

the  
leap

MIDLIFE PROGRAMME

# *Leap to Kenya*

MARINE CONSERVATION + COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT + SAFARI

# Kenya *Connection*

Yes, this is a holiday but one with purpose, connection, and adventure built in. Over 10-days you'll unwind on the coast, contribute to meaningful community and conservation projects, and go on safari in one of Africa's great national parks.

**LOCATIONS:**

VIPINGO + TSAVO EAST NATIONAL PARK

**ACCOMMODATION:**

PRIVATE HOUSE + SAFARI CAMPS

**ENVIRONMENTS:**

BEACH + BUSH

**PROJECTS:**

MARINE CONSERVATION +  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

**TEAM SIZE:**

12 PER DEPARTURE

**SOCIAL:**

BUZZY VIBES

**FITNESS:**

AVERAGE

**STAY LENGTH:**

10 DAYS

Reserve your place

INFO@THELEAP.CO.UK / +44 1672 519922





Picture this: waking up to the gentle rhythm of the Indian Ocean, sunlight filtering through palm trees, and the day ahead holding more than just relaxation, it holds meaning.

From snorkelling over coral gardens in the Kuruwitu Lagoon, helping to restore vital marine ecosystems, to assisting local elders with water collection or chatting with schoolchildren on their way home, every experience offers a deeper connection to the place and its people.

But it's not all action. There's time to slow down, breathe in the sea air, and truly be, surrounded by a community that welcomes you with warmth and curiosity.

Midway through the journey, the landscape shifts as you head inland to Tsavo East National Park. Here, guided by a local conservation expert, you'll witness elephants moving through dust-red earth, lions silhouetted against golden skies, and the raw beauty of the African wild. It's awe-inspiring, and grounding. This is what makes the Kenya Midlife Leap so unique. It's not just travel for the sake of escape. It's a journey that feeds your spirit, connects you to others, and quietly changes how you see the world.

SOUTH SUDAN

ETHIOPIA

UGANDA

SOMALIA

KENYA

TANZANIA

INDIAN  
OCEAN

Tsavo East National Park

3-Night Safari

Kilifi

Dhow Ride

Vipingo

Marine Conservation  
+ Community Development

Mombasa

Arrival / Departure

4

2

3

1

# Kenya *Itinerary*

## *Day 1* Mombasa + Vipingo

### *Arrival + Transfer*

You'll arrive in Mombasa, where the lively buzz of piki pikis and tuk tuks fills the air, and women sell fresh mangoes from wheelbarrows. After a scenic two-hour drive, you'll reach Vipingo, home to Oceans Alive, and settle into Bahari Hai - a cozy, beachside spot with whitewashed rooms, a small pool, and spacious terraces to unwind. Dolphin, Juma, and Joseph will quickly make you feel like part of the family.

After a relaxed lunch, swim, and post-flight massage, you'll meet Des and Tilda, the passionate founders of Oceans Alive. They'll introduce you to their inspiring work and take you to the protected lagoon, before sundowners and supper back at base.



# Kenya *Itinerary*

## *Day 2 Vipingo*

### *Marine Projects + Permaculture*

Your day kicks off with a peaceful, meditative walk along the beach, setting the tone for a day of connection and impact. Then, you'll head over to Oceans Alive to meet Katana (Head of Marine) and dive straight into your first snorkel. You'll swim above vibrant coral beds and hear first-hand about the marine restoration efforts happening beneath the surface.

Marine restoration involves several tasks, with the key ones being coral cleaning, out planting, and building new coral structures. You'll start with coral cleaning, heading into the shallow waters to find the baby coral in the nursery. Armed with a brush, you'll gently clean the coral and, if they're ready, help attach them to artificial reefs, contributing to the growth of a new underwater ecosystem.

Lunch back at Bahari Hai - a perfect break before heading into the afternoon's work.

Next, you'll dive into a permaculture project with the lovely Leah - a crucial initiative for building sustainable food sources. With the fishing ban in place, Oceans Alive has established a community farm where families learn about organic vertical gardening, and water recycling. Working alongside Leah, the project lead, you'll help local families grow their own food, reducing their reliance on the ocean, and creating new income streams.

You'll wrap up the day with a relaxed dinner at Vipingo Ridge, just a short 10-minute drive away. This is a stunning spot, with breathtaking ocean views, and resident giraffe, who might just stop by to say hello. It's the perfect spot to unwind after a fulfilling day of marine work and community connection.

