



the
leap

GAP YEAR PROGRAMME

Leap to Kenya

MARINE CONSERVATION + COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT + SAFARI

Kenya *Inspired*

This 4-week programme in Kenya is about creating connections, driving change, and understanding why your actions matter.

LOCATIONS:

INDIAN OCEAN + TSAVO NATIONAL
PARK

ACCOMMODATION:

PRIVATE HOUSE + SAFARI CAMPS

ENVIRONMENTS:

BEACH + BUSH

PROJECTS:

MARINE + SOCIAL IMPACT +
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

TEAM SIZE:

18 PER DEPARTURE

SOCIAL:

BUZZY VIBES

FITNESS:

AVERAGE

STAY LENGTH:

4 WEEKS

Reserve your place

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



You'll spend a month living and working in a vibrant coastal community—long enough to properly settle in, make genuine connections, and get involved in a wide variety of marine conservation and community development projects.

Each day brings something different. You might start by snorkelling over coral reefs, helping with turtle conservation, or collecting data for marine research. Then you'll head into the village to build a jiko stove, plant crops in a community garden, or work on water access initiatives.

It's hands-on, varied, and full of purpose—and every project is rooted in local needs and long-term impact. Because you're based in one place, you'll become part of the local rhythm—joining church services, learning to make mandozas, and getting to know the people behind the projects.

And when it's time to unwind? Think safari drives, dhow cruises, scuba diving, and beach hangs with your team. You'll leave Kenya with stories to tell, friendships that stick, and a whole new perspective on what it means to travel with purpose.

SOUTH SUDAN

ETHIOPIA

UGANDA

SOMALIA

KENYA

TANZANIA

INDIAN OCEAN

Tsavo East National Park
Optional Safari

3 Kilifi
Dhow Ride + Optional Scuba Diving

2 Vipingo
Marine Conservation
+ Community Development

1 Mombasa
Arrival / Departure

4



Kenya *Itinerary*

Days 1-2 Mombasa/Vipingo

Arrival + Settle in

You'll be picked up from Mombasa airport, ready for your first taste of Africa. As you journey through the lively streets, you'll weave through bustling tuk-tuks and wheelbarrows piled high with fresh fruits and vegetables. The drive will take about 1.5 hours, before you arrive at your home for the next few weeks, Bahari Hai.

Your first day will be spent with your team leaders, Joseph and Juma, who will introduce you to the inspiring projects supported by Oceans Alive and explain how you'll be getting involved. They'll also take you on a tour of the surrounding area, showing you the best spots for downtime around Vipingo. It's the perfect chance to decompress and fully appreciate your stunning new home by the beach.



Kenya *Itinerary*

Programme Overview

Throughout your 4 weeks, Monday to Friday, you'll dive into a mix of marine, community, and environmental projects – all aligned with Oceans Alive's mission to protect ocean health and support local livelihoods.

No two days are the same. One morning you might be snorkelling over coral reefs, monitoring marine life; by the afternoon, you're in the village helping to build a jiko stove or assisting with a school garden. Then, as the day winds down, you could be sailing on a dhow at sunset, kicking a football with local kids, or exploring a colourful market.

Every day brings something new – hands-on work that connects you to the community, mixed with moments of adventure and discovery. From scuba diving beyond the reef to tracking wildlife on safari, the variety keeps things fresh, exciting, and grounded in purpose.

This isn't just a routine—it's a full, vibrant experience where marine conservation, cultural exchange, and exploration come together to create something unforgettable.



Kenya *Itinerary*

Marine Projects

Oceans Alive launched Kenya's first locally managed marine area to help reverse the decline in fish stocks in the Kuruwitu Lagoon. The project provides essential support to the community, helping locals explore alternative livelihoods and reduce their dependence on fishing.

