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LIFE ENHANCED

Serengeti

YOUR GUIDE TO THE SEASONS

MONTH	RAIN FALL	HI TEMP	WILDLIFE & PARK INFO
JAN	90mm	28°C (82.4°F)	The advent of the short rains means that the Southern Plains are green now, so huge herds of migrant wildebeest, zebra and gazelles can usually be found. Game viewing is usually excellent in the Ndutu area, with good cheetah sightings. Predators are targeting the young gazelles being born. In some other parts of the park, the availability of plenty of fresh green grass and water means that the game is well dispersed.
FEB	90mm	28°C (82.4°F)	Rain is sporadic, so the herds congregate in areas with the lush grass. This is when the wildebeest calving season starts, a real bonanza for predators. In the woodland, giraffe, elephant and buffalo are generally easy to locate. In drier years, the great herds pull back into the woodland to the west in search of grass and water. In some years, a pack of Wild Dog might roam the far south.
MAR	130mm	28°C (82.4°F)	The wildebeest calving season is in full swing now, providing good chances of witnessing a birth. It is often quite dry at this time and the herds might split into smaller units scattered around the southern plains in search of the best conditions. In late March, the Long Rains start; this is when the Migration is at its most impressive, with vast numbers spread across the plain. In other parts of the ecosystem, access can become difficult due to muddy conditions.
APR	138mm	27°C (80.6°F)	The long rains are here, which means there are regular downpours. This is one of the best times to explore the eastern part of the ecosystem – Gol Mountains etc. The scenery is spectacular and the vast numbers of animals add to the drama. In some years a pack of Wild Dogs might be seen, making forays onto the plain to hunt the plentiful baby wildebeest.
MAY	67mm	26°C (78.8°F)	The rains continue into early May, so the migration is still to be found on the Southern Plains. Later on in May, they start moving north and west, searching for sweet grass and water around Moru and then Seronera. Traditionally viewed as the 'off' season, May is a great month to explore, especially the drier eastern and southern areas. Abundant plains game makes for great predator viewing too. Most camps in the west and north are closed at this time but it is one of favourite times to be in the Serengeti, with far fewer people than normal on the plains.
JUN	31mm	26°C (78.8°F)	With the ecosystem continuing to dry out, the herds continue westwards, towards the Grumeti River in the Western Corridor. The riverine forest here harbours plentiful buffalo and elephant, while there are many hippo and huge crocs in the river; these latter are hungry after a long fast, leading to explosive action when the herds come down to drink. In the north too, things are drying fast, but long grass can make game viewing difficult. The south is dry and dusty.

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JUL	13mm	26°C (78.8°F)	All those hungry mouths rapidly deplete the grass and in the Western Corridor and pretty soon they start to move on. The migration can be spread over a huge distance, with the first zebra herds arriving in the north Serengeti in early July, with big herds of wildebeest following later in the month. The north is still fairly green, especially on the western side, but elsewhere it is dry and dusty. In central Serengeti (Seronera, Moru) and the west, viewing is still excellent, with good cat action around water sources and plenty of plains game even though the migration has moved on.
AUG	28mm	27°C (80.6°F)	The dry season is well under way. The migration now moves into the north in a big way, with many moving into the Maasai Mara – but there are still plenty left in Serengeti. The dry conditions mean that they congregate near water, especially the Mara river, where the hungry crocs are waiting. There is a good chance of crossings now. The grass has been trampled and nibbled right down and overall game viewing is excellent.
SEP	34mm	28°C (82.4°F)	As August – the dry conditions are deepening and the search for enough food and water is continuous. The herds criss cross over the Mara river continuously and game viewing in the entire Serengeti ecosystem is brilliant.
OCT	44mm	27°C (80.6°F)	The height of the dry season. Late in the month, there is the chance of some showers, bringing green grass and the promise of rebirth. The wildebeest can begin their journey south towards the end of the month but most of the herds remain in the north until mid-later November.
NOV	111mm	28°C (82.4°F)	In a dry year, conditions in the north are very severe now, but normally the Short Rains start: dramatic thunder clouds herald the onset and the herds start heading south in search of fresh pasture. Wherever rain happens, the change is dramatic, with thousands of animals arriving almost overnight after a good storm. Grass is still short in the center, north and west of the park and the viewing remains good.
DEC	103mm	29°C (84.2°F)	By now, the short rains should be well in progress; the herds move progressively south and east, following the rain. Their ultimate destination: the Short Grass Plains, which provide ideal sustenance for all the pregnant cows in the horde of animals.