# Kenya *Itinerary*

## Day 3 Vipingo + Kilifi

### *Marine Projects + Dhow*


Your day kicks off back with Katana, for a spot of plug creation. On the beach, you'll get hands-on, crafting small concrete plugs the size of an egg cup, and attaching pieces of broken coral to them. These plugs will be placed in the coral nursery, sparking the restoration of the underwater ecosystem. It's a simple but brilliant way to contribute to the ocean's recovery.

After lunch, you'll head to Kilifi for a magical sunset dhow ride along Kilifi Creek. Set sail on a traditional wooden dhow, gliding through calm waters, surrounded by lush mangroves and the peaceful beauty of the creek.

The gentle breeze and golden light of the setting sun make it the perfect way to unwind.

Along the way, you might spot dolphins and tropical birds swooping by. It's a serene experience that connects you to the natural beauty of the area, leaving you feeling peaceful and inspired before heading to Salties for supper.



A photograph of two elephants walking across a savanna at sunset. The sky is filled with large, golden, and blue clouds. The elephants are silhouetted against the bright horizon. The foreground is a dry, golden field.

Just wanted to drop you a note and say from the bottom of my heart how fabulous our trip was. It was the perfect combination of challenge and fun, mixed together with a group of amazing women and life-affirming experiences.

# Kenya *Itinerary*

## Day 4 Vipingo

### *Marine Projects + Jiko Stoves*

Back to the ocean for your third morning of marine work, focusing on creating structures made of concrete and wire. These are built on land and then submerged into the ocean, where new coral plugs will be attached, helping to restore the reef.

Lunch and downtime will be spent at The Twisted Fig, one of Tilda's favourite spots, before you dive into the afternoon's community work. In the afternoon, you'll help with an amazing community initiative – building jiko stoves (think mini Agas). These efficient stoves help reduce reliance on fishing by allowing fish to be fried, extending their shelf life, and easing pressure on local reefs.

Unlike traditional open wood fires that contribute to deforestation, jiko stoves use minimal wood, making them more eco-friendly. As you build these stoves, you'll see firsthand how your work is reducing wood consumption and protecting local fish stocks, making a real difference for families and the environment.

Dinner will be back at Bahari Hai.



# Kenya *Itinerary*

## Day 5 Vipingo

### *Marine Project + Water Appreciation Project*

You'll head back to the ocean for your final day with Katana, wrapping up any remaining marine tasks before enjoying some peaceful time in the water – your very own underwater safari. Afterward, you'll spend the afternoon back in the community.

After lunch at Bahari Hai you'll head back into the community to get involved with the Water Appreciation Project, another unique opportunity to experience village life up close. This project is all about supporting those who struggle to carry heavy water buckets, ensuring they have access to clean water.



It's a simple but impactful task, and one that's deeply appreciated by the community. As you connect with local families and hear their stories, you'll see first-hand how small acts of kindness can create a lasting difference.

Supper will be at the Beach Bar, another local favourite.



# Kenya *Itinerary*

## Day 6 Vipingo

### *Church Service + Relaxation*

After spending the week immersing yourself in the local community, you'll be invited to join their vibrant Sunday celebrations at the local church. This is a truly special experience, where you'll be welcomed with open arms to sing, dance, and take part in the joyous service. It's a unique opportunity to connect with the heart of the community and share in their traditions and spirit.

Following the service, you'll head to the beach bar for a laid-back lunch, where you can relax, soak up the sun, and enjoy the tranquil beach atmosphere. It's the perfect way to unwind and reflect on the incredible experiences of the week.

Later, you'll make your way to Vipingo for supper, where you'll celebrate the end of phase one. It'll be a time to toast to all the memories made, the connections forged, and the impact you've had, as you look ahead to the next exciting next chapter of this impactful experience.



# Kenya *Itinerary*

## *Days 7-8 Ngutuni Camp & Tsavo East National Park* *Safari + Cycling*

Next, you'll embark on the safari phase of your adventure, heading into the heart of Tsavo East National Park, famous for its vast elephant herds. This safari will be guided by the renowned Chris Angel, one of Kenya's top wildlife experts. Chris will bring the plains to life, explaining the delicate and often harsh ecosystem, while helping you spot herds of elephants, prides of lions, and flocks of birds. With his expert team, you'll experience the wild in a way few others do.


