



**nomad**

LIFE ENHANCED

# Mahale

## YOUR GUIDE TO THE SEASONS

MONTH	RAIN FALL	HI TEMP	WILDLIFE & PARK INFO
JAN	240mm	27°C (80.6°F)	Rain is likely but the sun almost always makes an appearance and the forest is at its resplendent best, full of butterflies and wild flowers. It's a photographer's dream, as the haze which is often prevalent during other times of the year, is gone, leaving the air clear and bright. Large groups of chimps begin to disperse into smaller clusters of tighter family members and close comrades as the community spreads out to ensure ample food for all. This is an interesting time for chimp researchers and animal lovers who enjoy seeing the dynamics of chimp politics, because dispersal shows the strength of relationships and is a key time during power struggles as food resources are vied for.
FEB	220mm	27°C (80.6°F)	A lovely time to be in Mahale, although chimping can be more challenging. February can be especially hard to locate the chimps as they follow their primary food source into the higher reaches and thicker parts of the forest so be prepared for more challenging trekking. As in January, small clusters of close-knit chimps forage together. Rains continue to shower the forest occasionally, and with luck, a storm far out over Lake Tanganyika is a spectacle not to be missed...get the tripod, open the shutter and wait for lightning.
MAR	380mm	27°C (80.6°F)	<b>Camp closes mid March.</b> Redtailed monkeys and trumpeter hornbills watch over the camp from the forest edge. The chimpanzees are still found higher up the slopes to take advantage of more fruit in the upper slopes of the forest. They tend to come together in larger groups more often. There can be heavy rain.
APR	290mm	27°C (80.6°F)	<b>Camp is closed</b> for annual refurbishment and rainy season.
MAY	200mm	28°C (82.4°F)	<b>Greystoke re-opens near the end of this month.</b> The forest is dense and Tarzanesque, the perfect picture of rainforest habitat, teeming with wildlife and birds. Guests should expect a challenging trek deep into the forests and up the slopes of the Mahale Mountains to join the chimps as they feast on ripe fruits. As May comes to an end, so do the rains.
JUN	70mm	28°C (82.4°F)	Dry season begins, warm days invite afternoon swims in Lake Tanganyika off the boat in deeper water. Mornings are generally devoted to finding chimps. Chimpanzees can often be found in big groups but are still mostly quite high in the forest taking advantage of an abundance of fruit in the upper slopes so trekking to see them is a challenge. From time to time they descend into impenetrable valleys in the upper reaches of the forest making access difficult. There can be sporadic rain showers, but it's generally dry underfoot.

MONTH	RAIN FALL	HI TEMP	WILDLIFE & PARK INFO
JUL	0mm	29°C (84.2°F)	Generally in July it doesn't rain, but similar to June, chimps are still enjoying the fruit-rich slopes and can be found congregating in large groups. Mornings spent exploring this magnificent forest, following the hooting calls of chimps are rewarding and the chimps are starting to descend from the highest reaches of the mountains making trekking slightly less challenging than in June. Following a fresh lunch spread back at the lodge, afternoons are generally spent out on the lake on the dhow, swimming in the deep water, kayaking, or further forays into the forest to enjoy Mahale's myriad other creatures.
AUG	10mm	29°C (84.2°F)	Still dry and now very warm, the lake is constantly appreciated for its cooling swims in the deeper water and breezes off the water. While chimp trekking is beginning to take up less of the day with the chimps generally being closer to the lower slopes near camp. Chimps follow the fruiting patterns in the forest, and the lower slopes are beginning to produce ripe fruit. Chimps can be heard hooting and screeching in the forest behind the camp.
SEP	40mm	29°C (84.2°F)	As in August, chimps are not as high in the mountains anymore, reducing the tracking time and the challenge of the trek. The dry forest provides lovely but challenging photographic light, interspersing light and shady patches. Afternoons are hot, but the lake is the remedy. Guests head out to the deeper sections on the dhow, a cool box of drinks, and drift along the lake as the sun sets.
OCT	170mm	29°C (84.2°F)	Fluffy clouds roll in and the odd shower is to be expected, but the beach and the forest remain very warm and the sun always manages to make an appearance. Chimps are still low on the slopes, often in the vicinity of camp. The beach life remains ideal, while the immediate proximity to the forest maintains the Robinson Crusoe feel that gives Greystoke its alluring charm. Not restricted to October, but worth mentioning, the odd leopard track is seen crossing the beach, as are warthogs, bushbucks and yellow baboons to name a few.
NOV	330mm	27°C (80.6°F)	The chimps are still on the lower slopes, which is always good news for a less challenging trek to see them. The rain forest begins once again to live up to its name this month, but our guides and trackers have ponchos, which are large enough to cover small packs and camera bags, to keep guests and equipment dry if caught by a shower in the forest. As usual in the tropics, while rainy days do occur, the sun rarely fails to show its face for much of the day. With scattered clouds on the horizon, sunsets (and sunrises for the early birds) are more vivid than ever, setting the perfect scene over the immense Lake Tanganyika.
DEC	222mm	28°C (82.4°F)	Holiday season on the beach, mere steps from the forest, is a welcome respite from the cold for most visitors to Africa. Days are warm and sunny with dramatic short lived storms. Chimp tracking is similar to previous months, though never easy, not too much climbing is expected. Despite the extreme remoteness so sought after by our guests, you'll be surprised to find a good number of the requisite Christmas delights on the table. Chimpanzees in the morning (in the camera lens, not on the plate), and Turkey on the table in the evening.