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**Singita Grumeti, Tanzania**

**12** Situated in the Serengeti's western corridor, Singita Grumeti is a private wilderness bigger than Bedfordshire, where exclusivity is paramount. Although roughly the same size as the Maasai Mara, Singita Grumeti has only three camps and lodges. Sasakwa Lodge, the company's flagship property, is an Edwardian manor located on a Tanzanian hilltop; Faru Faru Lodge is set in an enchanted forest beside the Grumeti river; and Sabora Tented Camp, with its air-conditioned Bedouin tents, is down on the plains where the action is.

• Seven days from £10,125 with Bailey Robinson (01488 689700; baileyrobinson.com).

**Best of Botswana**

**13** Jack's Camp should be on everyone's list of the 10 best places to stay in Africa, not just for its unique location in a palm grove on the edge of the Makgadikgadi salt pans but also for its style and sheer romanticism. Pair it with Belmond Eagle Island Camp, on the Okavango Delta, and you have the perfect desert and delta deluxe safari.

• Three nights at Jack's Camp and three at Eagle Island cost from £6,580 per person with the Ultimate Travel Company (020 3051 8098; theultimatetravelcompany.co.uk).

*The best safari guides in Africa*

**W**hat makes a great safari guide? First comes an attention to safety, especially on walking safaris, which require a person with a cool head, a respect for dangerous game and a thorough knowledge of animal behaviour.

Most of the time, though, your guide is there to interpret the natural world in which he grew up, a bush-wise polymath who can be an inspirational source of knowledge on diverse subjects. He or she will also be a born raconteur with a fund

of stories to keep you entertained while mixing your favourite sundowner cocktail. Seeing Africa through the eyes of a top-dollar guide costs more than your average package safari, but the rewards are invaluable. Here are some of the best.

**Kenya**

**Jackson Ole Looseyia**  
In his traditional blood-red shuka, Jackson looks every inch a Maasai but is equally at home in the western



world. He shot to fame as a *Big Cat Diary* TV presenter but was already renowned for his guiding skills. His knowledge of the Mara, where he grew up, is unsurpassed.

**Botswana**  
**Map Ives**

Map – aka Martin Anthony Paul – honed his guiding skills in Zimbabwe and South Africa before returning to



Botswana where he was born. There, in the Okavango, he made his name, presenting a holistic view of the delta to enable clients to reconnect with the natural world.

**Kenya**

**Paul Kirui**  
Like Jackson Ole Looseyia, above, Paul Kirui is a Maasai, born and bred in the Mara. He is chairman



of the Kenya Professional Safari Guides Association (KPSGA) and one of its few members to have achieved its coveted gold standard.

**South Africa**  
**Juan Pinto**

South Africa's premier guide is Juan Pinto, director and head ranger at Royal Malewane in the Kruger



lowveld. He works with Wilson Masiye, a tracker with whom he has developed an almost telepathic understanding. The hawk-eyed duo make the finest team in Africa.

**Tanzania**

**Richard Knoeler**  
A founding member of Nomad Safaris, one of Tanzania's most prestigious travel firms, Richard is also



its chief guide. Possessed of a wry sense of humour, he describes his job as "doing what I love best, looking at awesome animals in the most beautiful parts of Africa".

**Botswana**  
**Ralph Bousfield**

The owner of Jack's Camp, on the edge of the Makgadikgadi, Ralph is an articulate conservationist



whose passion for the Kalahari and desert wildlife is second to none. His company, Uncharted Africa, has the motto: "Give them what they never knew they wanted."

**Tanzania**

**Andrew Molinaro**  
Having grown up in Kenya, "Moli" moved to Tanzania and ended up at Kichaka, the bush camp he



built with his partner Noelle in Ruaha National Park. An experienced walking guide, he is famous for his boundless enthusiasm and his love of elephants.

**Namibia**  
**Garth Owen-Smith**

With his silver beard and thousand-mile stare, Garth has the look of a desert prophet. Having walked all



over north-west Namibia for decades, he has become a living legend, internationally recognised for his pioneering community-based conservation projects.

**Zimbabwe**

**Steve Edwards**  
For many years a warden at Musango Safan Camp, on the fringes of the Matusadona National Park,



Steve now owns it and is also its chief guide. To walk with him, tracking black rhino or sneaking up on a buffalo herd, is a never-to-be forgotten revelation.

**Zimbabwe**  
**Andrew 'Stretch' Ferreira**

Known as the Elephant Whisperer of Mana Pools, Stretch has lived in the park



for 30 years, establishing an uncanny relationship with its lions and tuskers. Walk with him from Goliath Safari Camp and meet them face to face, but in perfect safety.