Kenya

Size: 581,309 km² (224,445 sq mi)
Capital City: Nairobi
Currency: Kenyan Shilling
Population: Approximately 45 million people
Official languages: Kiswahili, English
President: His Excellency Uhuru Kenyatta

About Kenya
Kenya straddles the equator on Africa’s eastern coast, extending west to Lake Victoria and East to the Indian Ocean. Kenya borders Tanzania, Uganda, South Sudan, Ethiopia, and Somalia.

Kenya is known for its highly diverse landscape and climate, which range from warm, tropical conditions around the Indian Ocean and Lake Victoria to semi-arid to arid savannahs and deserts hosting world-famous nature reserves; to snow-caps on Mount Kenya’s peaks. It is home to many world heritage sites, including the Cradle of Mankind within the Great Rift Valley. This geographical diversity is accompanied by an equally stunning array of biological diversity, peoples and cultures.

Kenya’s economy is the largest in East Africa. The country’s main exports are agricultural products, notably tea and coffee, fresh flowers and horticultural produce. It also has a mature and vibrant tourism industry.

Kenya offers some of the best and most accessible game viewing in the world, including the hard-to-resist attraction of the "Big Five" (lion, leopard, elephant, buffalo and rhino). These, together with many other animals that are unique to Africa, can be seen at the national parks and game reserves throughout Kenya. The wildebeest migration in Maasai Mara is one of the natural wonders of the world.

Kenya is famous for being home to the first African female Nobel Laureate, Wangari Maathai and is home to numerous world sporting champions.

Capital City - Nairobi
The name of Kenya’s capital city, ‘Nairobi,’ comes from the Maasai phrase Enkare Nairobi, which translates to ‘cool water’. It is famous for being the only major city on earth with a game reserve within the city limits. Nairobi also has a natural forest, Karura Forest, in close proximity to the central business district.

Nairobi is a cosmopolitan and multicultural city with an estimated population of about 3.5 million. The Jomo Kenyatta International Airport in Nairobi is a hub for travel to Africa, Europe and Asia, with numerous international companies and organisations represented in Nairobi. The city is a tech hub in Africa, and birthplace of the mobile money app, M-Pesa. Mobile phone penetration is nearly total in Nairobi.
Most parts of Nairobi are clean and well lit, and the city’s infamous potholes are being re-surfaced every day. A bold road network expansion and redirection is underway to ease Nairobi’s equally notorious traffic congestion, with many new highways and bypasses completed or under construction.

**People and culture**
Kenya is renowned for its diverse culture and heritage. Despite the numerous ethnic tribes that exist, Kenyans embrace a great sense of unity, peace, acceptance and closeness as one people and one country; all strong virtues of traditional African culture. The Kenyan people are warm, friendly and hospitable. The unique culture of some of the ethnic groups, especially the Maasai, is a great experience to be enjoyed.

**Climate**
Kenya enjoys a wonderful tropical climate. It is generally warm all year round, with plenty of sunshine and cooler nights and mornings. Visitors are able to enjoy most activities on the beaches and in the national parks all year round. Since Kenya lies on the equator, the seasonal temperature changes are not extreme. However, due to the differing topography, you will experience different weather patterns when traveling across Kenya.

Nairobi has a subtropical highland climate and at 1,795 meters (5,889 ft) above sea level, evenings may be cool, especially in the June/July season, when the temperature can drop to 9 °C (48 °F). The sunniest and warmest part of the year is from December to March, when temperatures average the mid-twenties during the day.

**Crime**
Security and safety in Kenya is a concern for both locals and foreigners, especially in the larger cities. In recent times the government has put in place measures to curb crime – including street lighting, security personnel, and community policing. Many people in Nairobi also make personal security arrangement for residences. With the usual precautions necessary in most large cities and rural areas, residents are living peaceful day-to-day lives in Kenya.

**Terrorism**
Kenya has not been spared the global scourge of terrorism and there is a heightened risk throughout Kenya. The Somalia based terrorist group Al Shabaab has carried out a number of past attacks in Kenya and continues to publicly threaten to carry out further attacks. People in Kenya are advised to be security conscious at all times and follow any instructions and restrictions issued by the local authorities. Particular care should be taken in crowded and public areas known to be frequented by expatriates and foreigners, as well as on and around public transport. Additional security measures such as avoiding areas with large crowds and visiting businesses during off-peak hours should be considered.

The government is putting in place security measures to counter the on-going threat, including securing the country’s borders, security checks and other controls. Besides airports, most public areas (supermarkets, hotels, offices, schools) have installed security screening points for patrons.
Health and Medical Facilities
Before traveling to Kenya you should consult a medical officer for the latest information on necessary vaccinations. Malaria is endemic in some parts of Kenya, and mosquito repellents and bed nets are recommended at night. Anti-malarial tablets may also be used when traveling to areas outside of Nairobi.

Nairobi is designated as a UN evacuation centre for surrounding countries, and the city has some top-class private hospitals and medical facilities offering a wide range of specialist treatment, including state-of-the-art scanning and MRI technology, dental and ophthalmic services.

Housing
Nairobi has a growing middle class that live in relatively good housing conditions and many new apartments and housing developments are being built in and around the city. Good houses can be found in many of the upmarket neighbourhoods such as Gigiri, Muthaiga, Runda, Langata and Karen. Other middle and high income estates include Parklands, Westlands, Hurlingham, Kilimani, Milimani, Spring Valley, Lavington, Rosslyn, Kitisuru, and Nairobi Hill.

Schooling
It is common for private schools in Nairobi to offer the Kenyan, British, American and IB Curriculum. A limited number of school offer other curriculums such as German, Swedish, and French. The international schools are generally very expensive and there is high demand for these schools which can result in limited availability of places.

Cost of Living
The cost of living in Nairobi is considered as moderate and ranks as a mid-range expense location against other cities in the world.