



Dine watching the hippos, crocodiles at Roberts Camp

It is a laid-back place where you can enjoy rustic ambience

BY EUNICE KILONZO

If you like being close to nature — to see and hear wild animals and birds pepper your background — get off the beaten path in Roberts Camp on the shores of Lake Baringo and discover hidden treasures of activities. Or just check in and enjoy the sundowner, watch the sunbathing hippos and crocodiles or the many beautiful birds chirping.

In just under five-hour drive from Nairobi, Roberts Camp is a great off-the-road experience for campers.

This off town location past Marigat town is serene as it is thrilling: green grounds, crisp fresh air, drop-dead silence except when the hippos grunt when basking in the sun.

At night, the hippos come out with their young ones to graze on the lawns and retreat to the water when the sun embers appear at dawn.

Rustic ambience

Rocks that overlook the orange-brown waters of Lake Baringo surround the beautiful oasis. Half alive, half-dead trees stand in silence in these waters and as the sun rises, it looks like a glossy postcard.

Watching from the Thirsty Goat Pub and Restaurant, you will be completely won over by the rustic ambience and the soothing view of Lake Baringo.

The bartender is always on hand to serve the variety of cocktails, cold beers and wines among other drinks on their menu.

The restaurant is a la carte and it is advisable as you confirm your room/ tent reservation to also make your food order.



Roberts Camp, on the shores of Lake Baringo.

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On the right is an open field for camping. During my visit, there was a Belgian family of four who were at the camp. The parents had visited the camp 20 years ago and had returned with their teenage sons.

Overhead and perched on trees are many beautiful birds, with blue and green feathers and bright coloured beaks. If you're a bird watcher, this is your paradise. You can also take an early morning boat ride in the lake to see the sun rise and feed fish to the eagles.

How it started

Roberts Camp started out as a dream by an English man, David Roberts and his wife Betty in the early 1950's, who has set out to hunt crocodiles

Roberts Camp, on the shores of Lake Baringo.

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on the shores of Lake Baringo. They later set up a fishing business—Kampi ya Samaki— where the tilapia caught on the shores of the expansive lake were frozen and transported to nearby Nakuru and onwards to Nairobi.

During this time, they stayed in tents before constructing a house where they lived with their six children. But just at the time of Kenya's independence, the floods destroyed the fish factory and the house.

The family moved out of their home into what is now Coots Cottage, and a second factory was built. They later started a tourist business called Fish Eagle Camp. This later became the Lake Baringo Club.

In 1966, David died. But, his wife Betty let his dream live on and moved to build a campsite with four cottages and four rondavels (westernised version of the African-style hut) which is now Roberts Camp.

The road between Marigat and the junction leading up to the camp is under construction and is thus rugged and dusty. Also, if visiting the camp, make sure to drive up to Lake Bogoria and see the beautiful scenery with pink flamingos.

Bring along eggs that you can boil in the hot springs inside the Lake Bogoria Park. Don't forget your salt and seasoning.

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