

AFRICAMP KENYA

This is a month of adventure in Kenya, where you will join a very special and incredibly lively Kenyan team along with our experienced leaders, travelling away from the well-trodden tourist routes, and forging friendships across cultural divides through real challenges.

Work on long-term, relevant grassroots projects with a company that has genuine principles of investing in, and promoting the lives of hundreds of young people and families. Climb the second highest mountain in Africa, go on an overland safari and relax by the Indian Ocean.

Africamp is a real hands-on expedition that will let you explore Kenya, see African life and meet many wonderful people along the way through working with street children, running proper community projects, climbing Mount Kenya and going on a real overland safari all the way to the Indian Ocean.

Africamp was voted as one of the Top 5 expedition experiences for young people, and for the past twelve years we have constantly improved and refined this expedition so it is an unforgettable month. We ask a lot of you - this is no hand-holding exercise - but we promise you much in return.

“When I got home I wanted to change my name, I had changed so much” said one Africamper.

Adventure Alternative has set up a sister company in Kenya called **Africampers**, which is run entirely by ex-street kids and who are now all adults. All of them have been supported since childhood by the charity we set up called Moving Mountains, which has saved thousands of destitute kids in the country. You will see how Aid in Africa works firsthand, how a company is run which has such sensitivity towards local cultures and the future of so many people. This is a special chance to see it all with your own eyes, and play a part that will make a difference. This is not just an idle claim, it is the vision of Adventure Alternative MD Gavin Bate who has spent much of his life in the slums of Kenya setting up this unique system that is truly changing lives.

Africamp will become an important part of your curriculum vitae, a reflection of your character and ability to be an effective member of a real expedition. For individuals or groups aged 16-22, interested in an all-round experience of a challenging and highly enjoyable expedition in East Africa, Adventure Alternative has a large complement of staff and vehicles and equipment in-country to ensure safety, professionalism and enjoyment. We welcome you to Africamp.

Expedition Details

Project and Camp

This expedition will give you the chance to live and work with street children. You will have the opportunity to take part in a long running project that is really changing and improving the way that many street children live. We run rehabilitation camps for street children from all over Kenya and you will help in the day to day running of this camp and also in a project which could be renovating slum schools, building an orphanage or a school or a rescue centre. The projects are run parallel to the strategies of the Moving Mountains charity set up by MD Gavin Bate to help thousands of children stuck in the rut of poverty. Your work will make a direct difference and we will hope that you see perhaps for the first time how a charity works, and what it means to be doing Aid in Africa. The reality is quite different to what you might think.

It is hard, emotional work. There is time to reflect and think, but we are always busy with anything from preparing a Kenyan dinner for many people, to working on the project itself which will include building structures and leaving a legacy from your visit, to running games or sports days or visits with the kids. You are with a group of around 20 like-minded people, most in Africa for the first time, so the challenge of living together in Africa is part of the challenge. Definitely you will learn a lot about yourself !

Mount Kenya

The next part of this adventure is a six-day trek on Mount Kenya, the second highest peak in Africa after Kilimanjaro. Hiking through mountainous jungle provides the perfect opportunity to experience wildlife in close-up. Elephant, buffalo, giant forest hog, colobus monkey and strange rock hyrax are all common here. This guided non-technical climb to 16,350' is a fantastic goal that offers both beauty and a real challenge. Gorges and valleys, glacial lakes and unique high altitude vegetation along with the spectacular landscape make this a really memorable part of the expedition.

You have to carry all your own gear and prepare your own meals and food on the mountain, living in tents and working as a team. It is a perfect expedition for the Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award. We climb for six days in total, and we summit to see dawn from the top of this amazing mountain, after getting up in the middle of the night for a really early start ! It's all about teamwork and fun and trekking in Africa on the second highest mountain of the whole continent !

