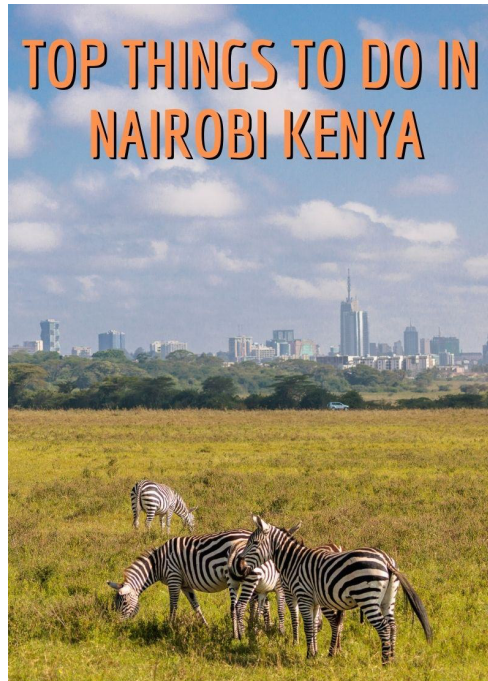


NAIROBI TRAVEL GUIDE: Kenya Travel Basics



Nairobi: Nairobi is the capital and largest city in Kenya. The city has grown from a rail depot in 1899 to a city of millions. It is the business, finance, and cultural hub of Kenya.

Most safari-bound visitors in Kenya spend at least one night in Nairobi, which is known as the “Safari Capital of the World”. However, many travelers spend little if any time actually exploring the city itself. The city is often used just as a place to stay before or after a flight rather than as a destination to explore.

It has a lot of visitor attractions, including museums, wildlife attractions, markets, cultural performances, parks, hiking trails, and great dining options. If you are interested in history, African art, wildlife, music, hiking, food, crafts, trains, gardens, or shopping, you are sure to find something of interest to do and see in the city.

It is also a city where you can really learn about Kenya, whether you are interested in colonial history, Kenyan independence, or modern life in Kenya’s capital city. From the ritzy suburbs to the busy Central Business District to Africa’s largest slum area, Nairobi is a multi-faceted city worth exploring.

We are excited to share our experiences and tips with you to help you plan your own visit to Nairobi.

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Getting to Nairobi

The main way that most international visitors get to Nairobi is by flying into the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (NBO), Kenya's main international airport. But you can also reach Nairobi by train, car, or bus.

By Plane

The main airport in Nairobi is Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (NBO). It is likely that this is where you'll be arriving into Kenya.

But if you are arriving from elsewhere in Kenya or East Africa, your flight may arrive at the smaller Wilson Airport in Nairobi.

To get from the airport to your hotel or downtown, you can take a taxi, a shared shuttle bus, an Uber, or book a private transfer. Your hotel may offer a free or paid airport shuttle, or you may already have a driver arranged with your safari company. If not, we recommend [booking your airport transfer](#) in advance as it tends to be the most hassle-free way. If you decide to take a taxi, be sure to set a clear price with the driver before agreeing to the trip. Or consider booking an Uber in advance.

By Train

Currently, the railway system in Kenya only connects a small area of Kenya, mainly the cities of Nairobi and Mombasa. So the main travelers arriving by train into Nairobi are those who are arriving into Mombasa by plane or ship. Historically, Uganda, Tanzania, and Kenya were connected by train but the rail connections have been closed for many years. You can find out information about routes and stations and book train tickets on the [Kenya Railways website](#).

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By Bus

Buses are by far the cheapest way to travel around East Africa. There are long-distance buses that arrive into Nairobi from throughout Kenya as well as from Tanzania, Uganda, and Rwanda. So we recommend checking online for options depending on where you are wanting to travel from or to.

For example [Modern](#), and [Tahmeed Express](#) are a few of the main bus companies that operate international routes around East Africa.

By Ship

The Port of Mombasa is the main international seaport in Kenya and the biggest port in east Africa. Most international passenger and cruise ships arrive into this port.

From Mombasa, you can then take the train, a bus, hire a private driver, or drive to Nairobi.

By Car

If you have a driver and are arriving on a safari that begins in another country or you are driving yourself, then you may be arriving into Kenya via one of its land borders.