It's a success that's now being replicated along the coast and has caught international attention - King Charles has even visited and is a big supporter. Part of your week will be spent with Katana, the leading marine conservationist, to help restore the lagoon and bring it back to its best health. Your tasks will include:

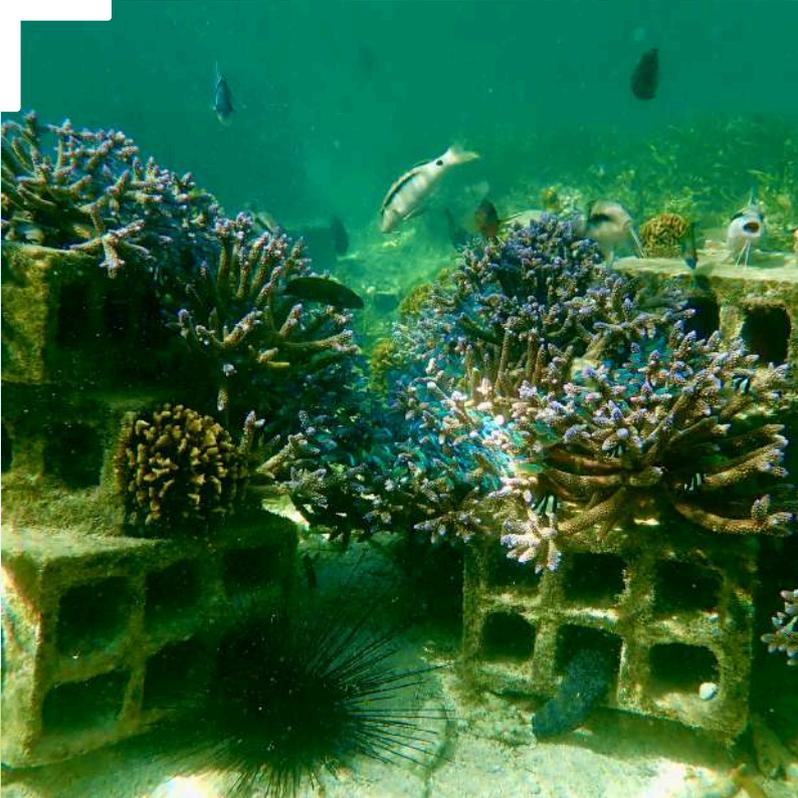
Species surveying and charting

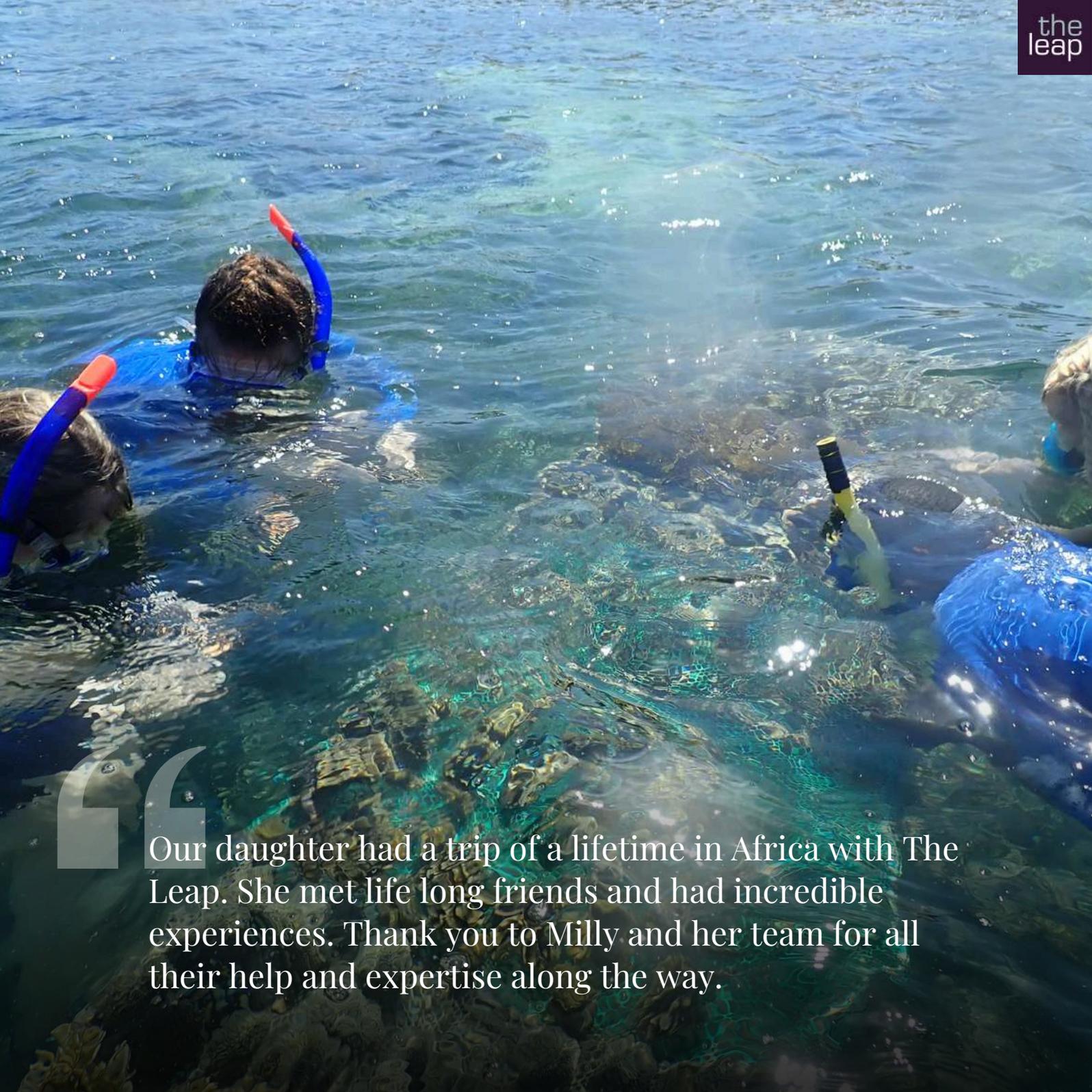
Snorkel on, you'll explore the lagoon, charting the species living there, whilst you marvel at the marine life, from octopuses and sea anemones to colourful corals and vibrant clams.

Coral regeneration

It's a bit like underwater gardening. Metal structures are placed in the lagoon, where broken coral fragments are attached. Once the coral grows strong, it's replanted onto the reef. Your tasks will include:

- **Plug creation:** You'll make small concrete plugs, about the size of an egg cup, where the coral fragments are attached. These plugs are placed in the coral nursery.
- **Coral gardening:** With snorkel and mask, you'll gently clean the coral plugs in the nursery to help them thrive. When the coral is ready, you'll assist in moving it to artificial reefs.
- **Building artificial reefs:** You'll help build artificial reef structures using concrete or wire. These are submerged in the ocean to provide a base for the coral plugs you've helped grow to be attached to.





Our daughter had a trip of a lifetime in Africa with The Leap. She met life long friends and had incredible experiences. Thank you to Milly and her team for all their help and expertise along the way.

Kenya *Itinerary*

Community Projects

Once you understand the marine challenges the community faces, you'll see just how crucial it is to stop overfishing. But for families who rely on fishing as their only source of income, change doesn't happen overnight. That's where you come in.

Permaculture: Building sustainable food sources

With a fishing ban in place for six months each year, finding alternative food sources becomes essential. Oceans Alive has set up a thriving community farm where fishing families learn sustainable practices like organic permaculture, vertical gardening, and water recycling. This project boosts food security, elevates local living standards, and reduces the pressure on marine life.

You'll work alongside Leah, the project lead, introducing community members to these efficient gardening methods that use minimal space and maximise output by recycling household waste for compost and water. Many families now grow enough to feed themselves and even sell the surplus, creating new income streams while lessening their dependence on the ocean.



