



Mercy & Bart

Saturday, 24 October 2026 · Naivasha, Kenya

A few more practical things to share with you: what to wear, how to book a room at the wedding venue, and a guide to Kenya put together by our talented Editor-In-Chief. October is getting closer!

WHAT TO WEAR

Colourful Garden Party

Our wedding takes place outdoors, on the lawns of Great Rift Valley Lodge, with the Rift Valley stretching out behind us. The dress code is **colourful garden party** with the colour palette below: polished and festive, but comfortable enough to walk on grass, sit in the sun and dance into the night.

COLOUR	NAME	HEX	ROLE
	Dark Teal	#004457	Primary
	Burnt Orange	#ed6200	Main accent
	Deep Red	#c23926	Accent / alternative
	Golden Yellow	#eccc15	Accent / alternative
	Sky Blue	#63a7c3	Accent / alternative

A FEW PRACTICAL NOTES

- The ceremony and reception are on grass, so flats, wedges and block heels are preferred over stilettos.
- Naivasha sits at roughly 1,900 m. Days are warm and bright; evenings cool down quickly. Bring a shawl, jacket or blazer for the night.
- The afternoon sun is strong, so a hat and sunglasses are a good idea.
- Neutrals such as cream, beige, tan and stone work beautifully alongside the palette.

WHERE TO STAY

Great Rift Valley Lodge

The wedding events will start in the afternoon, and the reception meal is dinner. For guests who would like to stay at the wedding venue itself, rooms at Great Rift Valley Lodge can be booked directly through the contacts below. **Please mention that you are part of the group coming for Bart and Ru's wedding**, and a **5% discount** will apply to your room booking.

Cecilia PRIMARY CONTACT

+254 713 953867 (WhatsApp) · Cecilia.Nanaiyu@riftvalley-resort.co.ke

Purity

+254 706 450892 (WhatsApp)

Susan

+254 728 409713 (WhatsApp)

Please note: the 5% discount applies to **room bookings only**. It does not cover chalets or other independently owned properties on the estate, even where these are managed by Great Rift Valley Lodge. It also does not apply to bookings made through platforms such as Booking.com, so please book directly with one of the contacts above.

YOUR GUIDE

To Kenya with Love

We have put together a guide for first-time and returning visitors, with a focus on Nairobi and Naivasha: entry requirements and the eTA, what to pack, staying connected, M-PESA and money, arriving at the airport, getting around, and what to expect once you reach Naivasha.

You will find it as an appendix at the end of this document (and attached to the email version). It is a companion to whatever you have already looked up, covering the small practical things and local nuances that don't always show up online.

ON GIFTS

Your Presence Is the Present

We are not expecting gifts, and we will not be accepting them. Many of you are travelling a long way to be with us, and that is already far more than we could ask for.

If you would nonetheless like to mark the occasion with a gesture, we would be touched if you made a donation to a charitable cause of your own choosing, whichever one is close to your heart.

Questions about any of the above? Just message us, we are happy to help with bookings, outfits or travel plans.

RSVP & FULL DETAILS

www.mercyandbart.com

*With love & excitement,
Mercy & Bart*

We look forward to sharing the most important moment of our lives with you.





APPENDIX

To Kenya with Love

A curated guide for first-time and returning visitors to Kenya,
with a focus on Nairobi and Naivasha.

The guide follows on the next pages.

TO KENYA WITH LOVE

Special Issue:
**In celebration of
Mercy and Barth**

A curated guide for first-time and returning visitors to Kenya, with a focus on Nairobi and Naivasha.





FROM THE EDITOR

There's something special about arriving somewhere new where everything feels just unfamiliar enough to be exciting, and just familiar enough to draw you in. Kenya holds that balance beautifully.

This guide was created with you in mind: whether it's your first time here, or your first time in a long time. It's designed to help you move through Nairobi and Naivasha with ease, knowing where to go, what to expect and how to settle into the rhythm of things.

Chances are, you've already done a bit of Googling (we would too), and you'll find plenty of helpful information out there. This guide is here to complement it.

