



## THE MARKET

Kenya is one of the most geographically diverse countries on earth, with vast expanses of savannah, highland ranges, equatorial rainforests, extinct volcanoes, a series of fresh water and soda lakes, alpine glaciers, arid deserts and tropical beaches, all within the borders of a single country.

With 40 years of experience, Somak Safaris is Kenya's leading destination management company in East Africa, arranging first-rate holidays exploring the region's wealth of natural beauty and abundance of wildlife.

With a commitment to personal service and value for money, Somak has established itself as the first name in safari holidays in Kenya and Tanzania, while continuing to seek ways to improve both service and destinations offered. It is acknowledged that Somak is the fastest growing destination management company in East Africa, attracting prestigious partners from all over the world.

As a leading player in the region's tourism industry, Somak has gained the respect and recognition of many other organisations, both in the public and private sector.

The word "safari" was born in Kenya,



where it means simply "a journey". However, this is a journey unlike any other. Whatever the adventurer is seeking, he or she will find it in Somak's unparalleled variety of travel options.

## ACHIEVEMENTS

Somak's innovative packages - Kenya Safari and Kenyan Wildlife Encounter - were awarded the Top Tour Award and the Highly Commended Tour Award in 2006 by Saga Holidays. Saga Holidays focuses exclusively on the provision of high quality, value-for-money services for people aged 50 and older.

The Awards are significant as they highlight the premium service provided by Somak, as well as Somak's selection of the lodges that are also known for their service. These awards are indicative of customer satisfaction and the

consistency of excellence offered by the company. Based on the results of questionnaires completed by Saga clients, they were awed by their Kenyan experiences hosted by Somak.

To add to Somak's Kenyan prestige, the associated Somak London's achievements include Travel Trade Gazette's Best Tour Operator to Africa 2006, Selling Long Haul magazine's Best Tour Operator to Africa 2006 and Travel Bulletin's Top Independent Operator to Africa 2006.

## HISTORY

Somak is a family run business that offers a 'personal touch'. Founded in 1968 by Suresh Sofat and to date run as a family business assisted by his two sons Ashish and Anil taking care of overseas operations and Suresh Raman and Joash Olum taking care of the East Africa operations, the Group had its origins in Kenya, carrying schoolchildren to and from England on what became known as the "Lollipop Specials".

Quickly becoming the largest charter operation on the Nairobi/London route, this set the scene for Somak's drive to produce



a quality product together with high volume business, which remains the Group's ethos today. From Kenyan beginnings, Somak has expanded into an international organisation, offering holidays to destinations across two continents, which are sold in three continents.

Today, Somak is the leading ground handler to overseas tour operators that feature Kenya. With highly experienced staff, the largest fleet of safari vehicles, and the most modern office complex, Somak is a gem in the country's tourism industry. With four decades of experience in organising holidays, Somak's pedigree is unquestionable, with the ongoing business of several large tour operators to prove it.

## THE PRODUCT

Somak is a global, independent organisation,

focusing on destination management, tour operating, retail travel and business house sales in East Africa, with associate offices in the UK and other countries.

Somak operates from Nairobi and Mombasa, Kenya and Arusha, Tanzania. The company's East African headquarters is located on Mombasa Road in Nairobi, leading to Jomo Kenyatta International Airport where guests begin and end their adventures.

The complex houses the administration department, workshop facilities for safari vehicles, accommodation for drivers



and guides, and the Safari Lounge. Guests can relax and recuperate in the luxurious Safari Lounge, the only one of its kind in East Africa. It is available to all clients passing through Nairobi, and is the perfect place to enjoy refreshments, an air-conditioned lounge and washrooms with shower facilities.

Helpful and highly trained staff members are on hand to meet and greet guests on landing at the airport. Somak's focus is on guest safety - then enjoyment - so a full briefing takes place prior to boarding the minibuses. A comprehensive safety instruction sheet is published in some of the more common international languages and a 24-hour communication centre provides all necessary back up for field staff.

Somak's workshop includes servicing bays, a body shop, a repair shop, transport office, and a major mechanical service department. The chief mechanic, trained in Japan by Nissan, leads a dedicated support team who maintain Somak's fleet of over 150 minibuses, all with HF radio and four-wheel drive, to ensure the utmost reliability on and off the road.

Safaris, excursions, accommodation and international travel are all arranged here for large and small groups, with a multi-lingual team or via one of Somak's overseas associate offices. An in-house team of programmers continuously develop cutting-edge programmes tailored to operators' specific requirements.

