

# LUNCH in the AFRICAN BUSH

— LARRY'S SHORT STORIES #37 —

In the larger hunting concessions of Tanzania, it's pretty common to be 50 miles or more from base camp at lunchtime. The plan for the afternoon might be to continue on a particular dirt track or be someplace special near sunset. In these large areas, it's almost never convenient to go back to camp at mid-day, so we have lunch in the bush.

Each morning, before our safari car leaves camp, a large wooden lunch box is loaded into the back. It's stocked with cooking equipment, utensils and enough fresh and canned food to provide lunch -- and an evening meal, should we break-down and get stuck out overnight. Also, there's a portable table and collapsible chairs -- just about everything for a nice relaxing meal.

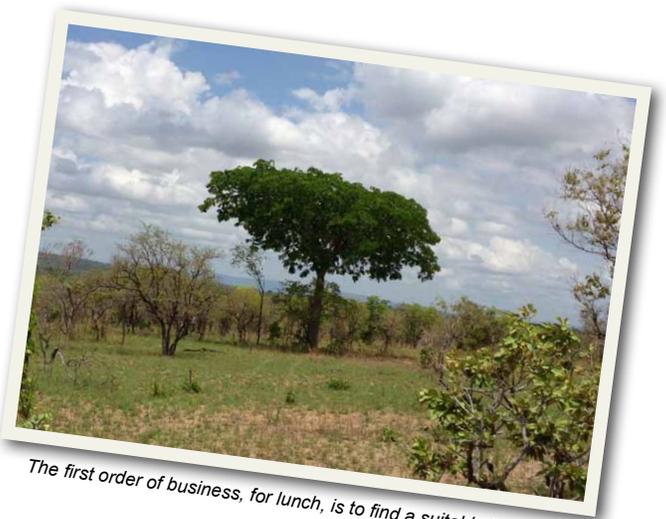


*This was an early December safari, and it was so hot that we took off our shirts to cool down at lunchtime. PH Nicolas Dubich on the left.*

The lunch box is divided in half, with one side insulated and holding some meat, salad, freshly-cooked potatoes, rice and pasta. Then of course there's freshly-baked and toasted bread, onions, garlic, tomatoes, perhaps an avocado and some fresh fruit. We never want for anything; there's even a bottle of wine.

Lunchtime is never a scheduled event; it just happens, based on the circumstances of that day's hunt. If there's nothing going on, we normally stop between 11:30 and 12:30; but if we're on a buffalo or elephant track, there's no lunch break. Lunch at 2, 3 or 4 in the afternoon is just as common as mid-day.

The first order of business is to find a good lunch tree. The professional hunters and trackers have favorites of course, since they're familiar with the hunting area; but if we aren't close to a favorite tree they just start looking. It must be



*The first order of business, for lunch, is to find a suitable 'lunch tree'.*

large, with lots of dense green leaves, to block the sun. The safari car pulls under the tree and the lunch process begins.

The table (complete with tablecloth) and chairs are set up and a small cooking fire is built. The PH serves as the chef, preparing everything, but typically delegating the cooking to our driver.

It's all so very good that I have to be careful how much I eat; yes, it's quite possible

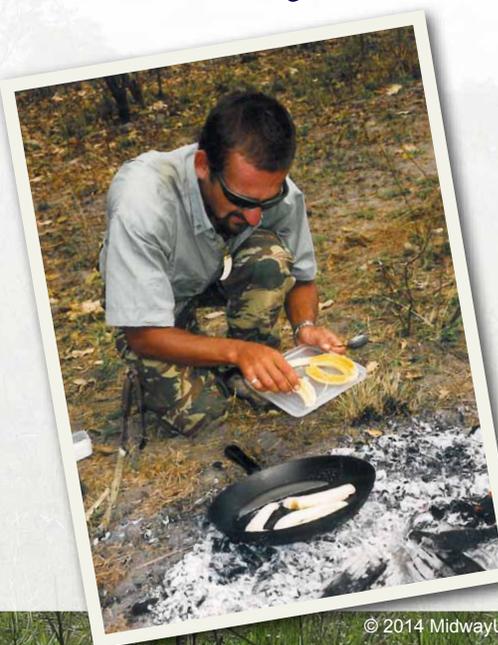
**"...just about everything for a nice relaxing meal."**

to gain weight on safari. If lunch is at mid-day, there's usually time for a nap or some reading before we head out about 3:30 or so and hunt back toward camp. Lunch in the African bush is a very special time!

**Midway** USA

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Kibaoni Camp  
The Selous Game Reserve  
Tanzania, Africa  
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*A younger Nicolas frying bananas (with sugar), one of my favorite deserts.*