Think of this as your insider cheat sheet: the little things, the practical tips and the local nuances that don't always show up online, but make a big difference once you're on the ground. The kind of things that help you enjoy the experience a bit more fully. In case this isn't enough, whenever you feel stuck please message or call on WhatsApp using the numbers below:

Will: +254717421262

Esmee: +254 7 972 776 22

We're so glad you're here. We can't wait to celebrate together.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

RU AND BARTH'S WEDDING CELEBRATION



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SPECIAL ISSUE: IN CELEBRATION OF MERCY AND BARTH



BEFORE YOU TRAVEL



We're so excited to welcome you to Kenya! To help you prepare for your trip, here are a few important things to know before you travel.

Entry requirement (eTA)

Most international visitors need to obtain an Electronic Travel Authorisation (eTA) before travelling to Kenya. For more information about the eTA, see page 7.

Staying Connected

Getting connected is easy. You can purchase a local SIM card on arrival (such as at the Safaricom shop at the airport) or use an eSIM before you travel. Mobile data is reliable in most areas in Kenya. A data package worth KES 500-1000 (US \$4-8 or 3-7 EUR) is roughly enough to get you through a week or two. Internet is generally fast and reliable in Nairobi and Naivasha, but coverage may be limited in more remote areas. We recommend saving important contacts and directions offline in case connectivity is unavailable.

Power & Plugs

Kenya uses Type G plugs (the same as the UK), with a voltage of 240V / 50Hz. If you're travelling from continental Europe, don't forget to pack a travel adapter.

Yellow Fever Vaccination

A Yellow Fever vaccination certificate is only required if you are arriving from, or have recently transited through, a country with a risk of Yellow Fever transmission. If you are travelling directly from France (or most European countries), you do not usually need a Yellow Fever vaccination certificate. If your journey includes a layover or stop in a country where Yellow Fever transmission occurs (e.g. Tanzania, Uganda, Ethiopia), you will need to show your Yellow Fever vaccination in your vaccination booklet upon arrival before passport control.

Malaria

Malaria exists in parts of Kenya, but the level of risk depends on where you are travelling. If you'll only be attending the wedding and staying in the Nairobi and Naivasha area, the risk is considered very low.

If you're planning to extend your trip to Kenya's coast, national parks, or other regions before or after the wedding, we recommend speaking with your doctor or travel clinic about whether anti-malarial medication is appropriate for your itinerary.

Whichever part of Kenya you visit, it's always a good idea to:

- Use mosquito repellent, especially in the evenings.
- Wear light, long-sleeved clothing after sunset where practical.

Currency

The local currency is the Kenyan Shilling (KES).

Credit and debit cards are widely accepted in hotels, restaurants, and larger shops.

For smaller purchases, local markets, or tipping, it's useful to carry a small amount of cash. You can withdraw cash using your Visa card or debit card at most ATMs (ensure international transactions are enabled on your card).

If you are staying longer and want to embrace the Kenyan digital culture, you can purchase a Safaricom SIM card at a Safaricom shop (at the airport or in most malls in Nairobi) and ask them to set up M-PESA for you (bring your passport to the shop for registration). If you have that set up, you will be able to pay with mobile money and transfer funds directly to your mobile money account directly from your regular bank account using apps such as WorldRemit or Remitly. Details shared in page 8-9.



KENYA ENTRY REQUIREMENTS: YOUR KENYA TRAVEL AUTHORISATION (ETA)



Getting to Kenya is easy! Most international visitors simply need to obtain an Electronic Travel Authorisation (eTA) before travelling (if you are not from Europe, see the list with exceptions on the eTA website). The application is completed online and is usually straightforward.

What you need to do

- Apply online before your trip using the official Kenya eTA website. Be cautious of third-party websites that charge additional service fees. Instead use the official Government of Kenya website: <https://etakenya.go.ke/>
- Apply for an eTA as a *tourist* to avoid requiring any family invitation letters
- We recommend applying at least 2–3 weeks before departure, although most applications are processed within 3 working days.
- Each traveler, including children, requires their own eTA.
- Your passport should be valid for at least six months from your date of arrival.

