

## Eating with the animals

August 2009

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*Sharing a meal is the best way to get to know someone - especially if they have four legs. Felice Hardy reveals where you can breakfast with the animals*



An inmate at Giraffe Manor may join you for breakfast, Nairobi, Kenya

### Nairobi, Kenya

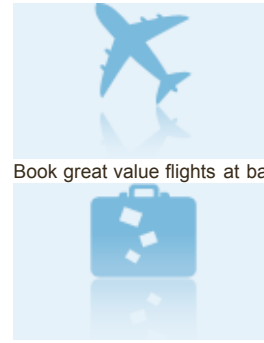
Giraffe Manor doubles as a hotel for humans and a rescue centre for giraffes injured or orphaned in the wild. The grounds are also home to a large family of warthogs, who scamper around like naughty Jack Russells. The tallest guests poke their heads through the windows while you breakfast in the dining room. The idea is to pass them food pellets with one hand and stroke their head with the other. Rooms cost £212 per night half board including wine with dinner, laundry and a sightseeing vehicle. +254 20 891 078, [giraffemanor.com](http://giraffemanor.com)

### Bern, Switzerland

BearPark, a new home for Bern's fabled brown bears, opens this October and about time, too. It's taken 500 years for the city to build this spacious park – until now, Bern's famous furry residents have been kept in sunken bear pits that many considered cruel. As the bears are fed daily, they don't need to hibernate when the first snowflakes fall, so you can picnic on the bank of the River Aare and watch the bears fishing and roaming in their two acres of parkland. Entry to BearPark is free. Bern Tourism, +41 31 328 1212, [berninfo.com/en](http://berninfo.com/en)

### Madikwe Game Reserve, South Africa

From Makanyane Safari Lodge on Madikwe Private Game Reserve outside



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Jo'burg you can take a dawn drive to have breakfast with wild dogs. These endangered creatures bear little similarity to household pets – they are capable of bringing down prey as large as buffalo. An armed guard keeps watch as you sit on the bank of the Marico river while the chefs get breakfast. Hippos may float past, and elephants, giraffes or even lions could wander down for a drink at any time. It's the guard's job to ensure that you are not on the menu, too. The lodge costs from £323 per night. Stay four nights, pay for three. +27 14 778 9600, [makanyane.com](http://makanyane.com)

### Banff, Canada

Two hours' drive from Calgary is the stunning Banff National Park. Stay at Mount Engadine Lodge and you can munch away while watching wild moose in their 'gardens'. But be warned, moose can be mean and are best seen through the dining room window. Breakfast itself is quite an event – with grass for the moose and egg frittata and sausages for the humans. Rooms cost £105 per night full board. +1 403 678 4080, [mountengadine.com](http://mountengadine.com)

### Lower Zambezi National Park, Zambia

Tuck into brekkie at dawn in the dining room at Chiawa Camp in Lower Zambezi National Park where old bull elephants wander by. The Slender Mongoose trip is an authentic safari experience, although the 'camping' aspect is far from mundane. Inside the nine tents are king-size beds and claw-footed baths. Rooms cost from £3,654pp including return BA flights to Lusaka, seven nights' full board, all game drives and transfers. *Expert Africa*, +44 (0)20 8232 9777, [expertafrica.com](http://expertafrica.com)

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