Safari

The third leg of the expedition is a safari, which is what people associate most with holidays in Africa. You will find yourself sitting on top of a special safari truck or in a safari vehicle driving through breathtaking scenery - far reaching savannah, fields of baobab trees, herds of roaming buffalo, lush green lakesides and red sunsets. We camp out in the bush, preparing food outdoors and going on game drives. Sometimes we go to Maasai homesteads and visit traditional menyatta to see how this tribe lives. We like to keep the journey fresh, so the itinerary can be flexible depending on where the wildlife is. We take some of the children with us from the slums so they too can see the animals of their country. We camp out, sometimes in tents, sometimes beneath the skies, and we cook for ourselves (buying our food locally). By now the day will begin with the sun-up and we really fill each day with activities and travelling overland.

Coast

Finally, the team will make their way to the Kenyan coast, sometimes by overnight train through the incredible Tsavo National Park, to enjoy the white sands and clear blue seas of the coast at either Malindi or Mombasa. There are various activities to fill the hot sunny days - snorkelling, diving and camel riding are all available. Africamp expeditions also incorporate traditional tribal evenings where you can join in with the customs of local tribes. Try sampling the blood of a freshly slaughtered goat at a local country hotel after having summited Mt Kenya ! You will dine in a variety of places from shantytown dukas to the famous Carnivore restaurant.

In Swahili the word 'safari' means 'journey'. The whole expedition is a journey, and not just through the land but also within yourself. There is a lot of discovery, and a lot of adventure, and lot of helping other people. You may find out a lot about yourself along the way.

The Africamp groups

There are always around 20- 30 people on each Africamp team, and they will be accompanied by at least 2 European leaders and 6 Kenyan staff. Group members are aged between 16 and 25, mostly 6th form age. Africamp attracts people from a variety of backgrounds; some come as individuals, pairs or groups. You can join any one of the trips, and decide which one is best for you. Some go to rural areas, some urban; some have large groups of friends going together, others are made up entirely of individuals. We work hard to make sure you are with the best type of group for you.

This trip is an expedition, so people are expected to work as a team to make things happen. You need to use your own initiative and work hard, and with this attitude you will get much more out of the experience than you thought possible. People often make lifelong friends and return year after year or meet up in new countries for fresh adventures. Some people are worried about how they might get on with other people but there is rarely a problem. Going to Africa is a great leveller; once you get there, and you meet the people and get into the expedition, you suddenly find that everyone is in the same boat. Some do a Gap Year in the school which they helped to build, others volunteer to run the charity. People come to climb the mountain, people come to have a taster of working with the street kids and 'doing some good' in Africa. Others just come for the adventure.

For many people Africamp is just the catalyst to experience lots more adventures in the future.

Dates

Normally all our trips start in July and August, and each one lasts a month. Departure dates vary to coincide with school finishing dates in England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland so some will leave Heathrow in the first week of July, others in the 3rd week and the last will depart in the first week of August, allowing school leavers to be back in time to deal with university places and accommodation.

We pre-book flights and pay the deposit to the airline on your behalf. This amount is added onto the cost of your Expedition. Two months before departure you pay the agency direct for your ticket. All groups are supervised all the time. We take great pride in the fact that we have never had a single accident, other than very minor cuts and bruises. We take our safety responsibility very seriously which is why we have such a very large staff back-up. You can take a look at our policies about safety, about dealing with children, about risk assessment and about staffing on the website or we can send you a copy in the post.

Adventure Alternative - A Special Type of Tourism in Kenya

If you are concerned about proper ethical tourism, and about your trip making a meaningful difference, then Africamp is the perfect expedition for you.

We have a very large and comprehensive set-up in Kenya. Safari vehicles, trucks, stores of camping and safari equipment, an office, many full time staff, a huge network of helpers and years of experience. But what we have is quite unusual, in fact it is totally unique. Adventure Alternative has a policy about ethical tourism that began with Gavin Bate's first experiences in the slums and his vision to balance commerce with charity, and to give people in Kenya a chance to really benefit from tourism. In fact our local company Africampers is staffed entirely by ex-street kids, all of them now adults and qualified, active, energetic young people.

