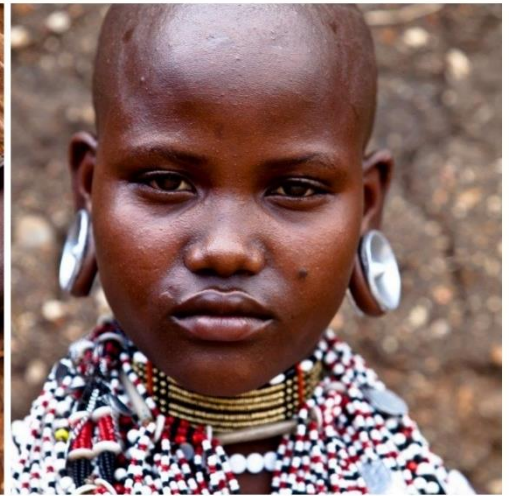


# MWIBA LODGE: CULTURAL INTERACTION

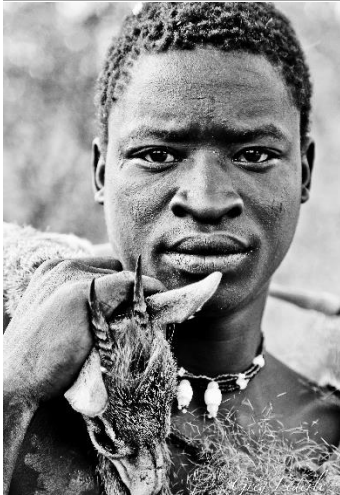
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## CULTURAL INTERACTION AT MWIBA LODGE

A visit to Mwiba Lodge affords guests the unique opportunity to spend time with four different tribes as they go about their daily lives. The Mwiba Lodge Conservation and Community Management Team have been serving these communities for years and often the staff for the lodge is recruited from the local tribes. These people welcome guests in to understand their daily lives, creating an honest and humbling experience that is often eye-opening for guests.

### HADZABE TRIBE – Africa’s ancient hunter-gatherers



#### THE HADZA:

One of the last hunter-gatherer tribes in Tanzania, the Hadza number under 1000. They live a life almost free of possessions and are able to move by carrying what they have on their backs. They do not grow or store food and raise no livestock. This tribe requires no chiefs or leaders and disputes are settled simply by one party moving away. The Hadza have a mutualistic relationship with the honey-guide bird whereby the bird leads them to the hives, the hunter smokes the bees to pacify them and gets the honey and the larvae, while the bird gets the wax and the bees.

The Hadza way of life is in danger of ceasing to exist - a tribe and an entire way of life may be about to disappear.

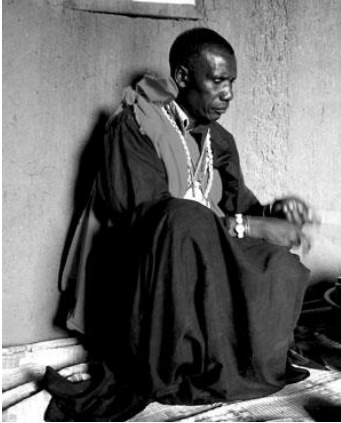
With Mwiba Lodge situated south of the Serengeti, on the escarpment above Lake Eyasi, guests have the incredible privilege of being allowed into the lives of this ethnic group in an authentic manner. Mwiba are actively working with this community to ensure the longevity of their tribal ways.

#### THE EXPERIENCE:

If guests would like to witness the Hadza way of life, their private guide and tracker will take them in search of the nomadic Hadza hunters who are moving through the wilderness. Upon finding them, guests may have the opportunity to accompany them as they forage for their vital food sources. They will show you how to prod the rich African soil for tubers and stalk small mammals and hunt birds. You may even be lucky enough to witness the unique interaction between Hadza and the honey-guide bird who leads you to a hive of bees to gather wild honey.

When the heat of midday starts to hang in the air, retreat to the cool shade of a grove of Lerai trees where you will have the privilege of being part of story-telling time where the Hadza retell tales of their ancestors whilst skillfully making new bows and arrows. A tracker and guide accompany you to assist with translation. We invite you to enter the experience with an open mind and embrace the primitive traditions of these fascinating people.

## SUKUMA TRIBE – Beating drums and tribal dance



### THE SUKUMA:

The Sukuma are a Bantu speaking people and are the largest of Tanzania's ethnic groups. The word "Sukuma" refers to the people of the north. The increased access to education and health-care has seen a drastic change in the traditional life of the Sukuma in recent years, with many people moving from the rural areas to the cities to find jobs as doctors, miners, teachers, nurses or wage-based labourers.

### THE EXPERIENCE:

Pay a visit to a Sukuma medicine man, who is the equivalent of a modern day homeopath and treats illnesses symptomatically. He invites you into his circular mud home to see the various shells and plant matter that are used as a medium for freshly collected actives that he makes into a concoction.

Should you wish to have him treat you, there will be a translator and he will request you to go into the surrounding bush to select, pick and spit on a plant which he then analyzes while chanting and dancing. Whether accuracy or intuition are part of the process, we leave for you to decide.

## MAASAI & DATOGA TRIBES – Fierce warriors and proud pastoralists



### THE DATOGA:

The Datoga, also known as the Mang'ati, which comes from a Maasai term meaning "enemy" is a proud, fierce warrior tribe, considering themselves to be the oldest tribe in Tanzania. (Although both the Maasai and the Hadzabe will also make claim to this). They keep to themselves and are known for viewing anyone outside of the tribe as a potential enemy. They are nomadic herders, depending largely on cow and goat meat and milk for their diet. Wearing traditional red leather dress, the bracelets around their wrists and ankles create a percussive beat for their singing and dancing, which can go on for days and even years!

### THE MASAAI:

The Maasai inhabit the south of Kenya and the north of Tanzania and have a long preserved culture. Believing that all cattle on earth once belonged to them, they still occasionally go on raids to retrieve their stolen herds. Their diet consists largely of beef, milk, blood, honey, fat and tree bark. They are forbidden from eating game meat, birds or fish. The Maasai are seen as defying modern culture to protect their customs and traditional way of life, however many initiations and rituals are slowly eroding due to outside influences.

### THE EXPERIENCE:

At Mwiba, the activities revolve more around the Datoga than the Maasai. Arrive late afternoon at a Datoga boma which becomes a hive of activity just before sundown as the livestock and young morani herders return from the pastures after a day of grazing. As the beating of hooves kick up dust and the sunlight softens it presents exquisite photographic opportunities.

The coolness of dusk is a relief after the heat of the day and you can feel the energy of homestead life as the people gather together and sing words of welcome in their mother tongue. The ladies beautifully adorned with intricate beaded necklaces and magnificent copper bangles and the men proud and tall, they jump and leap into the air as a ritual of Maasai / Datoga life, whereafter they will invite you to see inside their basic shelters. If you wish to witness a bloodletting ceremony, this can be performed, or bargain for some of the handmade beaded trinkets.

