

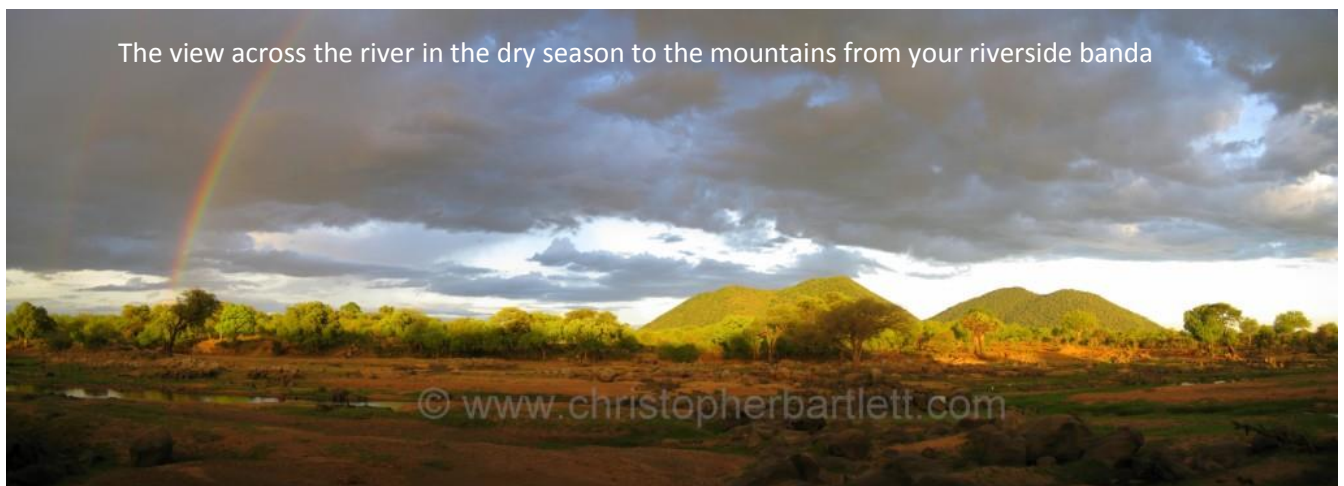


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Ruaha River Lodge

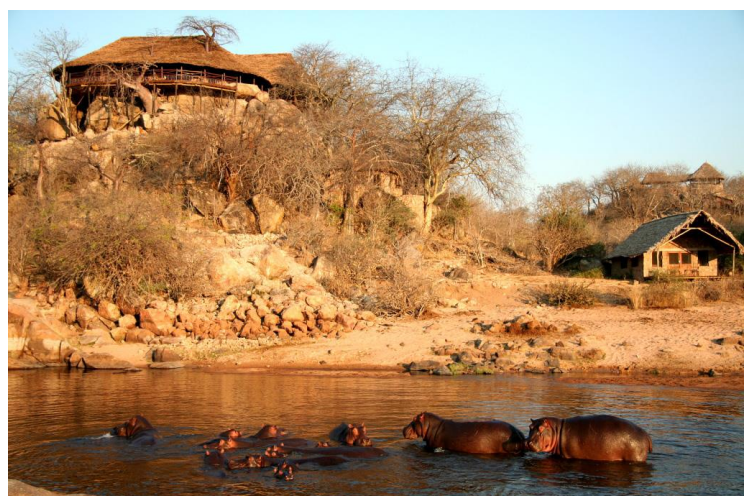
Ruaha River Lodge is situated in the vast Ruaha National Park a fantastic location right on the river and is the oldest lodge in Ruaha National Park. Unpretentious and relaxed, it is owned and run by the Fox family, and is well suited for those on a mid-range budget. Although the lodge is relatively large (there are 28 individual rooms in cottages or 'bandas'), they are judiciously spaced out on a bend in the river so the neighbours are barely visible, and guests are divided between two different dining and lounge areas when it is full, so the atmosphere is more personal than you might expect, and the service generally friendly. Game viewing in Ruaha National Park is extensive and impressive without the crowds of other parks - Ruaha can feel like your very own African wilderness.



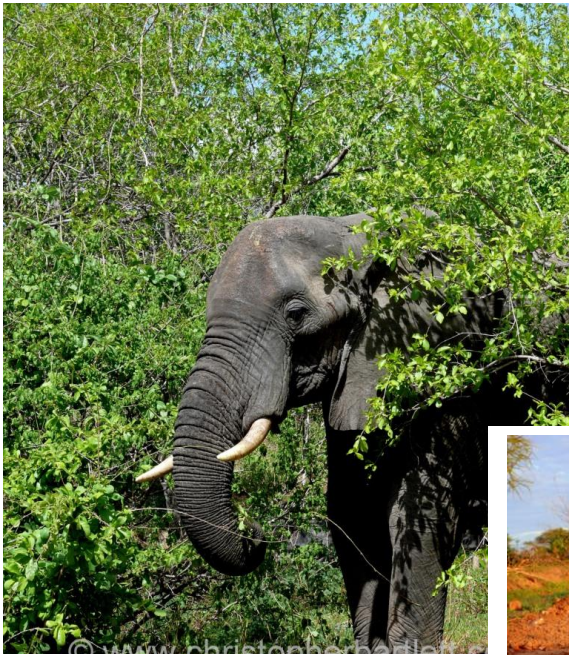
The view across the river in the dry season to the mountains from your riverside banda



Game –viewing from a banda



Hippos bathing in front of upper dining area and banda



Elephant close to the lodge



A pride of Ruaha lions relax by the riverbed



Hippo prints at the lodge



Elephants bathing in the river at the lodge



Game drive to a pride of lions at a kill

Game & Activities: you'll find all of the usual big game species in Ruaha, including elephant, large herds of buffalo, giraffe, wildebeest, zebra, lion, leopard, particularly good cheetah and even wild dog. Ruaha also has a few species associated with the parks further north, including Grant's gazelle and lesser kudu; it's an excellent park for wildlife and is great for birdwatchers. Activities available include game drives and viewing game from your banda-balcony.



Accommodation: Sandy, stone-lined pathways lead to the 28 detached bandas, built of solid stone along the river. Each is incredibly spacious and very comfortable, with a large veranda equipped with a couple of directors' chairs – a

peaceful place to watch animals coming down to the river to drink. Cool stone floors and walls help to keep the room at an even temperature, further helped by gauze over the windows to allow a through breeze. Like the rooms, the en-suite bathrooms are also very large, with a flush toilet, twin ceramic washbasins and shower. One of the two main lounge and dining areas at Ruaha River Lodge is under a large thatched roof, with open sides, reed walls at the back and views across the river. In the dry season, this is a great place to watch out for animals coming down to drink. The design is simple, open, airy and very comfortable. A second lounge/dining area, similar in style, is an impressive structure built on top of a high kopje, with spectacular views across the river and the park. Food is generally very good and plentiful with a three-course supper and service is friendly. Children are welcome although they must be carefully supervised at all times as wild animals walk through the lodge at any time of day or night.

Location / Getting There: Ruaha River Lodge is a nine-hour drive from Dar es Salaam, or a two-and-a-half-hour flight followed by a half-hour drive from the airstrip. The drive can be broken up half way with a stop at Mikumi National Park. Scheduled flights also link Ruaha to the excellent Selous Game Reserve and Zanzibar.



Banda interiors; a view of a banda balcony; one of the lounges

