



The eternal race.

MASAI MARA | KENYA

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WILDLIFE FEATURE



A deep rumble vibrates across the savanna, and tensions rise as eight million hooves kick up a thick blanket of dust. As they make their way towards Kenya's Masai Mara, their crossing creates huge ripples that travel down the Mara River's usually still waters. Many die in the journey, but nothing can stop it. The Great Migration is coming.

Driven by panic and purpose, a legion of nearly two million strong in wildebeest charge through roughly 650 miles of Serengeti and Mara grassland. Mirroring the great circle of life, The Great Migration moves in a constant, circular clockwise motion. They chase the rains, moving between fresh grasslands, during which they'll court, mate and then give birth.

Each leg of their epic endeavor comes with inherent risk, and around a quarter of a million wildebeest will perish while traveling across the plains and rivers of the Serengeti and Masai Mara. For they have company on their journey in the way of the predators that stalk them, and the vultures that circle hungrily above them. But in the wild, there are silent killers too. The wildebeest, zebra, and antelope are all at the mercy of starvation, thirst and complete exhaustion.

Once thought to be fueled by instinct alone, new research suggests that there's a method to the madness of the Great Migrations. One of nature's greatest spectacles is all due to salt.

As the calcium, sodium, and potassium content rises in the grasslands that the animals feed in, they must leave to find healthier grazing grounds. Moving like a single, living, breathing organism, their movements are swift and thunderous, generating enough energy to leave any compass dial scrambling.

Following a legacy representing close to a century of safari experience, Cottar's 1920s Safari Camp is the perfect luxury base from which to witness the eternal race – when the herds travel into the Masai Mara from July to November. While the sight of thousands of wildebeest and zebra is breathtaking, the Great Migrations are also characterized by a high number of predator action. As the grass feeds the wildebeest, the wildebeest then become steaks for the Masai Mara's populations of leopard, lion, and cheetah.

Near the end of the year, the Great Migration once again crosses the Mara River, moving back into Tanzania. The herds will have come full circle, completing the greatest overland migration on the planet. But the dust never fully settles. Before long, the wind will turn, taking the rain somewhere else, and the first wildebeest and zebra will begin to stir.

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See the Great Migration from Cottar's 1920s Safari Camp



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Cottar's 1920s Safari Camp

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