Documents you may need

Have the following ready before you begin your application:

- A valid passport
- A recent passport-style photo
- Your flight details
- Confirmation of your accommodation (hotel booking)
- A bank card to pay the application fee

Once you have applied, you can regularly check the status of your application on the eTA website (in the past, some travellers did not receive an email with the approved eTA and needed to download it from the eTA website directly). Let us know if you face any issues, we are here to help!

M-PESA (BY SAFARICOM): KENYA'S EVERYDAY PAYMENT SYSTEM



If you're visiting Kenya, one thing you'll quickly notice is that almost everyone uses M-PESA. From restaurants and coffee shops to taxis, markets, tipping, and even national park fees, M-PESA is the preferred way to pay. While credit cards are accepted in many hotels and larger establishments, having M-PESA will make getting around much easier and more convenient.

What is M-PESA?

M-PESA is Kenya's mobile money service, allowing you to send, receive, and pay for goods and services directly from your phone. Think of it as a digital wallet linked to your Kenyan mobile number rather than a traditional bank account.

You'll often see signs that say "Pay with M-PESA" or "Lipa na M-PESA" ("Pay with M-PESA"). Nearly every business, from supermarkets to roadside fruit vendors accepts it.

Why You'll Find It Useful

Having M-PESA means you can:

- Pay for taxis and ride services.
- Buy meals, coffee, and groceries.
- Shop at local markets and boutiques.
- Pay for activities and attractions.
- Tip guides, drivers, and service staff.
- Split bills easily with friends or family.
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash.

For most visitors, M-PESA quickly becomes the easiest way to pay for everyday purchases.

HOW TO GET M-PESA

Step 1: Get a Kenyan SIM Card or eSIM

To use M-PESA, you'll first need a Kenyan mobile number. You can purchase a SIM card or activate an eSIM from Safaricom. We recommend Safaricom, as it has the widest coverage and is the network that operates M-PESA. Please remember to bring your passport, as Kenyan law requires for SIM card registration.

For the safest and easiest experience, we recommend getting your SIM card and M-PESA account set up at an official Safaricom shop or at the Safaricom counters at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (NBO) when you arrive. Official Safaricom stores can be found in many of Nairobi's major shopping centres, including: Sarit Centre (Westlands), Westgate Shopping Mall (Westlands). The Village Market (Gigiri), Two Rivers Mall (Ruaka) and The Hub Karen (Karen)

Step 2: Register for M-PESA

Once your SIM card has been activated, ask the Safaricom representative to register your M-PESA account. Registration is usually completed in just a few minutes and can often be done at the same time as your SIM card activation.

Step 3: Load your SIM with Money

Once registered, you can load funds into your M-PESA wallet by:

- Depositing cash at any M-PESA agent (the Safaricom representative can help with this)
- Transferring money from selected international services (where available).
- Receiving money from another M-PESA user.

Thousands of M-PESA agents are located throughout Kenya, making it easy to add or withdraw money whenever needed but please make sure you use those in the shopping malls as recommended.

A Few Helpful Tips

- Keep a small amount of Kenyan shillings (KES) for the occasional cash-only purchase.
- Most businesses will display a till number or QR code for M-PESA payments.
- Mobile data isn't always required, you can still make payments using the standard M-PESA menu. Always confirm the recipient or business name before sending a payment.

Our Recommendation

We highly recommend setting up M-PESA shortly after arriving in Kenya. The process is quick, and it will make paying for everyday expenses throughout your trip significantly easier. If you're only visiting for a few days, you'll likely still find it one of the most convenient ways to experience Kenya like a local.



WHAT TO PACK

Pack whatever you'd like to! Below simply a few pointers to help you out. Also note, Nairobi is a huge city with many shops, so don't worry if you forget anything, you will simply be able to buy it here!

October in Kenya is one of the rainy months, bringing a mix of warm days, cooler mornings and evenings, and the possibility of anything from light showers to heavier rainfall. Think light layers, comfortable clothing, and a waterproof jacket or umbrella to keep you prepared while still enjoying the warmth. We'll keep an eye on the forecast and share a weather update closer to the wedding dates so you can pack accordingly.