Africampers is a company that was set up as a sister operation to Adventure Alternative and allows us to properly employ people full time. It is far more ethical and promotes the policy of pro-poor tourism, which is all about investing in the local set-up rather than marketing campaigns in the West. Adventure Alternative is just about the only adventure tour operator that does this, and we are determined to promote a proper tourism policy in such a committed way. We know there are plenty of companies out there that boast so-called policies and practises; and we also know that actions speak louder than words. Africampers represents the real investment that took years to achieve, and the projects you will be involved in have been developed over just as many years. You will be able to ask the Kenyans themselves what they think of the way we operate !

Gavin Bate is the Adventure Alternative Director and three-times Everest climber, and has been working and living in East Africa for most of his life. He has a house in a slum in Nairobi. He also started the charity Moving Mountains, committed to improving the lives of thousands of street children. Gavin's vision has been to balance commerce and charity, to put more into local investment, to use the expeditions to carry out and help pay for the charitable projects run by Moving Mountains. Adventure Alternative pays for all the overheads of Moving Mountains while the local Africampers company is run and staffed entirely by ex-street kids who are now adults with a great future. We think we are the only company around to have done this.

By coming on Africamp you are helping to take this idea further, to carry out more projects and to support a company in Kenya that is quite out of the ordinary.

The Africamp Staff

Our western staff are all experienced, and have been to Kenya many times before. Our Kenyan staff are ex-street kids or beneficiaries of Moving Mountains. They are honest, decent, fun-loving, professional and loyal. They will make your trip. From proper safaris to overlanding expeditions to Africamp to organising large projects around East Africa, the most common response we get from everyone is -"the staff were absolutely incredible, they really made our trip. Every one of them is an asset to the company and to Kenya".

Gavin Bate is a professional expedition guide and mountaineer with fifteen years of experience. He has walked solo across the Sahara Desert and led expeditions all over the world. He has climbed throughout the Himalayas, climbed the 6th highest mountain in the world without oxygen and was leader of the Millennium Seven Summits Expedition in 2000. He made an unsupported climb on the North Face of Everest without oxygen in 2003, and in 2005 climbed Everest for the third time, solo and without oxygen. This expedition gained him the record of the furthest non-stop ascent of Everest without oxygen by a Westerner. Gavin set up the charity Moving Mountains which works in both

Kenya and Nepal. He runs the company Adventure Alternative with a strong leaning towards combining business with charity, and a committed attitude towards ethical tourism.

Chris Little and **Andrew MacDonald** work for Adventure Alternative and every year help to run the Africamp Expeditions, and they are Trustees of Moving Mountains. They have been to Kenya many times and are very well experienced working on expeditions with young people and handling local situations in African. They also look after the office in Ireland so it is easy to speak to them or to Gavin anytime.

Other Africamper leaders include staff nurse and MM Trustee **Helena Ventham**, and **Chris Bowden** who studied Swahili at University. Adventure Alternative makes a point of giving excellent team players the chance to come to Kenya every year, so there is always a back-up team of young people who are highly enthusiastic assistant leaders.

The Kenyan team is very large and wide-ranging. We have representatives and workers and supporters all over Kenya. All of them have had some involvement with Moving Mountains, either as a beneficiary when they were once on the streets, or teachers, social workers and doctors. Wherever you go in Kenya you will find someone who is linked to the charity and to the company. They are all incredibly enthusiastic, honest, decent and hardworking. They understand western ways very well and speak perfect English. Their whole life is dedicated now to promoting the principles of ethical tourism in their own Kenyan way.

