

A photograph of three zebras standing in a lush green savanna. The zebras are in the foreground, with their heads and necks clearly visible. They have black and white stripes. The background is a soft-focus green field.

EXPERTS
IN TRAVEL
FOR OVER
80 YEARS

Fodor's

THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO
AFRICAN SAFARIS

WITH SOUTH AFRICA, KENYA, TANZANIA,
BOTSWANA, NAMIBIA, RWANDA,
UGANDA, AND VICTORIA FALLS

TOUR OPERATORS

Our list of tour operators hardly exhausts the number of reputable companies, but the following operators, sorted alphabetically, are well-established firms that offer a good selection of itineraries ranging from overland safaris to walking and fly-in safaris, under-canvas safaris, and safari lodges. They all offer fully customizable trips, too. (See *Planning Your Safari* for more about the various types of safaris.)

TOP 10 OUTFITTERS

Abercrombie & Kent. In business since 1962, this company is considered one of the best in the business and is consistently given high marks by former clients. From your first decision to go on safari to its successful conclusion, A&K offers seamless service. Their tailor-made safaris harken back to days past when intrepid adventurers such as Teddy Roosevelt and Ernest Hemingway relied on private guides to create a safari program and escort them through the bush from start to finish. The company has a professional network of local A&K offices in all its destination countries, staffed by full-time A&K experts, and maintains its own fleet of four-wheel-drive safari vehicles and trains its own drivers. The head office in the U.S. is in Illinois. **Destinations:** Botswana, Kenya, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe. **Popular packages:** Kenya & Tanzania, 12 days, from \$7,995. **Philanthropy:** Extensive projects benefit ecosystems and wildlife, communities and cultures, and health and education. Guests can meet local people making a difference in their communities. Many guests build their safari around several of these projects. **What they do best:** Destination knowledge—they have some of the most experienced guides on the continent. ✉ 1411 Opus Pl., Downers Grove ☎ 888/611-4711 🌐 www.abercrombiekent.com.

Access2Tanzania. After living in Tanzania for two years as a Peace Corps volunteer, owner Brian Singer set up Access2Tanzania in 2004 with his wife Karen and Tanzanian partner Michael Musa. Brian and Karen handle all pre-safari planning, and Michael takes care of ground logistics. They are one of few companies in Tanzania that do not subcontract their guides; each one is a full-time employee and they all consistently receive rave reviews. They own and maintain their own air-conditioned vehicles, which have unlimited mileage and pop-up roofs to allow 360-degree views. A new operation in Rwanda run by the company under the same principles is called Treks2Rwanda. **Destinations:** Rwanda, Tanzania. **Popular packages:** Adventures through Northern Tanzania, 7 nights, from \$3,165; Rwanda Gorilla Trekking, 3 nights, from \$2,515. **Philanthropy:** The owners run a nonprofit, Project Zawadi, which supports the educational needs of orphans and other vulnerable Tanzanian children. Hundreds of children are put through school each year, and it has also built several classrooms, teacher's accommodations, and a vocational training center. **What they do best:** Itineraries are custom-made

and private only; the team works hard to ensure that the individual needs of each client are met. They have offices in both Tanzania and the United States, meaning service is superb before, during, and after the safari. ✉ 253 Duke St., St. Paul 🌐 718/715-1353 🌐 www.access2tanzania.com.

African Portfolio. African Portfolio's team members visit each in-country operator annually and are on a first-name basis with the managers of the properties they use. They pride themselves on discovering the best places, whether they're hidden gems, up-and-coming properties, or well-established classics. With each client, they're committed to providing a safari reminiscent of what captivates them about Africa. Their mission is to provide unique and memorable experiences through nature-based travel that educate, entertain, inspire, and provide participants with opportunities to directly contribute to conservation. **Destinations:** Botswana, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Seychelles, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe. **Popular packages:** Chobe, Victoria Falls and Hwange, 9 days, from \$5,500; Great Rift Valley Safari, Tanzania, 12 days, from \$9,000. **Philanthropy:** African Portfolio was started in Zimbabwe and their philanthropic efforts are directed there; this includes support for education, orphanages, and a wildlife sanctuary. **What they do best:** Creating tailor-made safaris incorporating unique, genuine, and "off the beaten path" experiences. ✉ 146 Sound Beach Ave., Greenwich 📞 800/700-3677 🌐 www.onsafari.com.

Deeper Africa. This small, hands-on company, based in Colorado, has built its reputation on three things: excellent service, quality guides, and amazing wildlife viewing. Owners Wil Smith and Karen Zulauf have spent nearly two decades developing unique contacts that enable privileged access for their guests. Their knowledge of wildlife migration and movement patterns means that Deeper Africa travelers are in the right places, at the right time. They highly recommend having one of their guides join guests for their entire safari, allowing for discovery of the people, culture, and politics of Africa beyond wildlife basics. **Destinations:** Botswana, the Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, Namibia, Tanzania, Uganda, Zimbabwe. **Popular packages:** Kenya and Tanzania: Safaris in Style, 13 days, from \$11,749. **Philanthropy:** Deeper Africa supports conservation and community programs and creates opportunities for travelers to do the same both personally and monetarily. **What they do best:** Great wildlife viewing delivered by expert guides and authentic cultural experiences that give unique insights into African culture. ✉ 5353 Manhattan Circle, Suite 202, Boulder 📞 303/415-2574 🌐 www.deeperafrica.com.

Gamewatchers Safaris. This Nairobi-based company specializes in delivering luxury tailor-made safaris to small camps and lodges in the top game-viewing areas of East Africa. Every traveler is guaranteed a personal, authentic safari and

