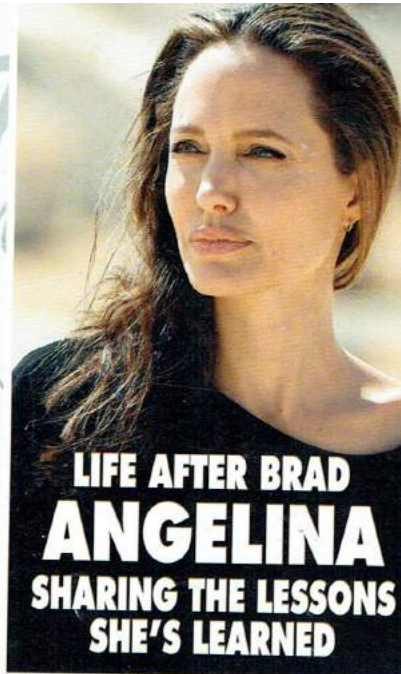


# HELLO!

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## BOUNCING BACK AMID BABY TALK **CHERYL'S NEW LIFE**

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**INSIDE: PRINCE HARRY'S AFRICAN ADVENTURE IN HIS OWN WORDS**





TALL TALES OVER HIGH TEA  
**GIRAFFE MANOR**  
OWNERS MIKEY AND TANYA CARR-HARTLEY INVITE US  
TO THE MAGICAL HOME A-LIST STARS GO WILD FOR

**'I love the Kelly room on the first floor. You can feed the giraffes straight from your room'** Tanya



Tanya and Mikey gather for afternoon tea with their three children – eldest daughter Sala (seated) and twins Tisa and Kinna – plus a special guest, one of the family of giraffes that roams free on their 13-acre estate in Kenya. The mansion (above left) would look at home in the English countryside, but is actually located in the suburbs of the capital, Nairobi









The Carr-Hartleys both grew up surrounded by wildlife and are thrilled to pass on their passion for conservation to their children. "It really is a unique upbringing. We 10 go everywhere together and they get to experience everything," says Tanya





Imagine being woken at first light by a gentle tap on your first-floor room window only to open the shutters and find a giraffe waiting to be fed. It sounds a tall story, but it happens every morning at Nairobi's Giraffe Manor, an African mansion perched at the edge of a 140-acre forest. The impressive property – built in 1932 – is home not just to the fourth-generation Kenyan Carr-Hartley family, but to a herd of endangered Rothschild giraffes.

Twice daily – at dawn for breakfast and at dusk during afternoon tea – feisty Lynne, gentle Irene, giant Jock and the rest of their clan, including two baby giraffes, stroll up to be offered maple-sweetened pellets. They stick their long necks through the windows of the English manor-style dwelling and, once well fed, retreat back into the forest or roam off into the giraffe sanctuary.

The idyllic spot is only a ten-minute drive from Nairobi's bustling city centre, but it feels like a true colonial countryside estate. Food-seeking warthogs join the 12 giraffes, all descendants of the original five brought to the estate by conservationists Jock Lesley-Melville, grandson of the Earl of Leven, and his US-born wife Betty in 1974.

Sir Mick Jagger, Madonna and Virgin supremo Sir Richard Branson have all enjoyed close encounters in this dream-like spot in the serene Langata suburb, acknowledging that, in this environment surrounded by 16ft creatures, they are most definitely not the stars.

The lord and lady of the manor are Mikey and Tanya Carr-Hartley, both 45, and their children, daughter Sala, 12, and eight-year-old twins Kinna and his sister Tisa. The couple set up and run The Safari Collection of four dream destinations, including Giraffe Manor. They are passionate about conservation and usually

**'It's a unique place. You forget you are in a city'**  
Tanya

Mikey and Tanya revamped the colonial-era property after they bought it, organising the renovations themselves rather than bringing in interior designers. Ensuring the extension they added matched the home's 1930s style – copying rooms such as the grand entrance hall (above and below) – proved a challenge with the couple having to hunt for reclaimed parquet flooring, rugs and doors







Giraffe-themed bric-a-brac runs throughout the house, which has welcomed famous guests including Sir Mick Jagger and Madonna. Pictures on the drawing room walls feature the stately animals (above) and even a chess set carries on the look (below left), while giraffe ornaments nestle in the wood-panelled study (below right). But nothing beats the real thing as the children enjoy a close encounter of the giraffe kind (right)



shy away from the camera, preferring to let the four-legged residents steal the spotlight. But HELLO! has been exclusively invited into their realm in the shadow of Mount Kilimanjaro to share the secrets of this magical kingdom.