Kenya borders Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda. However, the only countries you can currently enter Kenya from by land are Tanzania and Uganda. The open land borders change fairly regularly and if driving yourself, we recommend keeping updated on which land borders are open and the current requirements.

You'll also want to check the legal driving requirements for Kenya to ensure you have the proper documentation to drive in the country.

Getting Around Nairobi

You have a lot of options for getting around Nairobi including taxis, public transportation, hiring private drivers, joining a tour, renting a car, and walking. We talk about each option below.

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Taxis and Ride Sharing Apps

Taxis and ride shares are very popular ways for visitors to get around Nairobi. Although more expensive than public transit, these tend to be easier, safer, and more comfortable.

Taxis can usually be found waiting at the airports, train stations, street corners in the city center, and also around popular hotels, tourist sites, and shopping centers. Licensed taxis in Nairobi are either yellow or marked with a yellow stripe. Just note that many don't use meters so you will want to agree on a price before you get in the taxi.

You can also use a ride-hailing app like [Uber](#) or [Bolt](#) to get a taxi. This makes the paying process much more secure as you can pay through the app without needing to exchange any cash. Options in an app may include private car rides, shared rides, and *boda boda* (motorbike) rides, so just make sure you choose the option you want.

Walking

Walking is a particularly attractive option in the central parts of Nairobi, particularly the Central Business District. Many attractions are within walking distance and there are good sidewalks in most areas. If traffic is bad, it is often faster to walk than take a taxi or bus.

However, it is harder to walk in other areas of Nairobi where attractions are much more spread out and there is often a lack of good sidewalks. For those areas you are likely going to need to take a taxi, bus, or hire a driver. This is particularly the case when trying to visit the popular sites in Langata and Karen.

However, you want to be sure to take safety precautions if walking around the city as pickpocketing and robberies do occur (see Safety section). You should also be prepared for people, including children, coming up to you to try to sell you things, ask you for money, etc. These people are normally harmless but they can be annoying.

We don't recommend walking around the city at night or walking in the higher crime neighborhoods. If unsure if walking is a good idea in a particular area, ask hotel staff, a driver, or your tour operator for advice.

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Public Transportation

There are several forms of public transportation available in Nairobi, including buses, *matatus*, tuk tuks, and *boda bodas*. Most tourists don't take public transit in Nairobi but it can be an inexpensive option for budget travelers and those wanting to experience more local transit options. Public transit can sometimes be the quickest option (e.g., *boda bodas*) but is not always the safest option.

Prices are often not regulated so prices can vary. Most of these options require cash to board and you'll want to carry small bills as some may not offer change. *Boda bodas* can be paid for digitally if you use a ride hailing app. Some services, such as the public buses, may also accept local payment apps such as M-Pesa.

Public Buses

There are a few bus companies operating the city routes with the main one being the Kenya Bus Service (KBS), but newer operators like [Citi Hoppa](#) also offer bus services in the city. This is probably the safest of the public transit options for tourists.

Routes are generally noted on the side of the bus and the buses run many of the same routes as the *matatus*. You can check out routes and how to get from one place to another using apps and websites like [Moovit](#). Google Maps is another option but seems to show fewer options compared to Moovit.

Matatus

Matatus are privately-owned shared minibuses that operate along set routes and can legally hold up to 14 passengers. They are the most common form of public transit taken by locals in Kenya.

They are also probably the most noticeable of the forms of public transportation in Nairobi as they are often colorfully painted and decorated around a theme (e.g., sports teams, cartoon characters, famous rappers, Biblical scenes) and playing loud music.

These shared minibuses make a number of stops along set routes and the route is noted on the side of the buses. You can find out about the routes on [this website](#). You pay the driver or conductor upon boarding in cash or by Mpesa.

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The city is trying to phase out *matatus* due to poor safety records and so many of them are old and not in the best shape. Generally, this is not a form of public transit that tourists take but it is an inexpensive option. You might also travel by *matatus* as part of a walking tour with a guide.

Boda Bodas

The boda boda, or motorbike taxi, is a common form of transportation throughout Kenya as the motorbikes are inexpensive and can move through traffic faster than cars or buses.

Motorbikes are a very important form of transportation in Kenya; however, they are not the safest form of transit. The government has been trying to better regulate them in recent years.