Nairobi is stylish and cosmopolitan, and people generally dress quite freely depending on the setting. You'll see everything from casual streetwear and athleisure to dressed-up dinner looks and nightlife fashion. However, note that most Kenyan women do not wear shorts in public and that it's always good to dress appropriately for specific spaces or events.

Essentials

- eTA visa (see next page) & passport
- Yellow Fever vaccination booklet (in your hand luggage)
- Lightweight clothing for warm daytime temperatures
- A light jacket or sweater for evenings
- Comfortable shoes for moving around Nairobi and Naivasha
- Sunglasses, sunscreen, and a hat
- Chargers and travel adapters (UK-style plug type G)

For the Wedding in Naivasha

think relaxed, outdoorsy, and comfortable.

- Wedding outfit(s)
- Comfortable shoes if events are outdoors
- A shawl, blazer, or light layer for cooler evening temperatures
- Raincoat / umbrella for the light showers
- Bug spray (DEET)

Nice To Have

- Swimwear (many hotels/lodges have pools), and for if you're planning to go to the coast
- A small crossbody or day bag
- Portable power bank for long days out



YOUR ARRIVAL TO NAIROBI, THE CITY UNDER THE SUN

ARRIVAL

What to expect

- You'll land at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA)
- Immigration is usually straightforward, though it can take some time depending on arrivals
- Have your documents ready (passport, visa if required)

After you land

- Baggage claim is typically smooth
- Once outside, it can feel busy, this is normal

Tip: If you've arranged a pick-up, look out for your name sign. If not, move calmly and avoid engaging with too many unsolicited offers for transport.

Getting to Your Accommodation

The easiest and safest options:

- Pre-arranged hotel or host transfer
- Ride-hailing apps like Uber or Little (avoid Bolt)
- Avoid the airport taxis, they have a track record of bad experiences

Good to know

- Traffic from the airport can be unpredictable, even late in the evening. Request your driver to take you through the Expressway or better yet, communicate this early if using pre-arranged transport. The Expressway has tolling fees which you'll cater for depending on where you're staying but will be a maximum of 6 US dollars or 5.50 EUR.

Quick tip: Always confirm the car details before getting in. Don't share rides/accept to share rides with people you've met at the airport or drivers you've just met at the airport

WHERE YOU'LL STAY IN NAIROBI

Nairobi has good and varied choices of places you can stay, from hotels to Airbnb. Make sure you check ratings and reviews and please feel free to ask us if you need additional input.

Settling in to your accommodation

Once you arrive, take a moment to ease into things.

- Tap water isn't recommended for drinking, use bottled or filtered water
- Wi-Fi is widely available in hotels and Airbnbs
- You can get a local SIM card the next day if needed.
- You might notice lots of buildings going through construction, hopefully not where you stay but if you hear some construction noise it often ends at 5pm.

First 24-hour mindset:

Don't overpack your schedule. Rest, adjust and get comfortable.



STAY OPTIONS IN NAIROBI

We have a few suggestions but you absolutely can choose anywhere else you would like. We suggest the following neighbourhoods:

1. Westlands
2. Kileleshwa
3. Kilimani
4. Lavington
5. Spring Valley
6. Karen (a little further out of town)
7. Gigiri

Whether it be an Airbnb or hotel, these areas will be convenient and safe. This considers activities you would like to do as well, I would keep them within these areas unless you are moving with a group.

In your searches you will see a variety of selections, please use [booking.com](https://www.booking.com), Airbnb and direct hotel bookings.



KENYAN CULTURE

Kenya is incredibly diverse, with many cultures, languages, and traditions shaping everyday life. While experiences differ across communities and regions, there's a shared warmth and sense of connection that many visitors notice quickly.

People are generally friendly, social, and welcoming conversation comes easily here. Don't be surprised if someone asks where you're from, offers help, or starts chatting while you're waiting in line.

A few cultural nuances worth knowing:

- Greetings matter and are considered polite. A couple of basic greetings include, "Habari yako?" (How are you?) You can respond with "mzuri sana" meaning I'm well. If you want to fit in locally, you can say "sasa" which is a greeting similar to "hey/hi" which can be responded to with "poa" meaning "good"
- Community is deeply valued.
- Humor is a big part of social interaction
- Plans and timing can sometimes feel more flexible than expected. "I'm 5 minutes away" may occasionally mean "I've just left the house."