**It was your dream to own Giraffe Manor, how did you first hear about it?**

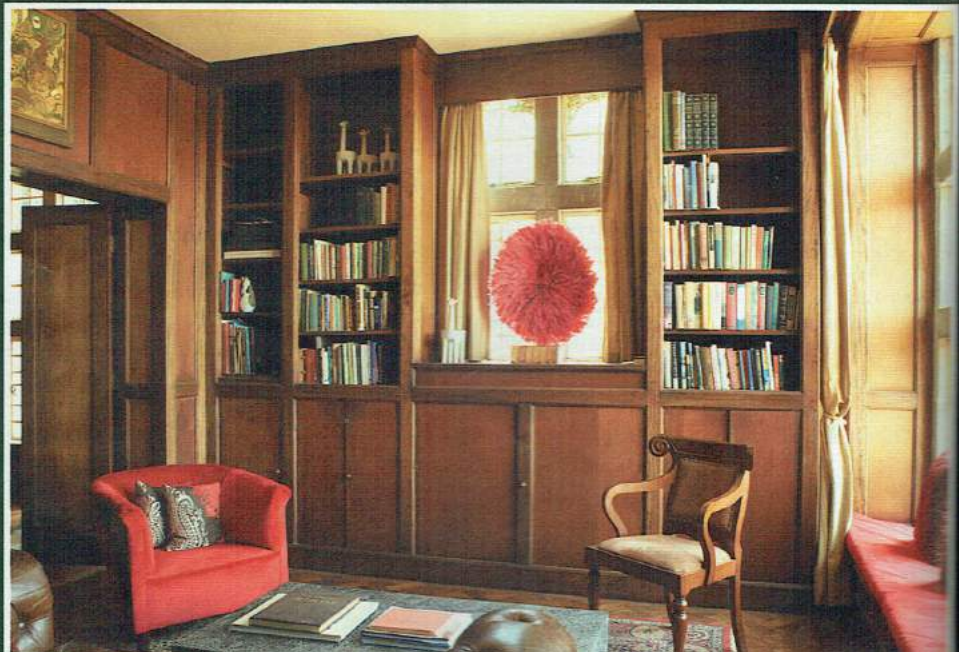
*Tanya:* "I grew up in a house nearby – only about a kilometre as the crows fly – so my brother and I used to ride past this place a lot. The giraffes were always there and my mum knew the Lesley-Melville family very well. We approached the previous owners, Rick and Bryony Anderson,

about buying it in 2006, but they said it wasn't for sale. Rick's mother Betty brought in the original giraffes and started the sanctuary so it was an intensely personal place for him."

