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VOYAGE TO
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TRAVEL+ LEISURE

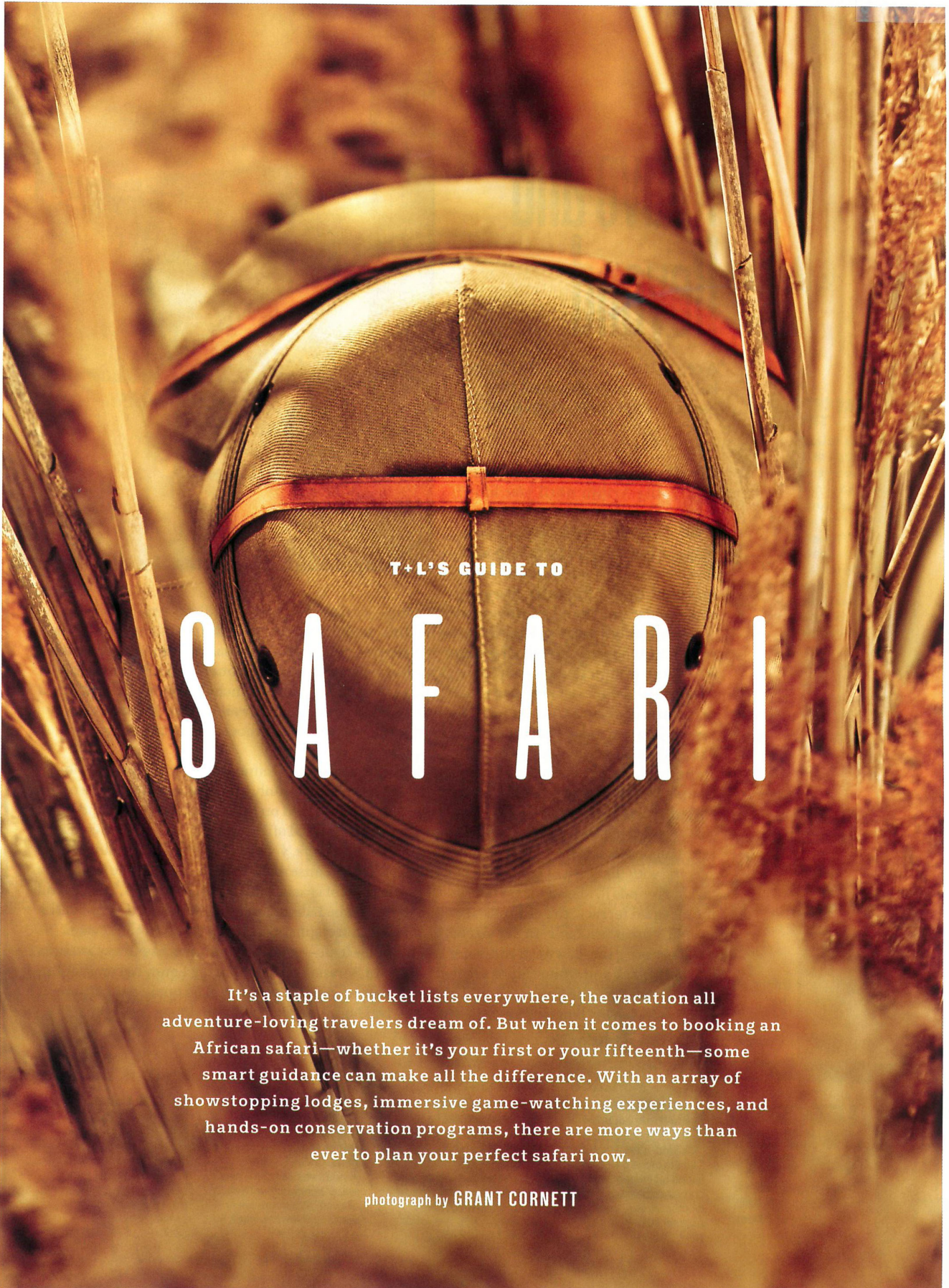
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PLUS
WHERE
and how
TO SAFARI
NOW



T+L'S GUIDE TO

SAFARI

It's a staple of bucket lists everywhere, the vacation all adventure-loving travelers dream of. But when it comes to booking an African safari—whether it's your first or your fifteenth—some smart guidance can make all the difference. With an array of showstopping lodges, immersive game-watching experiences, and hands-on conservation programs, there are more ways than ever to plan your perfect safari now.

photograph by GRANT CORNETT

Making an Impact

The new safaris are less about luxury, and more about getting involved. **BY JANE BROUGHTON**

is driven by experience, rather than by creature comforts. "It has become about what you did, the people you met who are making a difference," Lorentz said, noting many guests want privileged access to one-off conservation missions, such as witnessing African Parks' translocation of elephants in Malawi (passagetoafrica.com; six days from \$7,500).