At the same time, Nairobi is a major city, and it's normal for strangers to approach you, sometimes to help, sometimes to sell something, or sometimes just out of curiosity. You never have to engage if you feel uncomfortable or unsure, especially when alone or in situations that feel compromising. A polite but firm "No thanks" or "I'm good" is completely acceptable and usually respected.



YOUR FIRST OUTING IN NAIROBI - OPTIONAL BUT RECOMMENDED

If you have the energy, step out for something simple:

- A nearby café
- A relaxed dinner
- A short walk within your area

Nairobi reveals itself best in small moments. Feel free to search for restaurants on Google and consider their ratings.



The food scene

Nairobi's food scene is vibrant, diverse, and surprisingly expansive. You'll find everything from excellent coffee shops and relaxed brunch spots to local nyama choma joints, rooftop restaurants, and international cuisine from across the world. Eating out is a big part of social life here, and there's no shortage of good places to explore whether you're after a quick coffee, cocktails with a view, or a long lunch with friends.

A few things to know:

- Portions are often generous
- Reservations are helpful for popular spots, especially on weekends
- Bottled or filtered water is recommended

And yes, Kenyans take their tea and coffee seriously.





Security

Like most major cities, Nairobi requires a bit of awareness but for the most part, getting around is straightforward once you settle in.

A few helpful habits:

- Avoid walking alone in the dark in unfamiliar areas
- Keep valuables out of sight in crowded places especially your phone when riding in cars if windows are open.
- Use trusted ride apps like Uber or Little instead of street taxis
- If unsure, ask your host or hotel for guidance

Most neighborhoods guests stay in like Westlands, Kilimani, Kileleshwa or Karen are well-frequented and comfortable for visitors.

The general rule: relaxed, but aware.

Making the most of your stay in Nairobi

Whether you're visiting Nairobi for the first time or returning to explore more, we hope you'll take the opportunity to experience some of what makes Kenya's capital so special. Nairobi is one of the few cities in the world where you can enjoy a morning safari, feed endangered Rothschild's giraffes, visit rescued elephant calves, stroll through beautiful urban forests like Karura, or immerse yourself in the city's rich history, art, and culture all within a short distance.

The city is also home to a vibrant food scene, lively markets and unique shopping experiences, offering something for every kind of traveler. However you choose to spend your time, we hope your visit to Nairobi is filled with memorable experiences and gives you a wonderful introduction to the beauty and spirit of Kenya.



FROM NAIROBI TO NAIVASHA - A DRIVE

At some point, Nairobi's city energy begins to soften, the buildings thin out, the traffic eases (slightly), and the landscape slowly opens into the rolling views of the Rift Valley. The drive to Naivasha is part of the experience. Depending on traffic and departure time, the journey usually takes about 2–3 hours.

A few things worth knowing:

- Transport will be organized for you to leave Nairobi on the Friday before the wedding in the afternoon and for you to get back to Nairobi after the ceremony on Saturday morning. Details will be shared.
- Leaving Nairobi can take time, especially on Friday afternoons due to traffic
- The roads are generally straightforward, though occasionally bumpy in sections
- It's worth keeping a light jacket nearby. Naivasha tends to feel cooler than Nairobi



NAIVASHA

After the movement and energy of Nairobi, Naivasha offers something softer. Set within Kenya's Rift Valley, Naivasha is known for its open landscapes, lake views, acacia trees, wildlife, and slower pace of life. The air feels fresher, the mornings quieter, and time somehow moves a little differently here.

For the wedding weekend, most of your time will likely revolve around Great Rift Valley Lodge & Golf Resort, a scenic escape perched along the escarpment with sweeping views across the valley, where the wedding will be happening.



WHAT TO EXPECT

Naivasha is less about rushing between places and more about settling into the environment.



Where you'll stay

Most guests will be staying at or around Great Rift Valley Lodge & Golf Resort, which will be the wedding venue. The atmosphere here is relaxed, spacious, and very connected to the surrounding landscape.