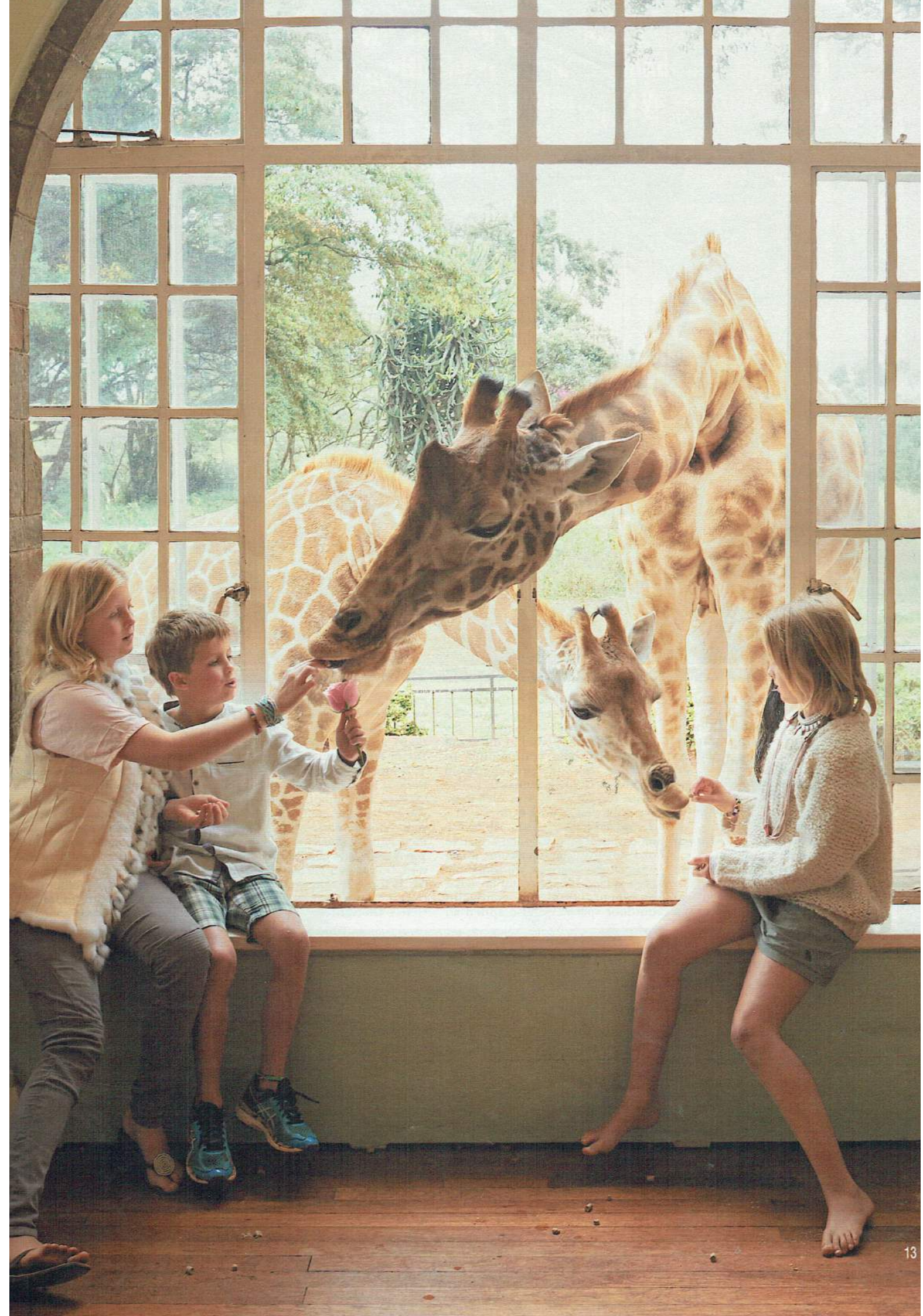
**How did you convince them to part with it?**

*Mikey:* "Well, a couple of years later we heard on the grapevine that they were going to sell it. I was going out on safari the next morning so I called Tanya and told her to go see them immediately and tell them we'll take it."

*T:* "Rick and Bryony were interested in having someone who lived this life, loved it here, grew up here... they knew once they sold, ▶











they'd have no control over what happened to the place. It is a 13-acre site so the land could have been developed into housing units of condos. There was a worry that the whole conservation ethos could change. But they knew how passionate we were about Kenya and the preservation of wildlife – we've dedicated our lives to it."

**It is such a special place, but what was its draw for you personally?**

**T:** "Three things. First, having the giraffes here is just spectacular. Second, the house itself is just so beautiful. It is bizarre to have such a

structure in the middle of the city and it's wonderful. Lastly, we wanted a place in Nairobi to complete our collection of properties." [Mikey and Tanya also own Solio Lodge in Laikipia, Sala's Lodge in the Masai Mara and Sasaab in Samburu].

**When you took it over in 2009 there was quite a lot of work to do...**

**T:** "We did it all ourselves. We had to modernise it quite a lot and we had to make the bathrooms en suite, which was quite a challenge. We added the back terrace. It's perfect for breakfast or lunch and gives a wonderful outdoor space. We also added an

extension. That took a long time as we wanted to do it in period style so had to find old reclaimed parquet floors, roofing tiles, doors, panels."