You'll start early at 6:30 am, with the first part of the journey taking about two hours to Bachuma, where you'll stop for refreshments and explore the large local craft centre.

Then, your safari adventure kicks off with a gentle cycling challenge along an open pipeline route. The ride is smooth, flat, and peaceful, stretching between 6 to 11km, offering a relaxed way to enjoy the surroundings. With a few refreshments stops along the way, you'll reach Tsavo's main gate in about an hour.

Your first night will be spent at Ngutuni, a local favourite. The décor is simple, but what makes it unforgettable is the elephant herds that come to the watering hole right in front of the camp.

This is one of those hidden gems where you'll be treated to incredible wildlife sightings. Brace yourself for an unforgettable evening with elephants in the wild.





“ Having never had a gap year, been camping, been away without family, been to Africa or known anyone on the trip beforehand I was taking a big Leap into the unknown.....and I LOVED every minute. It was a wonderful and unique experience.

# Kenya *Itinerary*

## *Days 9-10* Hildana Camp & Tsavo East National Park

### *Safari + Relaxing*

To end your incredible adventure, you'll spend the final two nights at the glorious Hildana Camp, a true treat to wrap up this unforgettable journey. Nestled in a stunning location, Hildana Lodge offers a blend of luxury, comfort, and nature that's hard to beat. The camp is perched along the riverbank, surrounded by lush landscapes and breathtaking views, making it the perfect place to unwind and reflect on the incredible experiences you've had.

Your time at Hildana will be all about relaxation and indulgence. The camp's rustic yet refined style creates an intimate atmosphere, with spacious rooms that overlook the river, letting you wake up to the sounds of nature each day. As the sun sets, you'll have the chance to relax on your private terrace, cocktail in hand, taking in the panoramic views of the surrounding wilderness.

The activities at Hildana are designed for ultimate relaxation and enjoyment. You'll have the option to take a leisurely game drive, explore the area on guided walks, or simply unwind by the pool with a book in hand, enjoying the peaceful surroundings. The camp's expert guides will also be available to share their knowledge of the local wildlife and environment, ensuring you leave with a deeper appreciation for this incredible part of Kenya.

As your adventure winds down, you'll enjoy exquisite meals, often served outdoors under the stars, as you reflect on the memories and connections you've made. It's the perfect way to end your journey in style – surrounded by nature, comfort, and a true sense of peace. Whether you choose to relax or explore, Hildana Lodge offers an unforgettable experience that's the perfect conclusion to an epic adventure.