Personally, we can't really recommend *boda bodas* as we have seen too many horrible motorcycle accident injuries working in hospitals to recommend them. However, if you do want to give them a go, we recommend using an app like [SafeBoda](#) or Uber to hail rides to better guarantee a licensed and safe driver. A driver should offer you a helmet and vest to wear and we would not recommend jumping on without a helmet.

Some tours may include transport by *boda boda* but it is not common.

Tuk Tuks

A tuk tuk or auto rickshaw is another public transit option in Nairobi. These 3-wheeled vehicles are perhaps a safer alternative to the boda boda. However, they are slower and seem to mainly operate for those going shorter distances outside the city center.

Driving Own Car

Driving is of course another way to get around if you have your own car or plan to rent one in Nairobi. You'll want to ensure you are knowledgeable about local driving rules and regulations and we recommend choosing a hotel that offers secure and monitored parking.

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There is normally free parking at most major tourist attractions and shopping centers; however, you'll likely need to pay for parking in more central areas. You can find out more about paying for parking in Nairobi [here](#).

We generally don't recommend driving in Nairobi if you can avoid it. Nairobi is a busy and congested city and traffic in the city is often bad. Most of the main roads are in good condition; however, there is almost always roadwork going on and some of the roads away from the city center are in fairly poor condition with lots of potholes.

Private Drivers & Tours

Joining a tour or hiring a private driver is another common way for visitors to get around Nairobi. If you are visiting as part of a tour or safari, you may have a driver/guide for your time in Nairobi who will handle all your transport.

There are a lot of tours which you can join and be part of either a group or have a private guide who will take you to see Nairobi's attractions. These generally include pick-up/drop-off from your accommodation as well as all transport throughout the day. These are convenient options that are perfect for people who don't want to deal with public transit or taxi services. Hiring a private driver can be a good idea if you need a driver to visit several places.

If you have just one day in Nairobi, you can check out our 1 day Da-Tour itinerary which details each of the places you will visit on your first trip. It also includes a number of small group tour and private tour options if you want to do a similar trip.

Kenya Travel Basics

In this section, we'll cover all the basic travel info about planning your trip to Nairobi, including visas, electricity, money, language, weather, and clothing.

Visas

Most international visitors to Kenya will require a visa to enter the country. You should check your own government's guidelines and those of Kenya for visa and entry requirements. You can apply online for an e-visa on Kenya's [government e-visa website here](#).

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Note that if you are also visiting Uganda and/or Rwanda, you may want to apply for an East Africa visa instead. This visa covers Kenya, Uganda, and Rwanda. You can apply for this visa through the same website.

To enter Kenya, most travelers will need a valid e-visa, a passport valid for at least 6 months past their travel dates, a printout of their travel itinerary, a support letter (generally from your tour company or business hosting you), hotel booking details, and proof of planned departure (e.g., flight or booked safari itinerary). Many travelers may also be required to show proof of certain vaccinations against certain diseases such as yellow fever.

Language

There are a lot of languages spoken in Kenya, but the main two are Swahili (Kiswahili) and English. Swahili is the most widely spoken language in Kenya, but English is also an official language and is widely spoken and understood. This is particularly true in Nairobi.

Tourists who don't speak Swahili or English often hire a local guide who speaks their native language or hire a translator.

Communication

We just wanted to note that many drivers, guides, and small businesses in Kenya use [Whatsapp](#) messaging as the main way (and sometimes only way) to communicate. We recommend considering setting up a free Whatsapp account on your phone if you don't already have one. This was the main way we communicated with our guides and drivers while in Kenya.

Currency

The currency of Kenya is the Kenyan shilling (Ksh). It is easy to find an ATM in Nairobi to take out local currency and we recommend using ones either at the airport or at a bank. Credit cards, as well as certain money transfer apps like [M-Pesa](#), are widely accepted.

Foreign currencies, like the United States dollar, Euro, and British pound sterling are also regularly accepted in the tourism industry. The most accepted and most stable foreign

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currency in Kenya is the U.S. dollar. In fact, many tourist activities are priced in US dollars. So it is a good idea to have US dollars with you.

However, it costs money for locals to exchange foreign currency into local currency, so it is good to pay smaller businesses and to tip local guides in Kenyan shillings if possible.