**Do you have a favourite indoor space?**

**T:** "I love the Kelly room on the first floor. It has a beautiful stained-glass window, a mammoth fireplace and you can feed the giraffes straight from your room. We also added terraces on the first floor, which are lovely."

**You literally have giraffes in your back yard. Do you ever get blasé about it?**

**M:** "Before I bought Giraffe Manor, I came here a lot to bring visitors. At first I thought it was a bit of a

gimmick. But when I saw how captivated people were interacting with these magnificent creatures, it made me realise how amazing this place was. It stays special. Even today, when I watch my kids who've seen them so many times still love the experience, it moves me."

**You recently took Sala, after whom you named your Masai Mara property, to see gorillas in the Congo...**

**T:** "It really is a unique upbringing. Our lives have always been outdoor-centric, enjoying wildlife. When the children were born, they fitted into our existence and we go everywhere

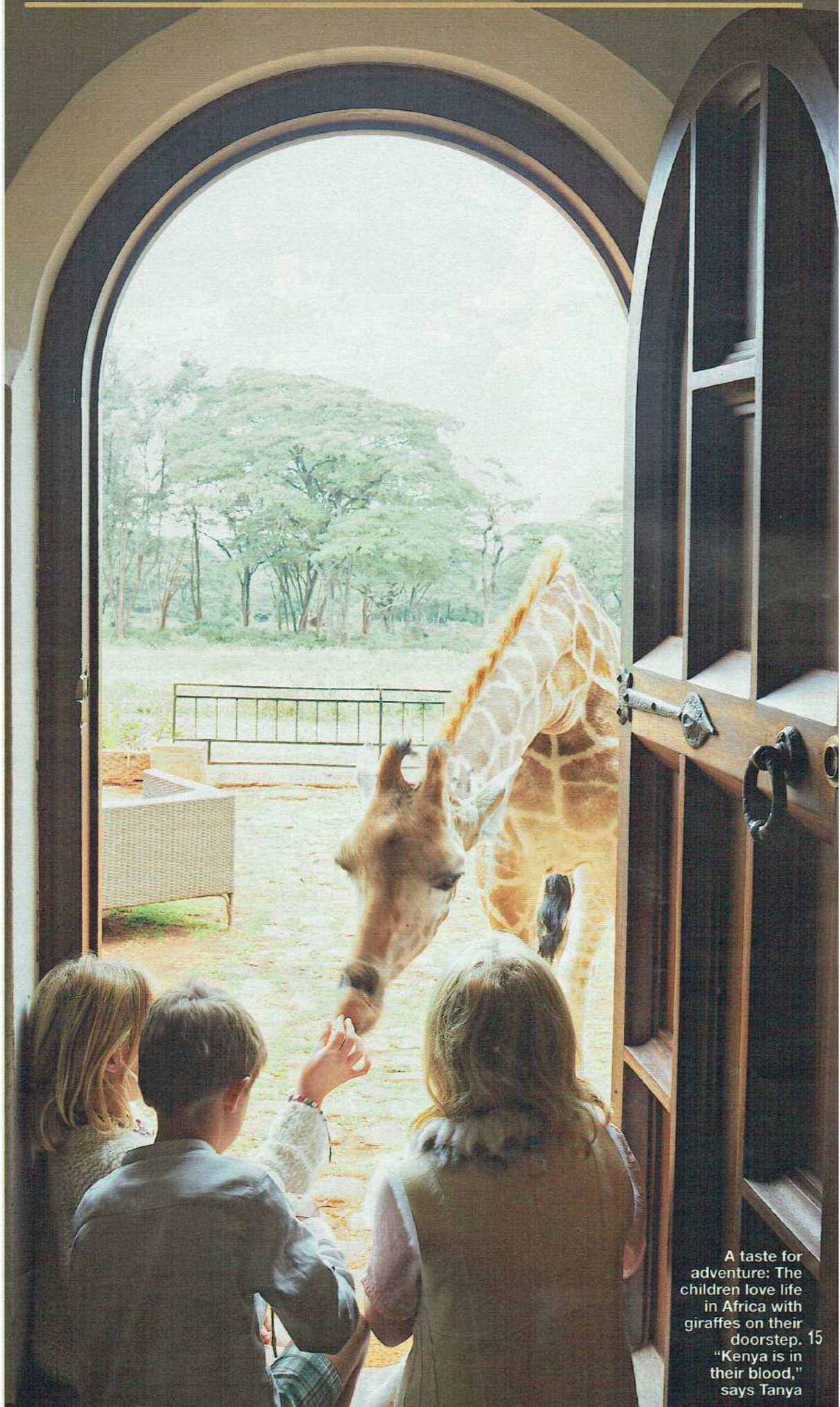


Many of the manor's original 1930s features remain in place, making it a homage to Kenya's colonial past and an era when European visitors first flocked to East Africa to go on safari. Ten bedrooms include two family suites, complete with wooden rafters and a canopied four-poster bed (above). Ornate carved wooden showpiece mirror frames (left) and furniture are in keeping, but visitors to Giraffe Manor can enjoy modern creature comforts, too, with en-suite bathrooms (right)





**'When I saw how captivated people were interacting with these magnificent creatures, it made me realise how amazing this place was. It stays special' Mikey**



A taste for adventure: The children love life in Africa with giraffes on their doorstep. 15  
"Kenya is in their blood," says Tanya



'We have been best friends for a very long time' Tanya



To the Manor born Fourth-generation Kenyans Mikey and Tanya get a taste of the house's colonial past as they dress up for a candle-lit dinner in the Orchid House

babies. We live together, we work together and we have been best friends for a very long time – I feel very lucky.