# Kenya *Itinerary*

## *Day 11* Return to Mombasa

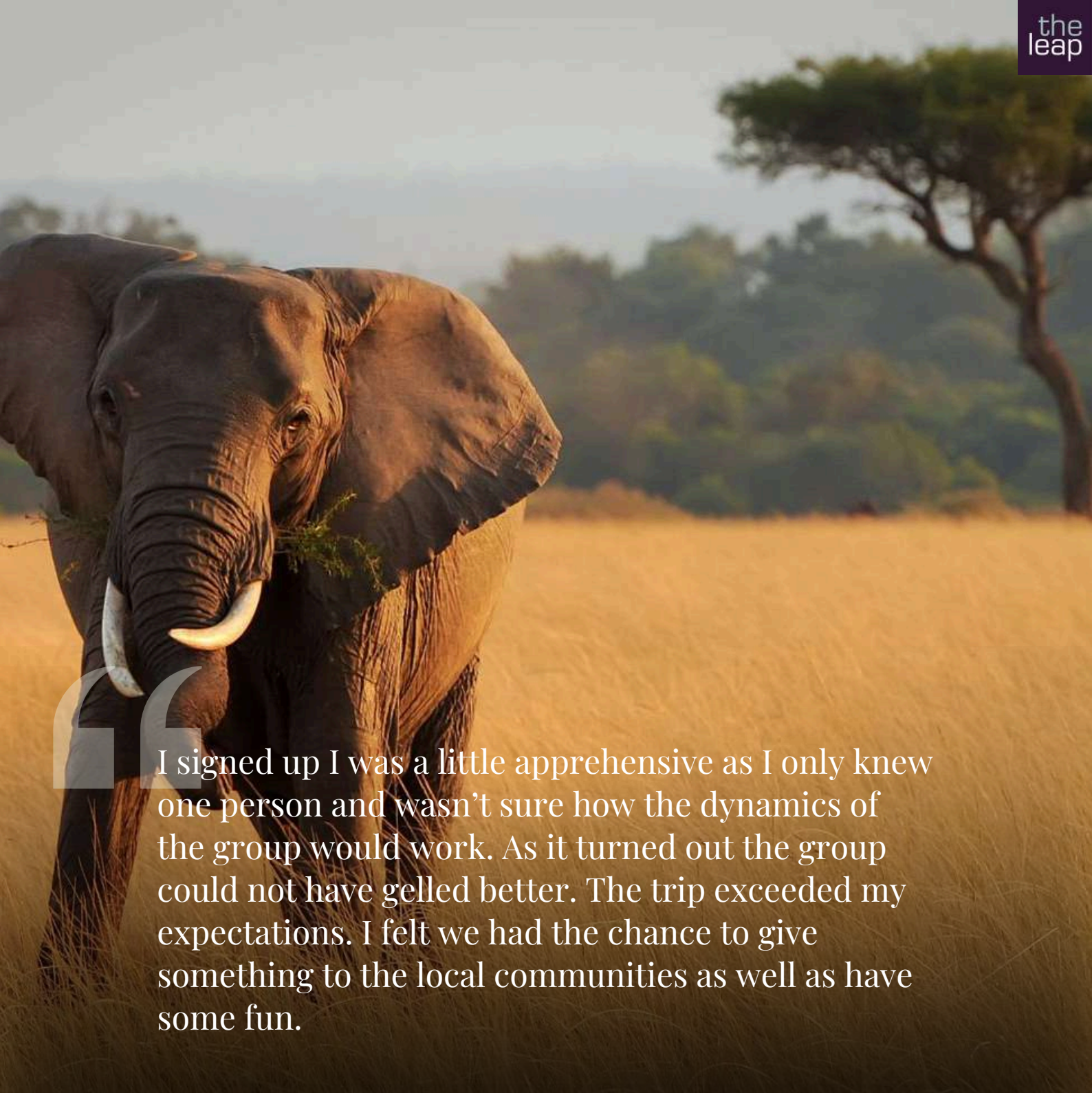
### *Fly Home*

After your final game drive, Chris will take you to Voi train station, where you'll board the train back to Mombasa for your flight. This journey is another unforgettable experience, as the train winds its way through ever-changing landscapes, offering you a unique view of Kenya's stunning countryside.

By the end of the trip, you'll feel:

- Energised by the perfect balance of physical challenges and mindful moments that have rejuvenated your body and spirit.
- Inspired by the meaningful connections you've made with local communities, contributing to vital projects that protect and nurture the environment.
- Fulfilled from embracing new cultures, gaining fresh perspectives, and finding joy in every step of the journey.
- Reconnected with your sense of adventure, having broken free from routine and rediscovered your passion for life.



A large elephant with prominent tusks is shown in profile, facing left, in a savanna landscape. The elephant is eating green foliage. The background features a golden-brown field, a line of green trees, and a hazy sky. A large, semi-transparent quotation mark is positioned to the left of the text.

I signed up I was a little apprehensive as I only knew one person and wasn't sure how the dynamics of the group would work. As it turned out the group could not have gelled better. The trip exceeded my expectations. I felt we had the chance to give something to the local communities as well as have some fun.

# Kenya *Staying & Food*

## Bahari Hai

You'll stay beachside at Bahari Hai, our volunteer house in Vipingo, just north of Mombasa and a short hop from Kilifi. This cozy home is simple – nothing fancy – but offers everything you need to unwind. Expect light, whitewashed rooms, a small pool, spacious terraces to relax on – right in the beach. Each room comes with its own ensuite shower. You'll be looked after by the wonderful Bahari family. Dolphin will ensure you are comfortable, Godfrey will cook delicious meals, and Joseph and Juma will guide your daily activities.

## Ngutuni Safari Lodge

A mid-range safari lodge but it never disappoints with regard to its game and hospitality – it's a local gem.

<https://kenyagamesanctuaries.com/>

## Hildana Camp

A spot of luxury so you finish off your adventure in style.

<https://www.thehildanalodge.com/>

## Meals

At Bahari Hai, you'll be treated to delicious, home-cooked meals prepared by Godfrey, our talented cook. Expect a variety of dishes, from tender grilled meats to fresh seafood and tropical fruits. If you have any special dietary requirements, just let us know – we're happy to accommodate your needs.