Kenya *Itinerary*

Community Projects



Jiko Stoves: Reducing Deforestation and Protecting Fish Stocks

Unlike traditional open wood fires that contribute to deforestation, these stoves are highly efficient, using minimal wood to generate high heat for cooking. Not only do they save valuable wood, but they also extend the shelf life of fish, reducing the need for daily catches.

As you help build these stoves, you'll see the difference you're making in the lives of local families - both by reducing their wood consumption and protecting the local fish stocks.

Kenya *Itinerary*

Community Projects

Beach clean-ups: Inspiring environmental stewardship

Beach clean-ups are more than just tidying up the shores. Working alongside residents, you'll find creative ways to repurpose the trash, turning plastic bottles into gardening tools or crafting colourful mobiles and keychains from discarded flip-flops. You'll have the chance to think outside the box, creating sustainable solutions that both engage and inspire the community to take better care of their environment.

Water Appreciation Project

This project provides essential support to the elderly and unwell villagers by delivering large water buckets from the village well to their home which is a daily challenge. Through this project, you'll help ease this burden, ensuring these community members have access to clean water. The task is simple yet deeply appreciated.





Kenya *Itinerary*

Privileged community interaction

What makes these projects truly special is the deep, authentic connection you'll experience with the community. You'll be welcomed into the lives of the locals in ways few visitors ever are.

You'll be invited to join Sunday church services, take part in a local football match, or even meet the local acrobatic club, who'll teach you a few impressive moves. You'll also learn to make mandozas (Kenyan fried dough) from the wonderful Godfrey.

These interactions go far beyond typical volunteering - they're a true privilege, offering an authentic glimpse into daily life and creating lasting connections. You'll leave not just with a richer appreciation for Kenyan culture but with friendships and memories that will stay with you forever.





Our daughter has had the most amazing time in Kenya, The Leap group have been fantastic with the organisation throughout, I always felt we were in good hands. The breadth of volunteering and involvement has been wonderful and I know this will have changed her life forever. Thank you.

Kenya *Itinerary*

Adventure interwoven

Your four weeks in Kenya will seamlessly blend meaningful community projects with adventure and exploration. Whether it's a safari in Tsavo National Park or completing a scuba diving course, your adventure is yours to shape.

But it's not all about the big-ticket experiences - there are plenty of simple joys to enjoy too. Exploring the coastline, cruising along Kilifi Creek in a traditional dhow at sunset, haggling in local markets, horse riding, or relaxing with sundowners at Salties. Pizza nights, golf at Vipingo Ridge, and impromptu adventures will all become part of your Kenya story.



Kenya *Itinerary*

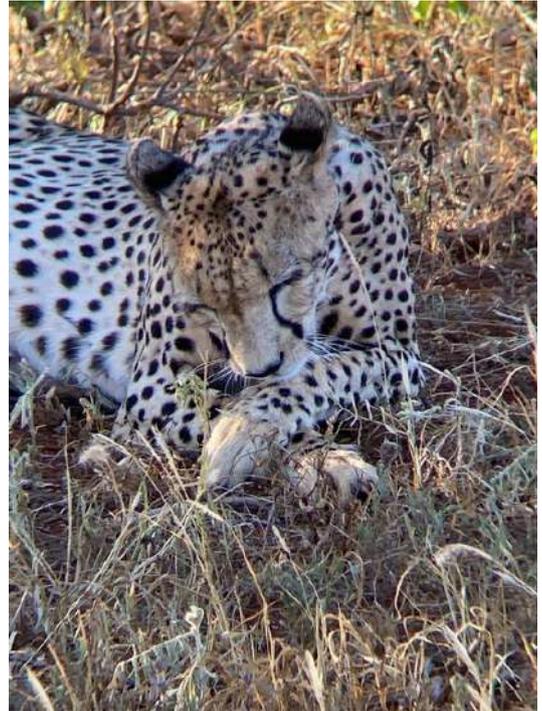
Adventure interwoven

Safari

No trip to Kenya is complete without a safari, and the famous Tsavo National Park offers the perfect opportunity to witness the incredible wildlife and stunning landscapes.

