

Irish Independent

ON SATURDAY

IRELAND'S BEST-SELLING NEWSPAPER

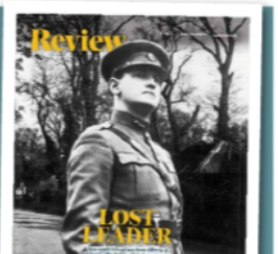
The 100 club

Four Irish centenarians tell their stories *Weekend*



Who really killed Collins?

Review



Top 50: The best footballers of 2022

Sport

Independent.ie

Saturday, August 13, 2022

€3.60 (€2.20 in Northern Ireland) C

Budget plan for double child benefit payment

∴ Families would get one-off bonus to be paid before end of year

Philip Ryan and Gabija Gataveckaitė

THE Government is considering a one-off double payment of the €140 child benefit sum as part of a cost-of-living package that will help parents.

The move, to be announced on Budget day, would be a huge boost to families, who would be in line for a €280 one-off payment if they have one child or €560 if they have two.

A family with three children would receive €840 if the policy is agreed by the coalition partners.

A family with twins would also get €840 as they receive one-and-a-half times the normal rate per child.

Under plans being discussed by Finance Minister Paschal Donohoe, Public Expenditure Minister Michael McGrath and Social Protection Minister Heather Humphreys, the payment would be made to families before Christmas.

It is seen as a universal measure as it would assist all families struggling with the cost of childcare on top of other necessary expenditures such as back-to-school costs that have rocketed due to record levels of inflation.

Full report: Pages 4-5



Blooming bliss: Ariany Menezes, from Drumcondra, at the National Botanic Gardens in Dublin yesterday. Curator Dr Darach Lupton says the impact of climate change means his team will have to reconsider what plants will thrive in the gardens in the future. Meanwhile, the Government has been accused of having no coherent plan to safeguard water supplies as the number of areas in drought, or running critically low, nears 100. **Pages 6-7** PHOTO: GERRY MOONEY

'Boy A' in Kriegel case is moved to adult prison

THE convicted teenage murderer in the Ana Kriegel case, known as Boy A, has been moved to an adult prison, the *Irish Independent* can reveal.

The murder and sexual assault of the 14-year-old schoolgirl in a derelict house in May 2018 shocked the nation and led to the conviction of two teenagers, who were sent to a juvenile detention facility.

In November 2019, Boy A was sentenced to life in jail for the murder and will serve an initial 12 years, followed by a review.

Full report: Page 8

Recommended retail price of the Irish Independent in ROI is €3.60 (€2.20 in Northern Ireland)
Vol. 131 No. 193 Irish Independent



13|08|2022

Irish Independent 
Weekend
Magazine

Tanya Sweeney:
‘Teen regrets?
I’ve quite a few’
**21 of the coolest
Irish cabin stays**
Donal Skehan’s
speedy salads

**‘I feel really
lucky. I did
everything’**

Four Irish centenarians tell their stories and share the secret to a long, happy life



Watching *The Lion King* as a young boy, I longed to see Africa, and now I was just three feet from two majestic lions in the heart of Kenya.

One of them snarled to let the other know it was time to move on and continue on their beat. It felt like a dream to hear them roar, to be nearby as they played with each other in their natural habitat, teasing and prowling as the sun beamed down.

Kenya is like nowhere I have ever seen, a magical wildlife haven. From the moment we arrived on safari, I was captivated by the wide rivers, the green, luscious grass on the plains, and the brown mountains in the background.

Travel is rebounding after the pandemic pause, and it feels like bucket-list trips have a new appeal. For me, that meant a safari, a trip that can take some planning. The climate in Kenya is warm and temperate all year round, but the Maasai Mara, the stunning area of vast plain where I watched those lions up close, is at its peak during the green season between April and June.

And it wasn't just lions. Rhinos, leopards, elephants and cheetahs — the so-called Big Five, representing safari royalty — were all spotted during our trip. In fact, there are more than 25,000 different animal species and a massive mix of up-close experiences throughout the country.

A hot-air balloon ride at sunrise with Governors' Balloon Safaris (governorsballoonsafaris.com; from €396-€491pp) gave another perspective on the continent. We spent about an hour soaring over rustling trees, rippling water and the animals below — the height adding to the glory of the Kenyan plains. Landing with a bump was a rush, too.

After our time in the sky, we were treated to a picnic breakfast al fresco with eggs, meat, vegetables and fresh fruits like mango, which is very popular in Kenya.