Throughout your stay, you'll have access to safe drinking water, tea, coffee. After a day of adventure, there's nothing better than relaxing on the terrace with a sundowner, enjoying the serene atmosphere as the sun sets and so a 'pay as you go bar' will be set up to keep life simple.

# Project *Background*



We're proud to work alongside Oceans Alive, an award-winning community initiative founded by Tilda and Des Bowden. Their vision was to create positive environmental, economic, and socio-cultural change in the Kuruwitu area. You'll be working directly with Tilda, one of the driving forces behind the project, and will benefit from her boundless enthusiasm and deep experience. In response to rapidly declining fish stocks in the Kuruwitu Lagoon, Tilda and Des established Kenya's first Locally Managed Marine Area (LMMA).

Their groundbreaking work has not only helped restore the lagoon's health but has also provided the community with alternative livelihoods, reducing their dependence on overfishing. Oceans Alive's success has gained international recognition, with King Charles visiting last year and becoming a passionate supporter of the initiative.

By working with Oceans Alive, you'll dive into a unique blend of marine, environmental, and community development projects - all interconnected to create lasting positive change in this stunning coastal region.

<https://www.oceansalive.org/>

# Kenya *Costs 2026 & 2027*

2026 - £3550 (10-DAY LEAP)

2027 - £3800 (10-DAY LEAP)

## **INCLUDED:**

- All volunteering project materials
- Transport throughout
- Food and accommodation as described
- Entrance fees to National Park
- Pre-departure briefing
- Leap T-shirt
- Safety and induction course on arrival
- Airport pick-up and return transfers for team flight

## **NOT INCLUDED:**

- International flights
- ETA
- Travel insurance
- Soft drinks and alcoholic drinks etc
- Laundry fees
- Private transfers to and from the airport if you do not arrive on the main team flight
- Food as described through itinerary

SEE OUR WEBSITE FOR DATES & AVAILABILITY

# Kenya *Nitty Gritty*

## What to Pack?

### Clothes

Consider the climate when packing; it's hot and often humid. Pack lightweight and cool clothes. On safari it can get chilly at night, so you'll need a light fleece and cotton trousers. Laundry is included at Bahari Hai.

- Sports tops and shorts are what you'll spend most of the time in.
- T-shirts - long and short sleeves
- Swimsuits - you wear these every day so bring lots.
- Sun hat
- UV sun rash vest - essential for snorkelling
- Feel good clothes for the evenings
- Reef shoes - essential
- Flip-flops / sliders / crocs
- 1 pair of casual summer shoes for wandering about / going out
- 1 pair of trainers for cycle / safari



# Kenya *Nitty Gritty*

## What to Pack?

### Equipment

- Reusable metal water bottles
- Head torch
- 2 x towels (quick drying microfibre ones are best)
- Day rucksack
- Your main bag MUST be a rucksack or soft duffel bag - no rigid suitcases
- UK plug adapter - only for USA and EU leapers.
- Sunglasses
- 1 pair of working gloves – a pair of sturdy gardening gloves will be perfect
- Snorkel and mask ESSENTIAL. Please consider leaving these behind so they can be donated to Oceans Alive.
- Portable phone charger
- Water proof camera case
- A hardback notebook and pens/pencil

### Toiletries & Medical

- Basic everyday toiletries
- Sun cream factor 50 REEF FRIENDLY ONLY PLEASE
- Insect repellent - Jungle formula works best
- Solid shampoo bars (avoid plastic where possible)
- After sun
- Hand sanitiser
- Insect repellent
- Antibacterial spray/cream for open wounds.
- Rehydration powders
- Savlon
- Antihistamines
- E45/Sudocream
- Immodium
- Mediplasters
- Personal Medication: Bring extra supplies, know the generic names of your medication, and ensure you can manage allergies (e.g. carry an epipen if necessary)

A man wearing an orange t-shirt, white shorts, and a fedora-style hat stands on a sandy beach. He is holding a black bicycle that has a bright yellow cooler mounted on the back rack. He is looking out towards the ocean where waves are breaking. The sky is clear and blue. A large, faint quotation mark is visible on the left side of the image, framing the text.

The planning that you and your team put into the trip made it so special. Your dedication and hard work, together with your amazing team made the trip most memorable.



Reserve your place

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