In particular **Rosie Gathirimu**, **Peter Kariuki** and **Kelly Kioko**, who all come from very difficult backgrounds, represent both the Africampers company and the NGO Moving Mountains. Time with them is well spent; they will teach you about life in Kenya and about aid in Africa. Project manager is **Francis Kioni**, while in each area of Kenya we have representatives who work for Africampers. **Maurice Odindo** in Siaya, **Gilbert Njeru** in Embu, **Samson Kagiri** in Nyeri. In Nairobi we also have **Osman Mohammed**, **Eva Muronji**, **Halima Ramadhani**, **Everline Odhiambo**, **Jennifer Gathirimu**, and **Jackton Otieno**. See our website for pictures!

The Expedition Options

Africamp is now so popular that we run a number of expeditions each summer. This is not a conveyor belt operation, every single expedition is slightly different, it has a different project or is in a different area and there will be different leaders. *Africamp is successful largely because every trip gives people something very personal.*

The main areas we operate are **Western Kenya** where we are building a Moving Mountains village for destitute people and families; this includes an orphanage, a clinic, a school, a crèche and a vocational centre. It is a 5 year programme and we have excellent links with the local Luo tribe and their area chief. This is definitely not on the tourist trail. It's astonishingly beautiful but the facilities are basic and African.

In **Embu** in Eastern Kenya we are slowly renovating a rescue centre for parents and their children and building up a strong medical link in the slums. We run camps and work with all sorts of local organisations to try and prevent the devastating effects of poverty. Embu is a beautiful market town surrounded by hills and forests. We camp in the grounds of a local Scout Centre which is also where we run the rehabilitation camps for the children. We also work with the community to promote a form of social welfare.

In **Nyeri** in Central Kenya we are running a programme of rehabilitation camps for children, who are living in the slums of this typically African market town on the slopes of Mount Kenya. Projects will include renovation of rescue centres, drop-in centres and clinics which exist to support a community that has no Government welfare. We take the children camping, give them a holiday and combine it with medical checks and social work.

In **Nairobi** we work in the biggest slum in Africa called Kibera where we have been building and renovating hospitals and schools for many years. The experience is very overwhelming but not in the way you expect. We are very well known in schools like Muthurwa where we run a feeding programme for 650 children, and you will help with that and run camps, renovate classrooms, build hospitals and take the kids on weekend camps to the Rift Valley.

In **Mombasa** we are starting a new orphanage called Jambo Jipya which currently has about 35 children staying there, and really needs our help. This is a new project coming up for 2007 and is in a hot part of the country close to the coast.

Arrival, Departure and Transportation

The team will generally depart from London Heathrow and arrive in Nairobi, the capital of Kenya. We use properly licensed vehicles all the time, and sometimes public transport which we know is safe and secure and properly driven. We also have our own vehicles with our own staff and mechanics. Sometimes we use the train service. No unsafe transport is used and at no time are people asked to board overloaded vehicles or unsafe vehicles. Kenya however is a country whose roads are not as good as in Europe so sometimes there are breakdowns, which we regard as all part of the experience.

Accommodation

Accommodation varies with the environment and expedition. Generally most of your time will be spent in tents. On the mountain you we use high quality mountain tents and at the camp or on safari you will sleep in larger walk-in safari tents. There are generally about 4 or 5 people living in the larger tents and 3 to each mountain tent. Showers are always available, although most likely will be cold and there is time for washing clothes. On the coast it is very warm and tropical and we pitch our tents close to the sea. We ask and expect people to look after their own belongings but we do have facilities for looking after some valuables. *We have an excellent lock-up in Nairobi and a very comprehensive office and overlanders site with hot showers, rooms, computer and restaurant.* Every team spends a night or two here at the beginning and end of the expedition.

Food

Food is always plentiful and varied but not always the same as at home. You will have the opportunity to feast on *Ethiopian delicacies, game meats, stews, roasted corn, sugar canes and fresh fruit. Lots of vegetables, potatoes, salads and good food is part of the success for a good expedition.* A Kikuyu or Maasai feast is unforgettable, as is a meal in the famous Carnivore restaurant. For the mountain you get to choose your own food from the supermarkets and we provide pots, stoves and fuel. Meat is quite a luxury to most Africans but it will be central to many of your meals. Vegetarians and people with special diet requests will be well catered for if food preferences are detailed on the booking form.