It's the ultimate 'beach to bush' experience, and is organised by Chris Angell who is one of Kenya's top safari guides.

This is optional and you'll decide when you get there - budget around £595 (subject to change due to seasonality and National Park Fees) for 3 nights per person, including transfers, accommodation, meals, and game drives.



Please note

These adventures are optional and can be decided when you arrive, allowing you to tailor your experience to your interests. Both the safari and scuba course are paid directly in Kenya, so you have the flexibility to choose what fits best into your journey.

Kenya *Itinerary*

Adventure interwoven

PADI Scuba Diving Course

For those drawn to the ocean, you have the option to complete an **Open Water** or **Advanced Scuba Diving** course.

It's an incredible way to explore the underwater world beyond the reef.

An open water course is about \$575 and includes all equipment, training, and certification.



Please note

These adventures are optional and can be decided when you arrive, allowing you to tailor your experience to your interests. Both the safari and scuba course are paid directly in Kenya, so you have the flexibility to choose what fits best into your journey.



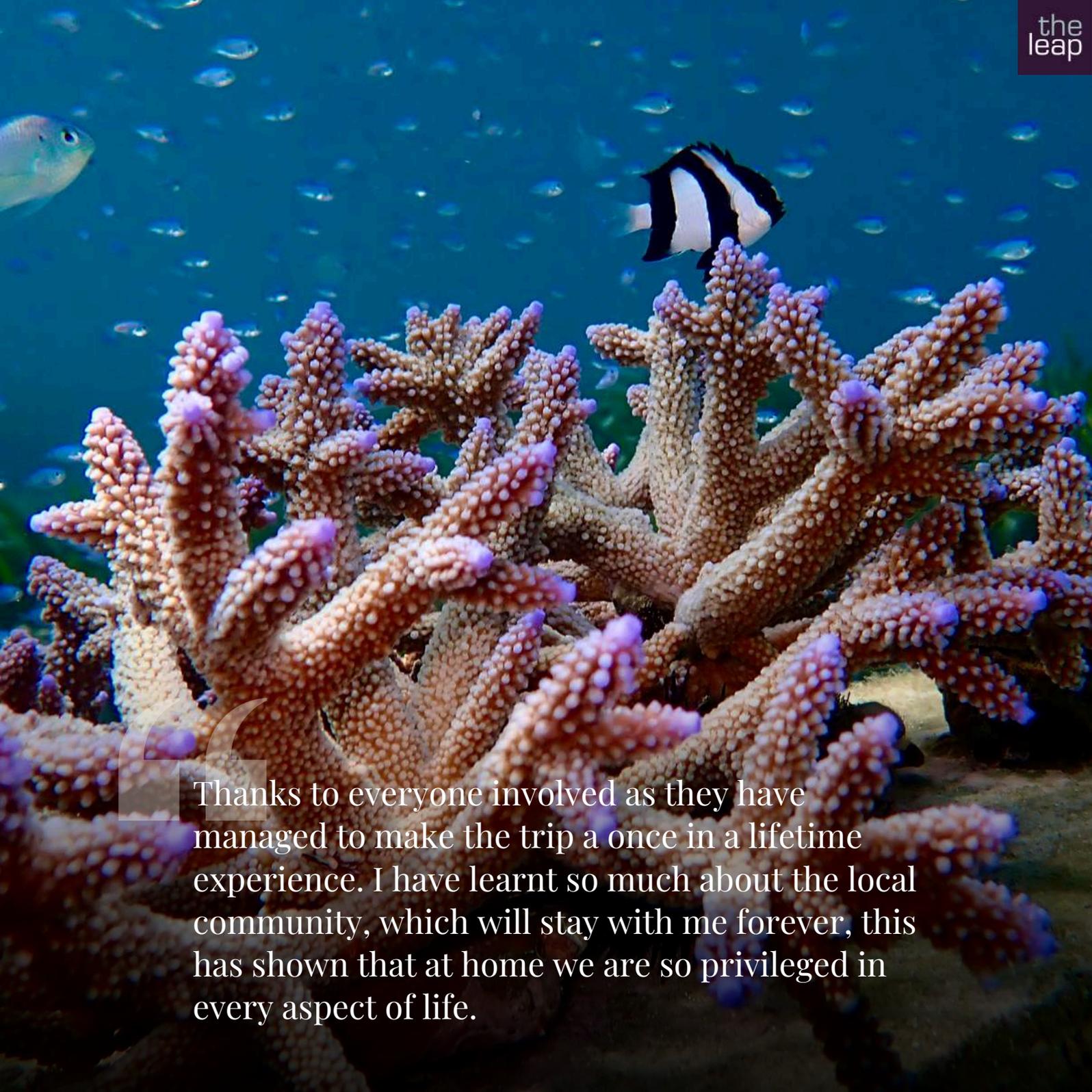
Kenya *Itinerary*

Days 28 Mombasa

Departure

On your final day you will be driven back to Mombasa airport for your departure backpack and incredible memories in tow.



The background of the entire image is an underwater scene. In the foreground, there is a large, branching coral reef structure with a pinkish-purple hue. A black and white striped fish is swimming above the coral. The water is a deep blue, and many small, silvery fish are visible in the background. The lighting is bright, suggesting a sunny day at the surface.

Thanks to everyone involved as they have managed to make the trip a once in a lifetime experience. I have learnt so much about the local community, which will stay with me forever, this has shown that at home we are so privileged in every aspect of life.

Kenya *Staying & Food*

Accommodation

You'll stay beachside at Bahari Hi, our beautiful volunteer house in Vipingo, just 1.5 hours from Mombasa and a short hop from Kilifi. Kilifi is famous for its kite surfing and the relaxed vibe at Salties bar - your weekend go-to for some downtime.