In Kenya, we generally use USD to pay for things at hotels and tourist attractions and for large tips (e.g., main safari guide or driver). However, we generally used Ksh to tip local guides and staff, pay at markets and local restaurants, or to buy souvenirs. So it is good to have some of both currencies on you throughout your trip.

Some attractions, particularly after the COVID-19 pandemic hit, started only accepting non-cash payments. But a couple of places we visited only accepted cash. So it is a good idea to have both a credit card (or M-Pesa) and cash on you while in Nairobi.

Electricity

Kenya operates on a 240V supply voltage and 50Hz and uses a Type G plug. So you will want to avoid packing any electronics that don't support 240V.

If you are coming from a country that does not use a Type G plug (three-prong one found in the UK), you will need **a travel adapter** to plug in your electronics.

Weather

The average annual temperature is around 66° F (18.5° C). Daytime temperatures rarely go below 50° F (10° C) or above 85° F (29° C).

February and March are typically the hottest months in Nairobi with an average temperature of 69° F (20.5° C) and the coldest months are July and August with an average temperature of 62° F (16.5°C).

Kenya has two rainy seasons, from March to May and from October to December. The rainiest month is April with a lot of rain also typical in May and November. So you'll definitely want to be prepared for rain if visiting during the rainy season, but we'd recommend being prepared for rain no matter when you visit.

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Nairobi is a city you can visit any time of the year. The weather is pretty temperate throughout the year, being warm during the days and cool at night. Most attractions in the city are open year-round to visitors.

How to Dress in Nairobi

We recommend wearing comfortable clothing in Nairobi that are suitable for the weather. It is often sunny in Nairobi so be sure to protect yourself from the sun and check the weather forecast for rain.

It is important to respect the local culture and customs while in Kenya, which means wearing clothing that is more loose-fitting and conservative. This means avoiding really tight-fitting clothing or clothes that are short, show off your stomach, or expose a lot of skin. However, although Kenyans may wear more conservative styles, they love color and bold patterns!

Now, while safari clothing and hiking boots are great to wear when on safari or hiking, we don't recommend wearing those clothes when visiting Nairobi (unless you are going to Nairobi National Park). We recommend wearing your regular travel clothes and leaving your safari clothing in your suitcase while exploring the city.

For shoes, you'll likely be walking around a lot so you'll want comfortable walking shoes. It is also good if you wear shoes that you don't mind getting a little dirty.

Travel Health

There are precautions you need to take to stay safe and healthy during your travels. These include avoiding untreated water, avoiding being bitten by mosquitoes, and making sure you are up to date on recommended vaccines and medications.

We highly recommend that you talk to your doctor or go to a travel clinic before your trip to see what vaccines and medication are needed or recommended. You can also discuss water safety, preventing mosquito bites, managing any existing conditions you may have, and traveling with medications.

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We also highly recommend reading the health advice given by your local government for travelers to Kenya. You can see the U.S. CDC travel health information and recommendations to travelers [here](#), and from the UK government [here](#).

Water Safety

The tap water in Nairobi is not considered safe to drink for travelers by most government travel organizations. In Kenya, it is recommended that you only drink bottled water or tap water that has been boiled, treated, and/or filtered.

Drinking untreated water or eating unclean food can cause travelers' diarrhea and other water-borne diseases, such as cholera, hepatitis A, polio, and typhoid. So you will want to take the normal precautions as you would when traveling to any destination with unsafe water, such as avoiding ice, unwashed or unpeeled raw fruits and vegetables, unpasteurized dairy products, and cooked foods that are not served hot.

Vaccines

There are a number of vaccinations recommended for travelers to Kenya. You should talk to your doctor or go to a travel clinic before your trip to see what vaccines and medication are needed or recommended. These will depend on what parts of Kenya you are visiting, what you plan to do there, and your medical history.

Make sure to get antimalarial medication to take throughout your trip.

You should make a travel health appointment at least 2 weeks prior to travel as some vaccines, such as the yellow fever vaccine, may take at least 10 days to be effective.

Proof of some vaccinations, such as yellow fever, may be required, depending on where you live, where you have traveled, and any recent disease outbreaks. Be sure to check the latest requirements.