For example breakfast might be tea or coffee, boiled or fried eggs and bread with jam and butter; cornflakes or cereals with milk. Lunch might be a salad with rolls and a soup or maybe a stew with potatoes, fruit, juice, biscuits. Dinners might be: Chicken stew with rice and vegetables like beans or cabbage or sukuma (like kale); or maybe beef stew with boiled potatoes; or sausages with potatoes

and veg. We would have fruit for afters, maybe mangoes, watermelon or bananas. Then tea or coffee or hot chocolate. It's exactly what the Africans eat. We also offer stiff maize meal which is called Ugali, but a lot of Westerners find this quite tasteless and stodgy so we don't make it a major ingredient.

On the mountain you buy your meals and this is much the same as at home. The supermarkets in Nairobi sell pretty much the same as here so you can get pop tarts, favourite cereals, nice biscuits, cheese and Nutella! Anyone who has done the Duke of Edinburgh Award will find that what you buy and use on Mount Kenya for food is pretty much exactly the same as at home.

If you have any food preferences then that's also fine. As long as we know in advance then it's easy enough to prepare a vegetarian meal or make sure we have a particular favourite in stock for you, within reason! *Chocoholics need not bring their own stocks either, you can buy it all in Nairobi very easily.*

Equipment

A full briefing pack for this expedition will be provided when booking forms are returned. On this expedition you will experience all sorts of weather conditions from mild cloudy days in Nairobi to hot and sunny ones at the coast. On the mountain temperatures will drop to freezing and there is often some snowfall. Clothing needs to be versatile and fulfil a number of functions. Layering is the key to keeping warm. Adventure Alternative will provide all tents, cooking equipment, transport, food and bottled water. For anyone doing their Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award then you will not need to buy any extra items for Mount Kenya. Boots, a 3 season sleeping bag, waterproofs and fleeces for Mount Kenya are obviously important and everywhere else it's just old clothes, same as you would wear at home. Beach wear for the coast.

Vaccinations and Malaria

You should discuss vaccination procedure with your GP several months before departure. Recommended vaccinations include: tetanus, typhoid, polio, hepatitis A&B and malaria medication. A dental check is also recommended before departure.

Medical Routine on Expedition

Extra care needs to be taken with personal health while in Kenya. Always use clean water to brush teeth, washing hands regularly can seem like such a basic routine but it is often overlooked. The most common complaint on expedition is an upset stomach or feeling run down, which normally happens due to the change of diet and lifestyle. Extra care should also be taken with cuts. You should be careful to clean small wounds with clean water and plenty of antiseptic they should then be well covered.

During the trek on Mount Kenya the expedition guide will ensure that the ascent is slow and a rest day is always included for acclimatisation. These measures help reduce cases of altitude sickness. If you are ill your first point of call should be the expedition leader, if there is a serious illness or accident repatriation can be arranged and family members will be notified quickly.

Our success rate on Mount Kenya is almost 100% and we have never had a single rescue operation or problem on any of our expeditions in the last ten years. *We have a perfect safety track record. We believe entirely in safety, preparation and enjoyment.* We have a complete risk assessment and climbing plan for Mt Kenya which we can email to you if you wish, especially for Duke of Edinburgh Operating Boards.

Itineraries, Awards and websites

Itineraries on an expedition like this are subject to unforeseen events and delays although every effort will be made to ensure that the content of the itinerary is maintained. Expect the unexpected - if your expectations are of well-ordered office routine you may find Africa frustrating.

We work closely with you to ensure you take part in all aspects of the running of the trip while you are out there and to this end we expect initiative and teamwork from everyone. Unexpected events can throw up some interesting characteristics and we understand that any expedition worth its salt has to have the freedom to allow that to happen.