Think: quiet mornings, cool evenings, lots of greenery and the occasional zebra casually appearing nearby.

Accommodation in Naivasha tends to lean more lodge-style than city-style. Less about high-rise luxury and more about comfort, nature, and slowing down a little.

A few things worth knowing:

- Mornings and evenings can feel chilly indoors, so layers help
- WiFi is usually available, though occasionally less reliable than Nairobi
- Wildlife may roam within lodge grounds, which is very normal here



STAY OPTIONS IN NAIVASHA

We have a few suggestions but you absolutely can choose anywhere else you would like, especially somewhere near or within the wedding venue. Especially if you prefer Airbnb, you will see a variety of selections, we provide just a few. You would need to arrange for a driver/car if staying outside of the lodge to get you to the wedding venue.

1. A wide selection of chalets within Great Rift Valley Lodge
2. A wide selection of lodge rooms and villas managed by the Great Rift Valley Lodge
3. A 4-bedroom cottage within the lodge
4. A 3-bedroom villa within the lodge



TRIPS YOU CAN JOIN BEFORE AND
AFTER THE WEDDING

**YOU'RE WARMLY
INVITED TO JOIN
MERCY AND
BARTH ON THE
PLANNED PRE-
AND POST-
WEDDING TRIPS.
A WONDERFUL
OPPORTUNITY TO
EXPLORE KENYA.**

**RESERVE
YOUR SPACE
EARLY ON THE
WEDDING
WEBSITE!**



TRIP ITINERARY

October 13th - November 1st



13th-18th

Working remotely

Mercy and Barth can host 1-2 guests at their apartment in Nairobi for this period. Let us know!

19th-23rd

Travel to Nanyuki

Sandai Farm is reserved for this stay. Activities here include mountain hikes, game drives and a peaceful relaxation in a rustic place! A reservation has been arranged for an initial group of 6–10 wedding guests, with flexibility for additional bookings.

23rd

Family dinner!

At GRVL, bride and groom, family, grooms people and brides people have dinner on the night before the wedding.

24th



Wedding day!

Details for the wedding will be shared separately.

24th-26th

Stay at GRVL

Guests will be arriving before the wedding day and staying the day after, in cottages/Airbnbs in and around GRVL. Some activities such as boat rides, game walk/drive, a visit to Hell's gate etc, may be organized.

26th

Travel back to Nairobi and stay one night

A shuttle will be organized for this.

26th

Fine dining in Nairobi

This will be organized at Embark Dining for the newly weds, family, grooms people and brides people.

27th-1st

A trip to the Coast in Watamu

Accommodation has been booked at Watamu Beach Cottages for a 5 day stay. Bookings have been made for 3 nights at the villa (4 bedrooms) and 2 nights in a penthouse (1 bedroom) and 3 nights at a 2 bedroom cottage from the 27th to 30th. More cottages are available for booking on the Watamu Beach Cottages website [here](#) based on your needs.

1st

Travel back to Nairobi

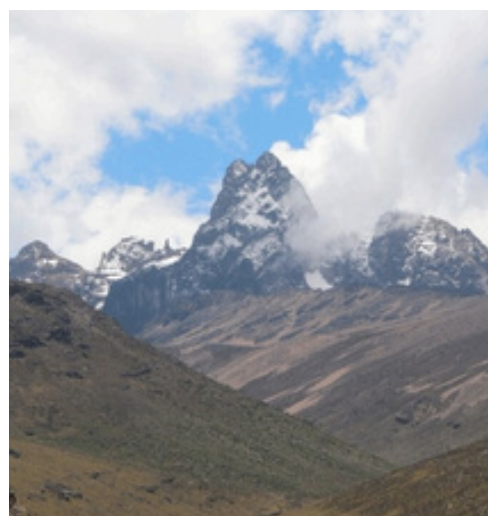
Return home with wonderful memories of Kenya and the wedding celebration.

**RESERVE YOUR
SPACE EARLY**

www.mercyandbart.com



A SNEAK PEAK OF SOME OF THE TRIP DESTINATIONS





SEE YOU SOON!

