

Inspiring and Educating Sellers of Affluent Travel

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# LUXURY

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## TRAVEL ADVISOR

### TRUE BLUE

**Ellen Bettridge  
leads AmEx Retail  
Travel Network**

#### DESTINATIONS

Honolulu Retreats

#### HOTELS

Rome Cavalieri

Umbria's Palazzo Seneca

#### CRUISE

Exploring Florida's Ports

#### SPAS

Fiesta Americana, Cancun

Sofitel La Reserva Cardales



## SAFARIS



A GAME DRIVE at Serian Camp in Kenya. Guests have a vehicle all to themselves.

# ENRICHING SAFARIS

Mother-and-daughter duo Marcia and Elizabeth Gordon know Africa. Mother Marcia ([marcia@ejafrika.com](mailto:marcia@ejafrika.com)) has worked with Africa's tourism scene for more than 30 years, while daughter Elizabeth ([elizabeth@ejafrika.com](mailto:elizabeth@ejafrika.com)) was born in Kenya. Together, they created **Extraordinary Journeys** ([www.ejafrika.com](http://www.ejafrika.com)), a bespoke luxury African tour operator that offers unique safari experiences. With their insider expertise, they know how to find the best places for both first-time visitors and seasoned African explorers.

Typically, the team starts their process by meeting clients in person or over the phone, learning about the clients' travel habits and what they hope to get from a trip to Africa. Based on the conversation, they create three unique proposals and let the client choose the vacation.

Once they understand what the clients want, the Gordons try to nudge them out of their comfort zone—gently, of course. Using five-star accommodations as a draw, they encourage visitors to spend a night under the stars, or to explore the wilderness and wildlife. Most important of all is trying something new.

Among the properties the Gordons use, they recommend **Alex Walker's Serian** ([www.serian.net](http://www.serian.net)) camp in Kenya, which, they say, combines the relaxed charm of a lived-in home and safari chic. The wilderness is just across the river, and can be reached by a suspension bridge. (Alex Walker is a safari guide and second-generation Kenyan.) Another Kenyan property they recommend is the new **Mara Plains** ([www.maraplains.com](http://www.maraplains.com)), a luxury experience for those who want to get away from other tourists.

Zanzibar just got its first real luxury property, **Baraza** ([www.baraza-zanzibar.com](http://www.baraza-zanzibar.com)), which has a spa that we hear is "to die for" and a National Geographic-accredited dive center.

The Gordons personally inspect every camp and meet with every guide to make certain that their clients will get a genuine safari experience. Good wine is important, of course, but a traveler can get that anywhere. A safari can be a once-in-a-lifetime experience, and the difference between a good safari and a great one is the guides.

Some enriching trips the team has organized include helping a Jewish couple honeymoon over Yom Kippur. Elizabeth got the clients invited to before-and-after dinners at the homes of the head, and former head, of the Jewish community in Nairobi. Another client's vacation will combine

volunteering at an orphanage in Rwanda, climbing Mount Kilimanjaro and then a five-day safari followed by four days in Zanzibar where they plan to dive and fish.

While seeing animals on a safari is an amazing experience, there are many other ways of enjoying a fulfilling trip to Africa. The company believes in combining pleasure with responsible tourism, and they create win/win partnerships with locals who benefit from the tourism industry. Extraordinary Journeys can also help set guests up with a volunteer project.

It's also involved with an orphanage, and Marcia started the Bring A Book Foundation. Their philanthropic efforts have paid off both for locals and visitors. They have excellent contacts—all of whom guests can interact with.

—Jena Tesse Fox