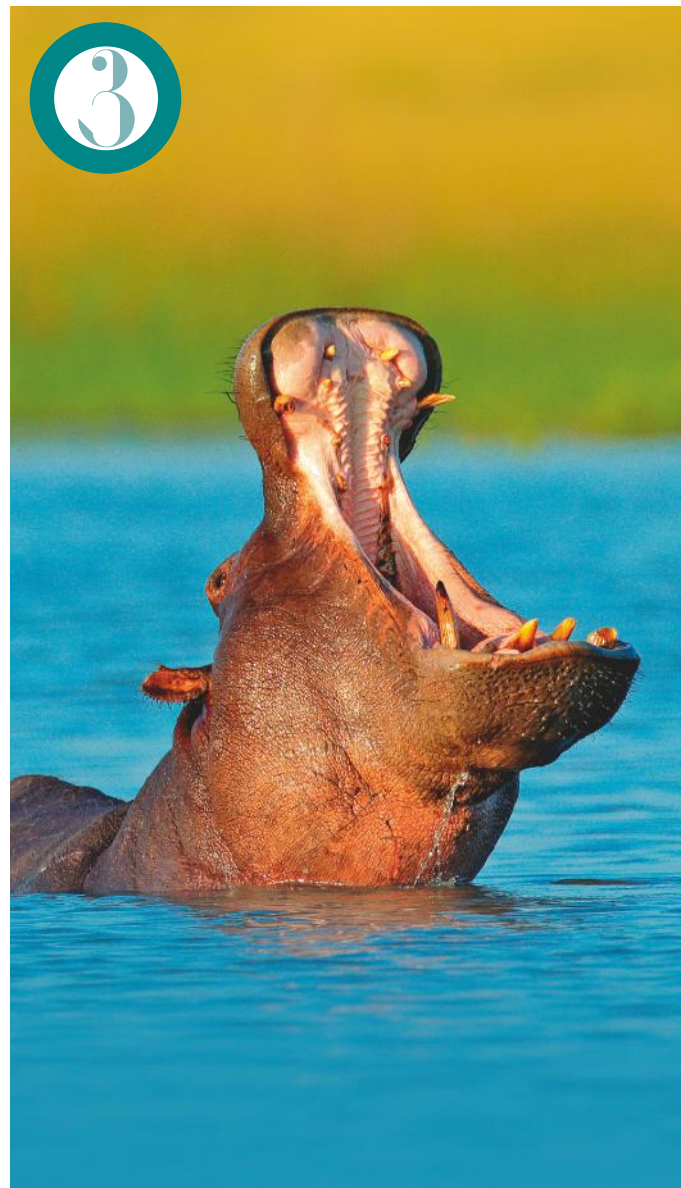


ASK THE operator

Clients interested in a safari with the kids or grandkids? **Elle Fazan** seeks tips for selling to different family groups from three experts



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1 Under-10s

Antony Barton went on his first safari aged four years old. "It's the first memory I have and will stay with me for ever," he says. He now works for Explore, which provides small-group experiences with expert local guides.



Antony Barton
family programme manager, Explore

For families with young children I would recommend a safari in South Africa. There's less driving than in Tanzania and Botswana, and it offers more variety. You can take in the Indian Ocean at Kosi Bay, with its incredible beaches; stay in beehive huts in Swaziland; and visit three superb parks in the Kruger area – Grashop, Tshukudu and Kruger itself – each of which offers a different game experience.

Families can expect to see giraffes, zebras, elephants, buffalos, rhinos, wildebeest, impalas, waterbucks, warthogs, hippos and crocodiles, plus lions and amazing birdlife. Children are so impressionable and what they see will stay with them for a lifetime. That said, we recommend that the youngest age to join our group trips is six or seven years old, so they can get the most from the experience. Most kids will have only seen domestic animals before, so when they hear a lion roar or stare up at the Milky Way unblemished by light pollution, it's just magical.

The guides on these trips are really used to working with children, and are fantastic. They whip up incredible meals on safari, including traditional braai or a stew-type dish – usually meat with potatoes or rice and vegetables – and delicious desserts. Although we can offer our trips as private adventures, I recommend small-group trips for families. Kids tend to form friendships very quickly; the whole group dynamic is a big part of the experience; and many families stay in touch.

2 Teenagers

Distinctive Africa specialises in tailor-made trips and Hilary Holland has worked for the company since 2015. She enjoys the relationship she builds with agents, saying: "It's like picking up the phone for a friendly chat."



Hilary Holland
sales and operations, Distinctive Africa

Uganda is where East African savannah meets the rainforests of West Africa, providing the best of both worlds for travellers. Alongside impressive game viewing, they can discover the country's beauty on foot, or on the many lakes and rivers. The country is probably best known for its gorilla and chimpanzee trekking, which has huge appeal for teenagers. The minimum age for trekking is 15 years old.

Activities are varied, and there is ample opportunity to learn about the country's biodiversity from experienced and cheerful guides. Uganda is a playground for activities – you can get out of the 4x4 to encounter wildlife, and many of the lodges offer cool activities that teenagers are sure to engage in.

A lot of the lodges in Uganda have pools, and offer family units comprising two separate bedrooms in one cottage – perfect for teens to have their own space. Most offer an international cuisine and often have pizza nights. The Ugandan Rolex is not to be missed – it's a chapati rolled with eggs, onions and peppers – a filling staple for many lunch boxes!

Ten days is the ideal time to take in some of the national parks and game reserves. Queen Elizabeth National Park offers superb lion viewing, along with elephants, antelopes, and more, plus boat trips on the Kazinga Channel.

3 Multigenerational

Africa expert and parent Tess Kelly set up Coral Tree Travel with her husband Mike to specialise in family travel. Every Coral Tree safari booking contributes directly to elephant conservation and girls' education in East Africa.



Tess Kelly
co-founder, Coral Tree Travel

We are hearing from many people who want a special experience with their whole family. Often they've been to Africa themselves and want to create new memories with their children and grandchildren. I can relate to that. My greatest joy recently has been bringing our own young daughter to Kenya and experiencing it through her eyes.

Private vehicles are always recommended for extended family groups, as you then have complete flexibility to plan your day how you wish and be adaptable if anyone gets tired.

Kenya is particularly well-suited for a multigenerational holiday as it has an abundance of large properties designed for families. It's very accessible – there are direct flights from London – and children are highly valued and treasured. They are guaranteed a warm welcome, lots of smiles and plenty of attention.

There's such a variety of topography, wildlife, and culture that each part of Kenya has something unique to offer, and it's easy to tie in a safari with a beach holiday on the coast or on Zanzibar.

The savannah plains of the Masai Mara National Reserve and surrounding conservancies are known for large herds of elephants and buffaloes, as well as a concentration of the big cats: lions, leopards, cheetahs. At the right time of year (July to October) the great migration of two million wildebeest happens – it's quite incredible.