This expedition counts towards the Duke of Edinburgh Gold Residential and Expedition. You can also help out with the charity Moving Mountains as the Service part of the Gold, contact us for information about this. Adventure Alternative is an accredited Access Organisation for The Award so we can sign your books after the trip.

For information on past Africamp's visit www.adventurealternative.com or to chat with others go to africampost.com and log on.

For info on the charity Moving Mountains visit: www.movingmountains.org.uk

Money and Costs

Trip Dates 5th July or 17th July or 5th August (subject to confirmation, this may change by a day or two). Duration is one month in Kenya.

Trip Cost See the website for the latest cost – www.adventurealternative.com

Price Includes

All pre-expedition organisation and the whole programme, three meals a day, all internal travel, project costs, safari equipment, accommodation, national park fees, all activities and all the staff. We also supply drinking water, the group equipment and all the costs ! There is no point during the trip when we ask you for money. It is all-inclusive. Also this expedition actively promotes and supports Moving Mountains charity. The expedition is organised by Adventure Alternative but is operated through Africampers which is Kenyan registered and a sister company to Adventure Alternative. So we are all one and the same. We do not outsource!

Price Excludes

International air fares which normally cost around £600.00, the visa which you buy on arrival at the airport for £30.00, travel insurance which is about £50.00, vaccinations which can cost about £50.00 (or free if you ask nicely), malaria tablets which are about £25.00, and personal spending money which is normally about £150.00 for things like souvenirs, soda's, chocolate etc.

Flights

We will organise a group booking for all expeditioners to Nairobi - prices will depend on airline used and time of travel. Or you can book your own flight as long as it arrives at the same time as everyone else. We book the flight and pay your deposit, which we add to the expedition cost (it's normally about £60.00) but you pay the balance yourself to the airline agency. Then the leader for your expedition carries all the tickets to the airport to meet you and check everyone in.

Money & Booking

A non-refundable £250.00 or 350 Euro deposit is required with the application form that you fill in. All cheques are payable to Adventure Alternative Ltd. Instalments must then be made; we are flexible but the balance must be paid 8 weeks prior to departure. Bank transfers are accepted and *all monies are secured in a client account which we do not touch (that is the European Law for adventure tour companies)*, and all expeditioners receive a receipt for payments received. You can

now also make your deposit online at our website address. It's a secure credit card process but you pay some extra to the payment company, normally about 5%.

The application form is provided with a booking terms and conditions page and you should read it carefully! It's important and relevant. Fill in the application and medical form and send it to the office with your deposit made out to Adventure Alternative. You will then receive a team brief pack and receipt and confirmation of your place.

After making the booking

After sending the form and the deposit, we then send you a team brief pack and a receipt and an invoice for the total amount of the whole trip. Your next job will be to fundraise or collect the money for the rest of the costs. In sterling it is a total of:

Expedition fee + flight + £50.00 insurance + £35 visa + £50 vaccinations and malaria tablets + £150 spending money = roughly £2300.00 for everything.

This is a lot of money and it needs real planning. *Don't apply for this trip until you have really talked with your family or your school or friends about the commitment and time this will take.* It's not impossible by any means, many people do it, but it requires planning and lots of thought. We do not want people to be stressed by the fundraising side of it, especially if exams are part of the equation. We can offer advice of course but there is no getting out of the fact that it is a lot of work needed.

We always ask for the balance of the flights by April. This means writing a cheque for about £550 to buy your ticket. By May 5th we will also need you to have paid the balance of your trip. So it's best to work out a system of instalments. This depends on when you apply and how much time you have to raise the money.

Our address is:

**Adventure Alternative Expeditions,
31 Myrtledene Road,
Belfast,
N.Ireland BT8 6GQ.**

Our telephone contacts are Gavin or Andy MacDonald on 028 9070 1476 or Chris Little on 028 70831258. From Eire you can make the code 048 instead of 028 or dial 0044 2890701476.

Or email office@adventurealternative.com or check out the website: www.adventurealternative.com.