With Kenya's varied topography, Somak's safaris are by no means limited to game parks and wildlife. The company organises treks to the famous snow-capped peaks of East Africa, from Mount Kenya to Mount Kilimanjaro. There's white-water rafting in the Tana or Athi Rivers, and adventurers can ride the "ship of the desert" - while drinking in the sights of North and Central Kenya from the back of a camel. Horseback rides to the undulating hills and plains of the Masai Mara are popular, as is the unforgettable experience of the hot air balloon flight over the Masai Mara or Taita Hills at dawn, followed by a champagne bush breakfast.

With over a thousand different species of birds, Kenya is bird watcher's heaven. Raptors like the fish eagle are particularly drawn to the famous Rift Valley, where alkaline lakes support populations of flamingos and pelicans. The powerful thermals above the Rift Valley also make this the perfect place for gliders.

Golfers in Kenya will find challenging courses in some of the world's most picturesque locations. With 35 courses, including some lush and lavish championship courses, golfers can tee off on the slopes of Mount Kenya, or attempt the long drive from the ocean-side hole beside the Indian Ocean in Mombasa.

Mombasa is East Africa's leading port, serviced by a number of charter aircraft and cruise ships. Somak Mombasa is home to all coastal operations, including Lamu and Malindi, and makes all arrangements using a large range of beach hotels and organizing excursions.

Kenya's beautiful coastline is world famous; the palm-fringed white sands and emerald waves are perfect for swimming and sunbathing. The warm tropical waters are protected by a coral reef, making them ideal for diving.

The Shimoni archipelago is a prime site, with four islands offering an astonishing variety of marine life. Somak tailors diving packages to suit guest requirements, as well as paragliding and deep-sea fishing.

Somak's commitment to providing quality service has resulted in nearly 15 percent of clients being repeat customers. The company also provides destination management services to many tour operators around the globe.



### RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Somak minibuses are a common sight on a safari in East Africa. Each vehicle is driven by expert drivers/guides, with extensive knowledge of the region and wildlife. Somak's seven-seat microbus fleet now expands to over 150 minibuses, all providing a first-rate safari experience.

In a new and exciting development designed to offer an even better safari experience, the brand recently announced the introduction of Somak Premier Safari minibuses. They feature only four seats in each bus, up to 46" seat pitch, welcome pack including maps and useful information, unlimited water and soft drinks, free use of binoculars, and a gift on departure with the company's compliments.

Somak's diversification now ventures into hotels and lodges. Kenya's newest hotel group, Ashnil Hotels, has several upcoming properties with the first being the 40 room Aruba Lodge located in Tsavo East National Park. The lodge is set on the shady banks of the Aruba Dam where abundant wildlife is found.

### PROMOTION

Kenya is a major participant in worldwide tourist trade shows and exhibitions. Somak also plays a leading role in presenting its quality services to the tourism industry at trade fairs including the World Travel Market (WTM), Moscow International Travel and Tourism Show (MITT), Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA), United States Tour Operators Association (USTOA), The American Society of Travel Agents (ASTA) International Tourism Bourse (ITB) and China Outbound Congress.

### BRAND VALUES

The brand offers so much more, and an "edge" that is unique: The company knows what makes a great safari, where the most romantic rooms are found, and what to offer those wanting something a little different - like a luxury tent on stilts. Somak knows that there are many different ways to arrange a holiday.

As an established specialist operator, Somak is able to command keen prices, thus ensuring the best prices are quoted and prevailing special offers are enjoyed. Part of Somak's expertise lies in creating itineraries tailor-made for a client's journey, including the careful selection of accommodation, saving clients time and effort.

Somak offers the finest hotels and tours of a level of quality and exclusivity likely to exceed the expectations of even the most discerning traveller.

As a family-run company, Somak Safaris prides itself on personal service. As an independent company, time and effort can be spent solely on creating wonderful holiday experiences without having to appease shareholders. It's a win-win situation: The Somak brand grows while clients come back repeatedly for a fascinating, beautiful African adventure.



### THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT SOMAK

- Somak Safari Lounge is open to all clients 24-hours a day
- Associate offices operate in London, Los Angeles, Arusha, Zanzibar, India, Japan and Europe
- The new and exclusive premier microbus is the first four-seat safari microbus in East Africa
- Somak caters to over 50,000 visitors to Kenya each year
- The 24-hour call centre is a key support division designed to take care of any eventuality