Picture the whitest of sand, warm tropical water, turtles, migrating humpback whales, dolphins, and more tropical fish than you can shake a stick at. Utterly stunning.

At Bahari High, you'll be looked after by the wonderful Bahari family. Dolphine will ensure you're comfortable, Godfrey will whip up delicious meals, and Joseph and Juma, your team leaders, will guide your daily activities. The house is cosy with 2-3 bedroom bungalows, each with ensuite bathrooms, set in a lovely garden with a small pool and plenty of communal spaces. It's got that perfect 'home-from-home' feel.

Food

Godfrey will cook delicious, home-cooked meals. From flavourful stews and grilled meats to fresh seafood and tropical fruits. If you have any special dietary requirements, please let us know, as these can be easily accommodated.

Safe drinking water, tea, coffee, and fruit squash will be available throughout your stay, though any additional soft drinks, beer, or other beverages will be at your own expense.



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.

Kenya *Costs 2026 & 2027*

2026 - £3760 (4-WEEK LEAP)

2027 - £3850 (4-WEEK LEAP)

INCLUDED:

- Pre-departure briefing
- 24-hour emergency back-up, management and support by UK and in-country team
- Safety and induction course on arrival
- Food and accommodation throughout
- Airport transfers for the team flight
- All transport to and from projects
- Leap T-shirt

NOT INCLUDED:

- Travel insurance
- Medical expenses (reclaimable through travel insurance)
- Private transfers to and from the airport if you do not arrive on the main team flight
- Food and accommodation if away from the programme
- Alcoholic drinks and some soft drinks
- Laundry fees
- Tourist visa/ETA
- Safari or scuba diving (optional extras)

SEE OUR WEBSITE FOR DATES & AVAILABILITY

A photograph of three young men in scuba gear floating in the ocean. They are all smiling and looking towards the camera. The man on the left is making a peace sign. The background shows a blue sky with some clouds and a distant shoreline with buildings.

“Definitely recommend The Leap, very professional. All the stress is taken away and everyone is very helpful. No question was a silly question in preparing my son to travel and I felt he was in safe hands.”

Kenya *Nitty Gritty*

What to Pack?

