



Mwiba Lodge



Courtesy Mwiba Lodge

At a Glance

A glamorous retreat in the southern Serengeti, Mwiba balances the indulgences of a permanent safari lodge (spa, gym, infinity pool, wine cellar) with the immersive wilderness experience of a tented camp. The 10 beautifully appointed tented suites have hardwood floors and sliding glass doors but also canvas siding, so you sleep to the sounds of the bush at night. Private decks overlook either a watering hole or the river, both frequented by elephants. The lodge is built into a rocky hillside, so there are expansive views everywhere: from bedrooms, the multiple dining areas and living room of the main lodge. Mwiba is located on a corridor of the Great Migration (and calving season during January and February is a highlight). Because the lodge is situated on a wildlife reserve, off-roading and night drives are permitted; game drives are done in private vehicles with top guides. The most memorable excursion, though, is heading out for a bush walk with the Hadzabe, a hunter-gatherer tribe—an extraordinary insight into an ancient way of life.

The Standout: The privacy of the 130,000-acre Mwiba Wildlife Reserve

Don't Miss: Seeing the Great Migration from the property's on-site helicopter

Indagare Loves

- The owner's conservation fund, which protects more than two million acres of wilderness and engages local communities
- The unique cultural experiences offered on-property with local tribes
- The intimate, romantic atmosphere and sexy, elegant design of the suites

Mwiba Lodge Review

Texas billionaire conservationist Dan Friedkin has established a conservation fund in Tanzania to protect more than 6.1 million acres of wildlife area. His outfit, Legendary Expeditions, offers a variety of tented and lodge experiences in Tanzania's most incredible wildlife areas, and Mwiba Lodge, which opened in 2013, is his latest and is the greatest outgrowth of his passionate involvement in the country's wildlife preservation.

Inspired by the intimate feeling of a tented camp, Mwiba Lodge combines the best of camping (isolation and proximity to nature) with the modern comforts that today's explorers appreciate even in the wild such as an infinity swimming pool, a beautiful new spa and gym with a yoga platform, wifi, indoor/outdoor showers and plush mattresses. Friedkin's wife Debra oversaw the design with a South African design team, and they incorporated canvas tent panels and large glass windows in the eight suites to create structures that are both contemporary and luxurious, with modern comforts and an elegant African bush decor.

The rooms each have cooling systems that pump through the mosquito nets around the bed, beautiful wash basins and soaking tubs with full window views. The suites are either nestled into the surrounding foliage overlooking a river where elephants and buffalo cross daily or are elevated on high stilts with sweeping views of the surrounding area.

The attention to detail on property is excellent, from the 45-minute massages included for all guests, the incredible stories the guides share about habituating animals to the area and the carefully curated South African wine selection and delicious menu.

Just a three-hour drive from [Ngorongoro Crater](#), or a 40-minute flight from Arusha airstrip, Mwiba Lodge's location on the border of Ngorongoro Conservation Area commands a prime spot for seeing the Great Migration in the southern Serengeti (typically December to March.) The concession area with rivers and 30 natural springs

draws resident game year-round, but because the lodge is on a private concession, guests have this wilderness to themselves. So in addition to game drives, it is also possible to enjoy off-roading, walking safaris and night drives. One of the highlights of the property are the unique and exclusive cultural experiences: guests may go on a bush walk with the nomadic Hadza tribe or visit a nearby village that serves as a regular meeting point for many local tribes.

Who Should Stay

Those wanting a soulful safari camp with high style. Families with children are welcome, but the vibe of the property is romantic and serene enough for honeymooners as well. The main draws of the property are the remoteness, the luxurious accommodations and cultural interactions. Those looking for an abundance of habituated game should consider one of the Singita properties in the Grumeti Reserve.

- Melissa Biggs Bradley on December 30, 2013