Mosquitos

There are mosquitoes in Nairobi although the risk of malaria and other mosquito-borne diseases if bitten is typically very low in the capital according to the WHO and other health organizations. The number of mosquitoes fluctuates based on rainfall, temperature, and time of year.

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However, while the risk of getting malaria may be low in Nairobi, it is much higher in many other parts of Kenya. If you are visiting other parts of Kenya, you should talk to your doctor before your trip about antimalarial medications. Most visitors to Kenya take antimalarial medication during their trip and we have always done so.

But even if you are not worried about the risk of malaria in Nairobi, mosquito bites are annoying, itchy, and can transmit other diseases (e.g., yellow fever, dengue fever, Rift Valley fever, and chikungunya). The best ways to prevent mosquito bites include using [insect repellent with DEET](#), wearing long sleeved shirts and long pants, and using mosquito nets. Mosquitoes are most active between dusk and dawn.

Is Nairobi Safe for Tourists?

Nairobi is not considered the safest city and its rate of crime is often rated as “high” compared to other cities in the world. But it has improved from the days when it was referred to as Nairobbery due to the high crime rates. While it is of course impossible to predict crime or terrorism, by taking precautions you can travel safely in Nairobi.

You particularly want to be careful with securing valuables and being aware of your surroundings. The most common crimes against tourists are pickpocketing, muggings, and carjackings. You also want to be skeptical of people approaching you asking to sell you something (e.g., cheap safaris or tours) or asking for donations for a good cause.

It is recommended that travelers avoid Nairobi neighborhoods where there is increased crime rates like Eastleigh and Kibera. We have visited Kibera but only during the day when accompanied by a guide.

Like in many major cities, we recommend taking extra precautions if out in the city at night. We always get a taxi or hire a driver if we need to get around at night.

It is best to carry around only the amount of money needed for your day so that if you are robbed, you won't lose a great deal of money. If robbed, don't resist, just give them what they want to avoid any physical escalation. It is also a good idea to have a **money belt** or similar separate place to hide your passport and a spare credit card.

If carrying a purse or bag, we recommend a cross-body one, a sling, or a fanny pack that is harder for someone to snatch and less likely for you to set down. If wearing a

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backpack, we recommend considering a small one with lockable zippers. We recommend carrying only what you need for the day.

Even if it may be fairly obvious that you are probably a tourist, you still want to avoid being too conspicuous by not carrying around big cameras, designer handbags, wearing expensive jewelry, etc. Best to leave your expensive gear and valuables at home or locked up at your hotel.

We also recommend avoiding holding out your smartphone while walking around, not only is it something that is easy to steal but it also distracts your attention. If you need to check your phone, do so before you set off or when in a safe spot. Also, it is always a good idea to have any important information and your photos backed up elsewhere so if your phone is lost, stolen, or damaged you still have all the data.

If walking around, especially in the city center, you will no doubt be approached by people trying to sell you cheap safaris and such. We recommend telling them politely but firmly that you are not interested and moving along. They will generally leave you alone but if you are feeling harassed or followed, we recommend going into a hotel, restaurant, or store to get rid of them or telling a nearby police officer or security guard.

Not all taxis and drivers in Nairobi are reputable. If you need a taxi, we recommend using a secure taxi-hailing app like Uber or Bolt. These make it so the prices are regulated and you can pay without needing to hand money to the driver. We have used Uber many times in Nairobi without incident.

Being stuck in traffic in Nairobi can attract street sellers, beggars, and thieves. When in a car, we recommend keeping your window rolled up and your door locked. If in a *matatu*, keep hold of any bags or valuables to prevent thieves from snatching things.

Don't be afraid to ask questions of your driver, hotel staff, local guides, tour operator, etc. about whether it is safe to do X or Y. If you are unsure if it is a good idea to walk or visit somewhere, it can be good to get a local opinion. Most people are very willing to give advice for visiting their city.

You want to be particularly cautious when traveling in Kenya around the time of elections or referendums as violence, rioting, and ethnic tensions in the country often escalate during these periods. If you are visiting at a more tense or politically unstable time, it is probably safer to stick to guided activities.

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We always recommend making sure you have travel and medical insurance coverage. If you experience a crime, you should report it to the local police. Even if they aren't likely to be able to help (e.g., pickpocketing), you will likely still need a copy of a report for your insurance. For more serious issues, you may also want to contact your country's embassy or consulate who can help direct you to further resources.