Even first-timers booking safaris to iconic parks in Kenya, Tanzania, Botswana, and Zimbabwe are demanding a more meaningful experience, according to Karen Zulauf of safari outfitter **Deeper Africa**. A typical Deeper Africa trip to Zimbabwe, for example, would be led by some of the country's most prominent conservationists, such as Mark Brightman of the Bumi Hills Anti-Poaching Unit, and include an afternoon with the Shangaan people, former hunter-gatherers now at the forefront of community conservation in Gonarezhou National Park (deeperafrica.com; 13 days from \$11,499). As Zulauf put it, "Connecting our guests with the right people and projects reframes the way they view Africa, and the way they present it to others."

For a long time, going on safari basically meant one thing: observing wildlife from the inside of a jeep. These days, however, discerning travelers want to go deeper. Instead of being told about the animals, and efforts to conserve them, they want to participate—whether spending the day with an anti-poaching unit or taking part in a rhino-relocation mission.

According to Michael Lorentz, of safari specialist **Passage to Africa**, the itinerary of the future



EXPERT TIP

Nature is a powerful antidote to stress. Do all that you can to leave your electronics behind. Turn off your cell phone and don't tap into e-mail. You will be amazed at how different you feel after just a day.

—Dana Welch of travel agency the Travel Society (travelsociety.com)



BEYOND THE JEEP

Get out of the tour vehicle and closer to the action.

Canoe down Botswana's Selinda Spillway for a surround-sound encounter with the 600 bird species that live on this ancient waterway. greatplainsconservation.com; five days from \$3,500.

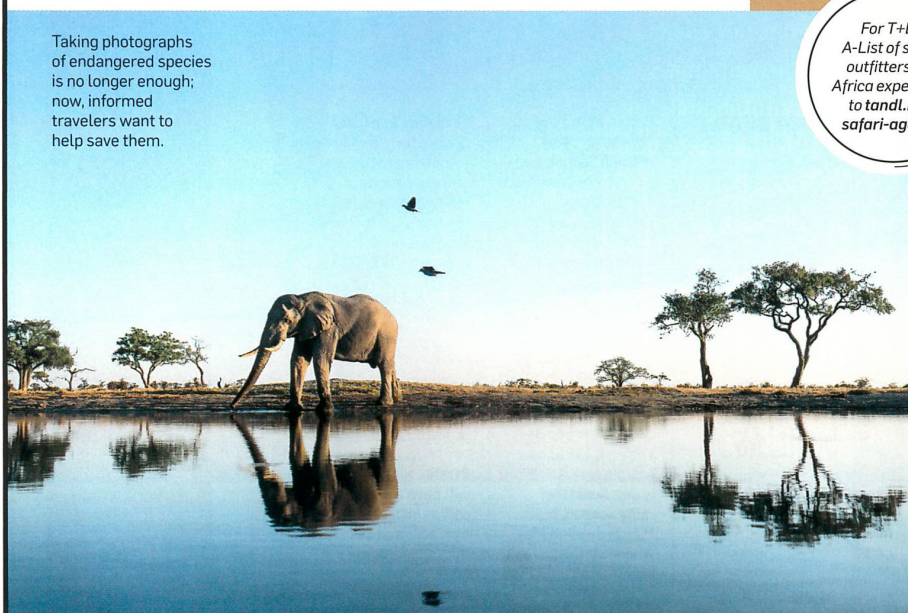
Walk with Masai guides through Tanzania's Crater Highlands and Lake Manyara National Park, learning about the community's way of life as you go. deeperafrica.com; 13 days from \$11,749.

Ride on horseback through Kenya's Masai Mara during the annual wildebeest and zebra migration, a wildlife experience matched by few others. Experienced riders can also trot around the periphery of the migration, where a high concentration of resident predators gathers. greatplainsconservation.com; four days from \$2,220.

Camp in comfort on a mobile safari in Tanzania's Ruaha National Park that includes an immersive game-tracking expedition on foot with expert local guides. kichakaexpeditions.com; four days from \$2,397. — J.B.

Taking photographs of endangered species is no longer enough; now, informed travelers want to help save them.

For T+L's A-List of safari outfitters and Africa experts, go to tandl.me/safari-agents.



PAUL SOUDERS/GETTY IMAGES; ILLUSTRATION BY OWEN DAVEY - FOLIO.