Clothes

- Sports tops and shorts are what you'll spend most of the time in. There is a great market in the village, where they sell great second-hand clothes cheaply - especially good for when you are working in the community as clothes get dirty
- T-shirts - long and short sleeves
- Swimsuits - you wear these every day so bring lots. With bikinis, no thongs please
- Sun hats - plural
- UV sun rash vest - essential for snorkelling
- Feel good clothes for the evenings and going out at the weekends
- 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/football/golf



Kenya *Nitty Gritty*

What to Pack?

Equipment

- 2+ reusable metal water bottles
- Head torch (with sufficient batteries)
- 2 x towels (quick drying microfibre ones are best)
- Day rucksack and bum bag
- Your main bag MUST be a rucksack or soft duffel bag - NO rigid suitcases
- UK plug adapter - only for USA and EU leapers.
- Sunglasses (bring 2 pairs - not designer - they are essential and you need a backup pair)
- 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
- Waterproof camera case
- Light raincoat/poncho
- A hardback notebook and pens/pencil
- Bamboo toothbrush for cleaning coral

Optional

- Spare cheap phone in case you lose your mobile
- Laptop or tablet - not essential but useful
- Underwater camera such as GoPro



Kenya *Nitty Gritty*

What to Pack?

Toiletries

- Basic everyday toiletries
- Sun cream factor 50 - REEF FRIENDLY ONLY
PLEASE
- Lip balm
- Insect repellent - jungle formula works best
- Solid shampoo bars (avoid plastic where possible)
- Travel wash - for hand washing clothes



Medical

- Immodium
- Rehydration powders
- Savlon
- Antihistamines
- E45/Sudocrem
- Mediplasters
- Bite cream
- Asthmatic volunteers must bring their own inhalers and make sure there is enough to last the whole trip
- Volunteers with allergies must bring an epi-pen
- Diabetics must bring their own insulin/equivalent medication



The last few weeks have been the best of my life. The amount of incredible memories made and people met is amazing. Such an eye-opening, unforgettable adventure, something everyone should experience.

Kenya *Nitty Gritty*

Communication

We will provide you with the emergency numbers for both The Leap and our overseas team. If you have any issues or concerns at any point, please talk to your guides who will do all they can to resolve any issues or contact us.

Your Health

Each location will have first aid on site. For more serious emergencies: Volunteers need to pay for minor medical expenses on their credit card and then reclaim these expenses back through their travel insurance. In an emergency, and where evacuation by air is necessary, the insurers will settle bills directly.

Your Team

Maximum of 18 and a minimum of 8 volunteers per departure. The programme cannot run with fewer than this. 5 to 6 weeks prior to departure, if the minimum group size hasn't been met, you will be offered an alternative placement or a postponement, depending on availability and preference. Anyone aged 18- 22 can participate.

Kenya *Nitty Gritty*

Behaviour

This is a team experience and looking out and being respectful to one another is vital to create a positive experience for all. However, if anyone puts themselves or others at risk, does not listen to safety advice and is being disrespectful to the team and staff then we have to revert to our discipline procedures. These involve: a verbal warning, followed by a written warning, followed by a dismissal from the program – with no refund. Please do not be that person who ruins it for everyone else.