We recommend that those who are concerned about safety stick to guided tours or hire a private guide or driver. Guides can not only make travelers feel safer, but they can also help make everything run smoother and can provide invaluable background and context to the places you visit. But also remember that even a guide can't always prevent things like purse snatching or pickpocketing, so you still need to use personal caution.

How Much Time Should I Spend in Nairobi?

How much time you want to spend in Nairobi will likely be determined by your interests and the length of your trip. There are lots of things to do and see in Nairobi and you can easily spend several days in the city as we have.

As the capital and largest city in Kenya, we definitely think that Nairobi deserves at least one full day of your trip. No matter your interests, whether it is history, culture, wildlife, shopping, art, or food, you are likely to find things that appeal in the city.

Personally, we recommend having at least 2 full days in Nairobi. That will give you time to see many of the highlights of the city. But you can still see quite a lot if you just have one full day.

If you have a safari that begins or ends in Nairobi but your safari itinerary doesn't include any sightseeing in Nairobi, you can easily book a guided day tour of the city or you can explore independently on your own. You may want to arrange to come into the city a day or two early or stay later to have time for sightseeing before or after your safari.

Where to Stay in Nairobi?

We recommend choosing your location based on the places you want to go in Nairobi, especially if you only have a short time in the city. Generally, we would recommend

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staying either in or near the Downtown area of Nairobi or in one of the western neighborhoods like Lang'ata or Karen.

Nairobi has a very wide range of accommodation options including hotels, guesthouses, hostels, apartments, and home rentals. Prices range from cheap \$30 budget stays to \$3,000 per night luxury stays. If booking accommodation in the more budget range, just be sure to read recent reviews, check the details to see what is included, and make sure in an OK area of the city.

We generally recommend booking accommodation that includes an on-site restaurant (or cooking facilities if booking an apartment or hostel) as then you always have the option to eat your evening meal there. Even if you plan to eat out elsewhere, this gives you a very convenient backup option if you don't feel like going out at night.

Downtown Nairobi and the Westlands

The Downtown area or [Central Business District](#) (CBD) is a great area for those planning to visit central attractions like the Kenyatta International Convention Centre, City Market, Jamia Mosque, Maasai markets, Central Park, Uhuru Park, Nairobi National Museum, Railways Museum, and downtown shopping. The [Westlands area](#), located just north of the center, is also a good place to check and is a popular area for expats.

Here are some lodging options in both the CBD and Westlands areas:

- [Stanley Hotel](#) – The Stanley Hotel was Kenya's first luxury hotel, dating back to 1902. This 5-star hotel offers 3 restaurants, a bar, a fitness center, a pool, and on-site private parking. It is located right in the heart of the Central Business District. If you are looking for a historical hotel in a central downtown location this is one to consider.
- [The Norfolk](#) – This 5-star Fairmont property is another one to consider if you enjoy historical hotels as the hotel is situated in a 19th century colonial building surrounded by gardens in the northern part of the CBD. It offers several restaurants, a fitness center, a pool, and 24-hour front desk.
- [Hilton Nairobi](#) – This 4-star hotel is a good option for business travelers and conference attendees who want to be super close to the KICC. The hotel offers on-site restaurants, bar, fitness center, business facilities, spa, pool, and 24-hour front desk. The hotel is located in the CBD and is just a short 5-minute walk from the KICC building.

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- [Best Western Plus](#) – This hotel is a solid mid-range option located in the CBD. The hotel offers a restaurant, bar, a fitness center, and a swimming pool.
- [YWCA](#) – If you are traveling on a small budget, this YWCA is located just outside the CBD may be an option to check out. It offers private rooms and an on-site cafeteria.
- [Nairobi Serena Hotel](#) – This is another 5-star hotel that is located just outside the CBD, offering spacious rooms, on-site restaurants, bar, fitness center, pool, and 24-hour front desk. This hotel is part of the popular Serena hotel brand that has hotels throughout East Africa.
- [Villa Rosa Kempinski](#) – The Villa Rosa is a lovely 5-star option in the Westlands area, offering spacious rooms, on-site restaurants, spa, fitness center, 24-hour desk, and swimming pool.
- [Lotos Inn & Suites](#) – This mid-range hotel in the Westlands offers spacious suites, an on-site restaurant, rooftop lounge, and free private parking. Close to a number of restaurants and shopping centers.

