

The NEARLY-PERFECT Safari Camp

— LARRY'S SHORT STORIES #141 —

Most of our African safaris have been the 21 day variety, in the Selous Game Reserve of Tanzania. This has historically been one of the best places to hunt lion, leopard, buffalo and elephant on the same safari, as they all freely roam through this vast area. Of course there are many species of plains game there also, as the big cats have to eat.

Yes, the hunting is great, but one of our most pleasant memories has always been the tented safari camps, located far from civilization - in the middle of game country. After a long international flight, the first day of safari begins with a plane ride to the bush – landing on a grass strip. Then, it's a short drive on a dirt road, to camp; which is where the safari actually begins – home for the next 21 days.

From the guest's perspective, there are just two parts to a camp – the tents and the lounge/dining area; but there's also a lot of unseen infrastructure.

Behind the

scenes are the kitchen, the storehouse, the skinning shed and of course the place where the trackers, game scouts and camp staff stay – all located conveniently out of sight from the camp access roads.

The tents are spacious (three bays), with gun racks and chairs in the front bay, beds in the center and clothing racks and a laundry hamper in the back. Out the back tent flap is the attached, enclosed, but not covered bathroom annex — with a shower, wash basin and flush toilet. Now



This picture of me in the lounge and dining area was taken on one of those rare days when we were back in camp for lunch.

the definition of running water in these camps is: the 'water boy' running to get it. He keeps a tank filled near the toilet and brings fresh water to the wash basin morning and evening, and a hot shower (gravity fed canvas bag) on request.

The lounge and dining area serves as camp headquarters.

Arriving in camp after dark, there's generally a fire in the fire pit, where one might enjoy

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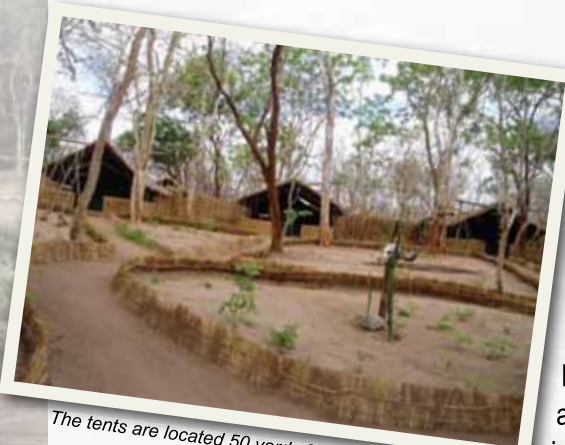
a cold drink before showering and changing for dinner.

The evening is a long, pleasant experience, with multiple courses of dinner and lots of telling the stories of the day. We've always been in two safari cars, so after being apart all day, there's lots to catch up on. A nearly-perfect safari camp isn't a 5-star motel, but it can and should be a very memorable part of any safari.



Larry Potterfield

Kibaoni Camp
The Selous Game Reserve
Tanzania, Africa
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The tents are located 50 yards from the lounge/dining area and connected by grass-lined trails.



The dining table has been moved out onto the patio. It was rare for us to be back in the camp by sunset; so this is a very special picture.