"We actually worked together for ten years before we got married, for Jocelyn Wildenstein [the New York socialite whose acrimonious billion-dollar divorce from art dealer Alec was a tabloid sensation]. We used to run the Wildensteins' lodge at Ol Jogi [in central Kenya]. We loved it. It was a great stepping stone and learning curve."

**Do you have a favourite property in your portfolio?**

**M:** "I adore Sala's camp at the Mara due to the sheer abundance of wildlife there. Big cats, big open spaces... it is such a beautiful setting on the water, overlooking the Serengeti."

**T:** "Samburu is magical simply because it is such a

passionate environment. It's vibrant and rich in every way – a rich people, rich culture, rich soil... Of course, we also love Giraffe Manor – it's a unique place as it isn't a bush destination and yet it is. You forget you are in the middle of the city. Where else in the world would you get that?"

**You must have met a host of famous faces...**

**T:** "That's the best part of our job. I am embarrassed to say I don't know who half of them are – that part of everyday culture is less of a priority for us. We always get Whatsapp messages from friends – 'Did you know so-and-so was there?' Supermodel Gisele [Bündchen] Instagrammed while she was here. Madonna came to the manor to see the giraffes. I put up a private camp for her at Nairobi National Park as there wasn't room for her to stay."

**M:** "But we want everyone to have a great experience whether they are a celebrity or not."

**Your passion for Kenya is infectious...**

**T:** "We love the freedom. And bringing up kids in an outdoor world with real cultural experiences, wildlife encounters, healthy good food – everything is alive."

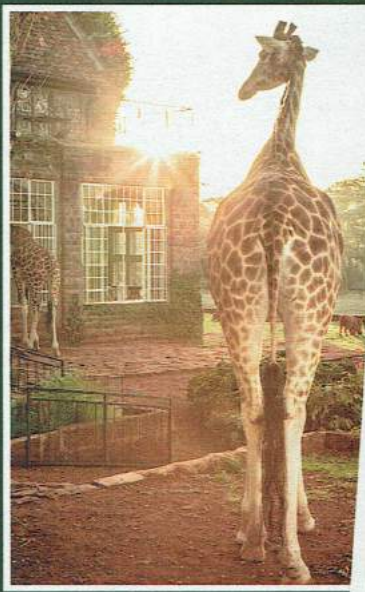
INTERVIEW: NATASHA FARUQUE  
PHOTOS: TIM BEDDOW

STYLING: ASHLEY PITTMAN & PENNY WINTER  
MAKE-UP: ALLIE DREW

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The terrace (far left) is ideal for a bite to eat while watching giraffes roam free (left) – often on the hunt for food from the human visitors (below)

