learn more about the Mara ecosystem, and the intricate web of life that binds all the different species together. Visiting the Enjoolata Awareness Centre will add extra meaning to your stay in the Mara, and give you a greater appreciation of just why it is so important that we all work together to preserve this unique place for future generations.

Basecamp Maasai Brand (BMB)

At Basecamp Masai Mara, a 3-minute drive from Basecamp Adventure. Basecamp Maasai Brand (BMB) was founded in 2003 to provide Maasai women with a new means of making a livelihood – namely, using their beading and crafting skills to create items that combine Maasai heritage with contemporary style. BMB has grown significantly, and we now work with over 150 local women. BMB provides an outlet for traditional Maasai crafting skills, and empowers women to generate revenue through selling items both online, and in the store at Basecamp Maasai Mara. When you visit BMB, you’ll not only have the chance to buy unique gifts and souvenirs, but also to see the artisans at work.

Tree Nursery Tour with Tree Planting*

Tree planting is one of our most important ecological initiatives, and we’ve been able to make a dramatic difference to the quality of the habitat around our camps for birds, insects and animals. Whereas historically trees were cleared for grazing and firewood, we’re helping to turn back the environmental clock – and you can help. Explore the ‘Obama Forest’ around the camp, named for the former US President who planted a tree here back in 2006. His family’s trees are just some of the many thousands that are now capturing carbon, providing shade and helping to channel precious rainfall.

* A small donation to our reforestation programme is required if you wish to plant an indigenous tree and help to offset the carbon emissions generated by your trip to Kenya.

SPECIALIST

Hot Air Balloon Safari

A hot air balloon safari is a wonderful way to see the plains of the Mara – serene and silent, you can glide along without disturbing the wildlife below, while you appreciate the scale and beauty of this renowned wilderness area. Starting at dawn, you’ll rise into the early morning air and watch as the land below is transformed by the light of the rising sun. The herds may look up as your shadow passes over them, but the passage of the balloon overhead hardly seems to bother them at all. When you land, you’ll be welcomed with breakfast in a scenic location, before a game drive back to camp.