Managing Expectations

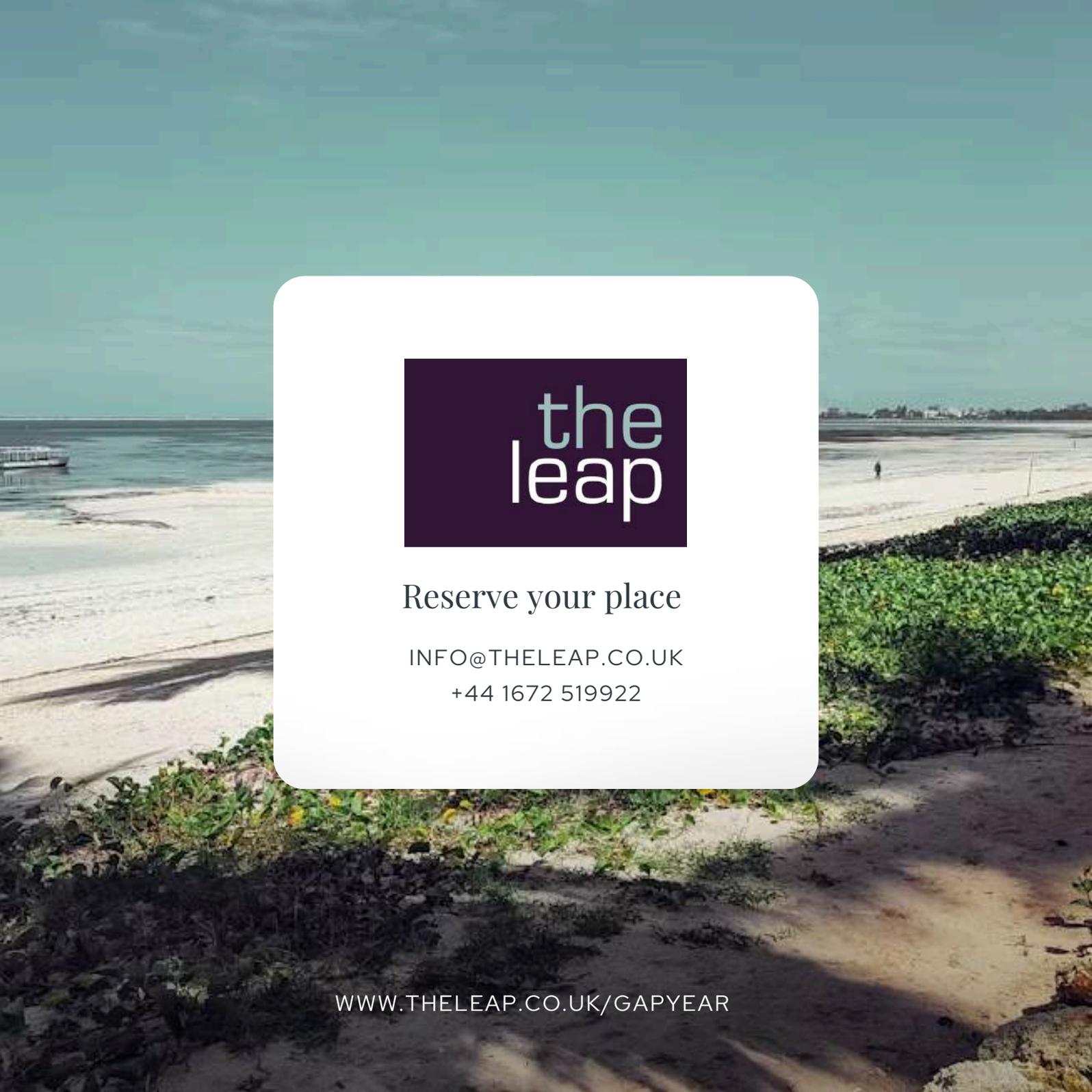
We do our best to describe our programme as accurately as we can so that you have realistic expectations. It's important that you read this document carefully, and listen to the pre-departure zoom, so you are fully prepared with what lies ahead. Please remain flexible, as tasks and projects may change, depending on the needs of the communities, projects on the ground and weather.

Your Safety

We prioritise safety in our gap year programmes through detailed risk assessments, safety audits, and adherence to industry standards such as BS8848, Trading Standards, the Year Out Group, and the Gap Year Association. On arrival, teams receive thorough safety briefings and are provided with secure accommodation, risk-assessed vehicles, medical evacuation access, and reliable emergency communications.

Accreditations

We're a member of the Year Out Group and the first UK company accredited by the Gap Year Association.



the
leap

Reserve your place

INFO@THELEAP.CO.UK

+44 1672 519922

WWW.THELEAP.CO.UK/GAPYEAR