

T+L | A-List | Africa + Middle East

The Best Travel Agents for Africa and the Middle East

by Travel + Leisure Staff



Ambroise Tézenas

Africa

Sandy Cunningham

Cunningham, who ran safari camps in Kenya before settling in the U.S., is most passionate about conservation, designing eco-minded safaris that highlight how tourist dollars save wildlife. She'll even suggest conservation-related events clients can attend before departure.

Best for responsible travel, honeymooners 505-795-7710;
sandy@outsidego.com

Michael Lorentz

The Passage to Africa CEO and cofounder of Safarious.com is known for his off-the-grid experiences and on-the-ground relationships that allow him access to little-known areas of Madagascar, entry into rarely seen tribal ceremonies, and the ability to set up mobile camps on private reserves.

Best for off-the-beaten-path itineraries, thrill seekers 27-21-447-0053;
ml@passagetoafrica.com

Botswana, Zambia, and Zimbabwe

Craig Beal

A former nuclear engineer who went on his first safari at age four, Beal brings impressive knowledge and attention to detail to his trips. He is familiar with scores of camps, studies animal migratory patterns, and is a whiz at navigating complicated travel logistics.

Best for first-time safari-goers *952-540-4101; craigb@travelbeyond.com*

East and Southern Africa

Dan Achber

Achber loves working with safari novices, as well as seasoned travelers willing to go outside their comfort zones. He'll send clients to a lightweight mobile camp in Botswana and the hard-to-reach Zakouma National Park, in Chad, where conservationists have brought elephant herds back from the brink of extermination.

Best for first-time safari-goers, thrill seekers *416-628-1272, ext. 104; dan@trufflepig.com*

Volker Altvater

Altvater exclusively books smaller-scale tented camps that take a holistic approach to game management, habitat conservation, and cultural preservation—the antithesis of a mass safari circuit.

Best for responsible travel, seasoned safari-goers *800-345-2445, ext. 2213; volker@bigfive.com*

Cherri Briggs

Briggs's feet-on-the-ground approach (she spends at least six months a year in Africa) gives her incredible insight into the practical concerns of safaris: when deltas are flooding, where animals are migrating, and the pros and cons of lodges (like which have plunge pools in the shade).

Best for family and honeymoon safaris *970-871-0065; cherri@exploreafrika.net*

Elizabeth Gordon

Kenya-born Gordon excels at creating specialized safari experiences. She's arranged a reptile-focused trip for a herpetologist and a run with Masai warriors for a marathoner. In her mid 30s, she's also in tune with the particular demands of younger travelers.

Best for specialized safaris, millennials *212-226-7331; elizabeth@ejafrika.com*

Mark William Nolting

Nolting has spent more than 30 years in the safari industry, building connections and traveling with his own kids, which allows him to home in on family needs— like camps with larger units, flexible itineraries, and food options for those with dietary restrictions.

Best for multigenerational families 800-882-9453;
safari@africanadventure.com

Sunit Sanghrajka

A founding member of Safari Professionals of America, this fourth-generation Kenyan prioritizes conservation with both families (village soccer games, group barbecues) and repeat travelers (trips to less-visited private land reserves).

Best for multigenerational families, seasoned safari-goers 321-622-9371;
sunit@alluringafrica.com

Dana Welch

Welch, a former lodge manager in Zambia and trekking guide in Nepal, excels at pairing adventure with animal encounters (like observing chimps in Mahale Mountain National Park, in Tanzania). She partners with select operators that take travelers on bush walks and horseback game excursions.

Best for wildlife safaris, off-the-beaten-path itineraries 303-563-6225;
dana@travelsociety.com

Egypt

Malaka Hilton

When it comes to premium experiences, little is off-limits for Hilton. She can arrange access to exclusive golf courses, meals in private homes, group dinners at the foot of the Great Pyramids with a celebrity chef, even a rare glimpse at the remains of an unknown pharaoh.

Best for luxury seekers, culture buffs 941-951-1801;
malaka@admiraltravel.com

Gulf States

Amalia Lazarov

Interest in the U.A.E. is growing, and Lazarov works with clients on trips within the emirates (such as seven-star hotel stays paired with private shopping) as well as journeys that venture onward to the rest of the Middle East and Africa (like combining Abu Dhabi with Oman).

Best for culture buffs, business travel, luxury seekers 646-747-9356;
amalia@protravelinc.com

Israel

Rachel L. Epstein

Epstein visits Israel about five times a year to keep up on current events, the country's political temperature, and hotel and restaurant news. She's an invaluable resource for anyone taking a bucketlist, family, or faithbased journey.

Best for culture buffs, history lovers, educational trips, groups 713-590-8102; rachel.epstein@frosch.com

Morocco

Michael Diamond

Diamond has access to the country's best hotels and riads as well as its signature experiences, like touring artisan stalls in the Marrakesh medina with a local designer or having tea with the owner of a historic Tangier bookshop.

Best for culture buffs, history lovers, foodies 800-378-4555; michael@htprivatetravel.com

Namibia

Chris Liebenberg

This former nationalparks contractor has lived in every major destination in Namibia, so he's intimately familiar with the country's landscapes, wildlife, lodges, villages, and roadways (self-driving safaris are a specialty).

Best for thrill seekers, road trippers, adventure 858-598-5559; chris@piperandheath.com

South Africa

Tamsyn Fricker

Fricker, who lived in South Africa for years, designs trips based on particular interests. She's sent hikers to the lesser-known Wild Coast and arranged for politically engaged clients to meet with members of parliament.

Best for adventure, culture buffs, foodies 832-301-0896; tamsyn@travelartistryafrica.com

Southern Africa

Julian Harrison

This South African former game ranger likes to plan safaris that take the adventure quotient up a notch (canoeing the Zambezi River, gorilla trekking in the Republic of Congo) without sacrificing any comforts of a plush lodge or camp.

Best for adventure 800-545-1910, ext. 429; julianh@premiertours.com