



Maasai Tribal Immersion



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📍 Tanzania - Arusha

Learn about the proud Maasai people! Immerse yourself in their traditional customs, daily routines and enjoy every second of this unforgettable experience!

This homestay provides insight into the culture of this amazing African tribe. Today the Maasai are famed for their traditional clothes, fantastic storytelling, herding methods, and nomadic lifestyle. Although authorities have encouraged the Maasai to abandon their way of life, these proud people have held fast to their age-old customs.



Program Description

To learn about the Maasai culture is one thing... but why not be a part of it! This is your chance to learn from the experience of being and doing. You can see the Maasai way of life up close and participate in the many activities that are typical of their daily life.

During this Maasai Village Homestay, you will be welcomed to stay within their village, learn about their culture, and participate in their daily tasks. Tasks are always divided, with men usually taking care of and/or selling the tribe's cattle, while women will take part in milking, cooking, finding firewood and taking care of babies and even constructing the houses in the boma. You will find that there will be plenty of opportunities to explore Maasai culture more, in the way of interaction, and communication, as well as, exchanges of ideas and experiences. You will even have a chance to learn beadwork with the women in the village or how to make Maasai sandals from the men or to teach the village children some basic English and/or teach/play sports with them.

The Maasai are a proud people, who do their best to preserve their unique culture, and yes, different tribes in Africa can have very distinct characteristics and customs! They are quite possibly one of the most emblematic tribes of East Africa. With a Nilotic ethnic background, they live in the northern Tanzanian and southern Kenya regions. The Maasai are known for their nomadic lifestyle (although, since the '90s, the Tanzanian government passed a bill in which they were forced to settle in a single place), their colorful dress code, their beaded jewelry, and awe-inspiring traditions.

The Maasai people have a very traditional way of living, with most relatives all living in the same family compound, which is traditionally known as a *boma*. They were nomadic people, as traditionally Maasai would move with their cattle from one grazing place to another. Today, these animals are still how they earn their income. Through the sale of their cattle and cattle products, they would make just enough money to survive and move on. Interestingly, the NGO, Oxfam, claims that the lifestyle of the Maasai should be embraced as a response to climate change because of their ability to farm in deserts and scrublands.

Maasai culture can seem very different to Westerners. For example, men can be married to several women depending on how rich the man is, this status usually dependent on how many cattle he owns! There are actually financial reasons for a Maasai family to have many wives, as a larger family allows more hands to take care of their cattle, cows, goats, sheep, and donkeys.

Due to the remote location of this program and limited local transportation, Participants may need to stay the first night in Monduli and travel the next morning to the village. Additionally, placement is in a Maasai village in Arusha, but to increase immersion you may get spread across various villages.

Program Duration & Availability

Min duration (weeks): 1

Aims & Objectives

- Provides you with the unique experience of living as one of the Maasai tribespeople
- Share your experiences and ideas with the local community
- Gain valuable insight into the culture, traditions, and landscape of Tanzania

Schedule

Monday

We will start the day with an introduction to the village, as well as Maasai culture. In the morning, you will be taught useful phrases in Maasai language, that you will be able to use throughout the week. Moreover, you will get to learn about the lifestyle of the Maasai people through an introduction to their cultural rules, the dos and don'ts, etc.

After lunch, we will take a trek through the wilderness that surrounds the village. During this hike, you will be able to see Tanzania's nature at its best. Visit a local caldera and enjoy the view.

Tuesday

The Maasai are a tribe well known for their herding traditions. Today, it will be all about grazing the livestock! You will join a Maasai warrior on his grazing activities through the bush - be prepared for several hours of walking!

During the dry season (June to October), this activity involves even more work: the nearest river to the village gets completely dried up, so the villagers are forced to walk further or dig holes in order to get to the water that is underground so their livestock can drink - don't be surprised if you are invited to participate!

Wednesday

In the morning hours, we will join the women of a boma in their traditional activities, you can expect to participate in activities such as milking cows, walking to the river with donkeys to fetch water, etc.

After lunch, we will join an exciting workshop in which you will be taught how to make gorgeous beaded Maasai jewelry - the kind that has made the Maasai such an emblematic and colorful tribe.

We will end the day with a cooking class lead by one of our hosts. This will be your dinner, so pay close attention!

Thursday

Today is another day of grazing the livestock! Grazing days are filled with adventure as they involve long walks through the African bush.

Friday

We will take a hike through the African wilderness once again! After a few hours of adventurous roaming, we will enjoy a picnic with a view of the valley.

In the evening, we will set up a bonfire where you will get the chance to hear legendary tales about the Maasai and other stories from the village.

Please keep in mind that in the village things are done on an as-needed basis. This is just an example of what your week might look like during your homestay, but activities may change depending on weather, community needs, ceremonies or other circumstances. Your flexibility and ability to adapt to changes in your new surroundings well will be of great benefit during this amazing experience.

This schedule can be changed and/or amended depending on weather conditions, local conditions and unforeseen circumstances.

Starting Dates

During 2019

This program starts every week.

During 2020

This program starts every week.

Participant Criteria & Requirements

Minimum age:	-
Maximum age:	-
Minimum English level:	Basic
CRB required:	On Signup
Passport copy required:	No
Resume copy required:	No
Required qualification:	None

Additional Requirements

There are no further requirements for this program.

Additional Equipment

- Modest clothing i.e. covering the knees and shoulders
- There is little or no electricity so flashlight, batteries and sleeping bag may be needed
- Sturdy shoes for the long walks you will take part in
- The village sometimes gets cold in the evening, so make sure to pack warm clothes