Western Neighborhoods of Nairobi

[Lang'ata](#) and [Karen](#) are both good locations for popular tourist attractions such as the Giraffe Centre, Uhuru Gardens, Karen Blixen Museum, Bomas of Kenya, Carnivore Restaurant, Kazuri Beads factory, and Sheldrick Wildlife Trust Elephant Orphanage. It is also a good location for those visiting Nairobi National Park.

Another good area to consider is the areas just west of Downtown Nairobi which put you in between the Central Business District and the areas of Lang'ata and Karen. These include areas like [Lavington](#) and [Kilimani](#). Good areas for those visiting attractions in both of these areas and where we often choose to stay.

Here are some accommodation options in the western suburbs of Nairobi:

- [Hemingways Nairobi](#) – This 5-star luxury boutique hotel located in Karen offers an on-site restaurant, bar, spa, swimming pool, and private butler service. All rooms are suites. This is one of the more luxurious properties in Nairobi.
- [Karen Gables](#) – This 4-star Karen lodging option offers a luxury B&B experience in a beautiful Dutch Cape style private home. Offers an on-site restaurant, lounge, and swimming pool.

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- [Tamarind Tree Hotel](#) – This 4-star hotel in Langata offers an on-site restaurant, bar, swimming pool, fitness center, and garden. The famous Carnivore restaurant is on the grounds, a short walk away. Great location for lots of Langata and Karen attractions, Wilson airport, and Nairobi National Park.
- [Palacina The Residence & Suites](#) – This great mid-range option in Kilimani offers both suites and private apartments. The property offers an on-site restaurant, fitness center, and swimming pool.
- [The Social House](#) – This mid-range 4-star hotel is located near the Lavington area and offers an on-site restaurant, swimming pool, fitness center, and garden.
- [Margarita House](#) – This guest house located in Karen offers an on-site restaurant, swimming pool, and garden. A reasonably priced option in the pricey Karen area.
- [Lavington Hill House](#) – This 3-stars guesthouse in Lavington has an on-site restaurant and bar and is surrounded by leafy gardens. Before it became a boutique hotel, it was the official state residence of the President of Southern Sudan. This was the very first place I stayed in Nairobi years ago.
- [Pori City Hotel](#) – This budget-friendly 3-star hotel option in the Langata area offers an on-site restaurant, bar, business center, and a 24-hour front desk.

Near the Nairobi Airport

If you need to stay near the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (NBO) you can look for a hotel in the [Embakasi area](#). This area is mainly residential. The closest hotels are the [Sheraton Four Points](#) and [Crowne Plaza](#) airport hotels. A lower-priced option near the airport is [Kozi Suites](#).

The closest hotel to Wilson Airport is the [Weston Hotel](#) and another good nearby option is the [Tamarind Tree Hotel](#). The [Pinkroses Garden Hostel](#) is a well-rated budget option in this area.

Nairobi National Park

There is currently only one accommodation option (other than basic camping) located inside Nairobi National Park and that is [Nairobi Tented Camp](#). The tented camp is a great place to stay if you want to be inside the national park and feel like you are on

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safari. Just note that you will need to pay the park fees each day of your stay in addition to the lodging costs.

If you are looking for a place away from the city, there are also several other hotels located on the southside of the park. A couple of good options located on the edge of the park include [Ololo Safari Lodge](#) and [Nyati Hill Cottages](#). They are situated overlooking the escarpment of the national park and you often see wildlife without leaving the property. Great places to relax and to stay for visiting Nairobi National Park, but not the best location for visiting downtown attractions.

Neighborhoods in Northern Nairobi

If you are just looking for the safest neighborhoods in Nairobi, then [Gigiri](#) and Muthaiga are two northern suburbs which are often rated as the safest places to live in Nairobi. They are close to Karura Forest as well as restaurants and shopping, but are further away from most tourist attractions.

There are a number of hotel and apartment options in this area including the 5-star [Tribe Hotel](#) and well-rated mid-range [Trademark Hotel](#) and [Magna Hotel & Suites](#). All are located in Gigiri.