Our first base in the Maasai Mara, situated in south-west Kenya, was a camp named Emboo River. It claims to be the first fully eco-friendly camp in Kenya, with electric-powered jeeps (allowing for much quieter game drives) and eco-friendly products by Grounded, which I learn are sold by an Irishman in Kenya. The company was set up by Limerick man Eoin Flinn and his wife Megan Root, who live in Nairobi with their two children, seven-year-old Afya and four-year-old Ollie. Croom native Flinn also runs 254 Brewing, a name inspired by Kenya's international dialling code. Kenya is "a special place to live", he later tells me.

Food was delicious at Emboo River, too. Most of my meals were vegan, with some of the dishes including veggie kofta korma, grilled matoke (a type of banana) with lentil stew, chapati bread and ugali (a sort of stiff, maize flour porridge) served with spinach and a vegetable stew, kachumbari (a spicy Kenyan salad with onion and tomato), and mandazi (a type of pastry, which we ate filled with banana alongside kashata, a sweet bite that is part of Kenya's streetfood scene). A chickpea burger with fries and baobab mayonnaise was particularly tasty, too.

After a day out on safari, eating dinner under the stars and spending time afterwards by a roaring camp fire is an experience not to be missed. The stars gleamed brightly, the African air felt fresh, and we had the added security of guards around the camp — ensuring that we remained safe from any animals on the prowl during the night.

Many Kenyan people speak English along with their native language, Swahili. I loved learning from them throughout the trip — we were shown how to use Maasai bows and arrows by William Partois Ole Santian, for example, an expert hunter and one of the founders of the camp along with Belgian couple Valery Super and Loïc Amadó.

Our friendly guides, 22-year-old Emily Silantoi and 21-year-old Naserian Kimongo'o wore the tribal colours of the Maasai — a famous tribe that has held on to some of its culture and traditions despite changes in modern Kenya. During our stay, Silantoi shared her views on how important tourism is for the country to keep growing as an economy and to help bring local employment.

On our game drives, the highlights kept coming. Young wildebeest that looked just like Pumbaa from *The Lion King*. Giraffes tagging along after their mothers. Lions sleep more in the daytime, we learned, coming alive at night, when their exceptional eyesight helps hunting.

We heard more about Kenya along the way, too. As coffee connoisseurs know, the country is renowned for its coffee and tea. It is also the most successful African country in the Olympics, with a total of 113 medals to date.

After three days in the Maasai Mara, it was time to go to Diani, on the coast south of Mombasa, for a change of pace and white pebble sand beaches. Twin-centre itineraries

A hot-air balloon ride with Governors' Balloon Safaris; and (below) Diani Beach



Lions are king on a safari in Kenya

Looking for a bucket-list trip? The Maasai Mara and Kenyan coast could provide a once-in-a-lifetime wildlife adventure after our pandemic travel pause...

Don't miss

A visit to a Maasai cultural village helped me to understand their culture. We visited homes made of clay and water, learned about their lives, and I felt their respect for animals like cattle and nature is something many Irish would relate to.

like this are popular with many travellers to Kenya and East Africa, including honeymooners, as the coast can be gorgeously refreshing after a safari experience.

Our hotel was the Sands at Nomad, with superb seafood and Indian Ocean views, and we also took the chance to do an excursion in the Kisite Mpunguti Marine Park. Here, we got to see other types of wildlife — dolphins, starfish and coral reefs — while snorkelling 6km off the Kenyan coast. After the bush landscapes of the plains, the view of Wasini Island felt like a tropical paradise.

For our last night, we stayed at a camp quite close to the capital in Kenya called Gamewatchers, Nairobi Tented Camp — which meant we didn't have far to go to get to the airport as we departed for home. It's the only camp in Nairobi National Park, surprisingly close to the city.

A bucket-list adventure? Majestic Africa is truly worth seeing and magnificent Kenya is a wonderful place to experience the best of the safari and beaches.

Do it

Colin flew from Dublin to Nairobi via Qatar with Qatar Airways. Kenya Airways also flies via Heathrow. qatarairways.com; kenya-airways.com

Colin stayed at Emboo River Camp (emboo.camp; from €425pp for game packages); The Sands at Nomad (from €115pp per night; thesandsatnomad.com), and Nairobi Tented Camp (nairobitentedcamp.com; from €150pp).

More info

Colin was a guest of the Kenya Tourism Board. magicalkenya.com

Words by
Colin Brennan