

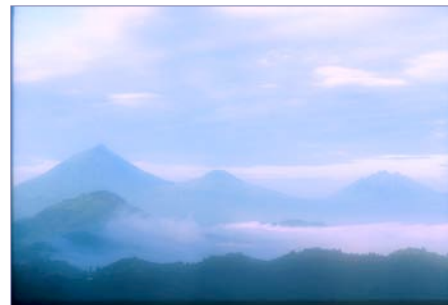
## GREAT LAKES & PRIMATES SAFARI RWANDA & UGANDA

- Day 1** - Arrive Kigali, met & transferred to hotel, PM city tour and/or Memorial Museum (Optional tour of Genocide Memorial Sites), 1 o/n Novotel Kigali
- Day 2** - Early road departure to Ruhengeri (90mins), complete park formalities, 1<sup>st</sup> Gorilla trek, PM explore Lake Kivu, dinner & 1 o/n Gorillas Nest Lodge
- Day 3** - Volcanoes National Park, AM 2<sup>nd</sup> Gorilla trek, lunch, PM at leisure, 1 o/n Gorillas Nest Lodge
- Day 4** - Early wake up & breakfast, depart for the Cyanika border with Uganda, drive on to Queen Elizabeth National Park, 1 o/n Ishasha Wilderness Camp
- Days 5 & 6** - Two full days exploring Queen Elizabeth National Park, visit Kasinga channel, 2 o/n Mweya lodge
- Days 7, 8 & 9** - AM game drive, lunch, PM drive to Kibale Forest, spend 2 days hiking in search of primates, 3 o/n Ndali Lodge
- Day 10** - Drive to Murchison Falls National Park via Hoima & Buitaba Escarpment, 1 o/n Nile Safari Camp
- Day 11** - Breakfast, river launch excursion on the Nile River to the foot of Murchison Falls, 1 o/n Nile Safari Camp
- Day 12** - Full day with picnic lunch at the Budongo Forest, 1 o/n Nile Safari Camp
- Day 13** - Fly private charter to Entebbe, connect international flight home

### Day 1 – Kigali - Rwanda: Land of a thousand hills

#### Day 1

- Arrive Kigali
- Met & transferred to Novotel
- PM optional city tour and/or visit Genocide Memorial Museum (optional tour of Genocide Sites available)
- Lunch at the hotel
- Overnight: Novotel Kigali
- Meal Plan: All meals



You will be met on arrival by an Origins Safaris representative and transferred to your hotel for check in and lunch at the Novotel, Kigali – a buffet selection served in the terrace restaurant.



After lunch you will be taken to visit the Memorial site and museum. Rwanda believes strongly in sharing its recent history to emphasise the country's determination that such atrocities will never happen again. This museum is an incredible, inter-active multi-media presentation. Due to the sensitive nature of this experience we stress that this visit is optional and not for the fainthearted.

**Novotel:** The hotel was built in 1978 and is located on a hill overlooking Kigali the capital of Rwanda. It is close to the office of the president and government ministries as well as British, Royal Netherlands and Egyptian embassies - the hotel is only 10 minutes drive from the airport and from the city center - the lobby with its

typical African design - the wide and spacious stair cases and corridors and beautiful garden surrounding the hotel - makes it one of the most scenic hotels in Kigali.

## Days 2 & 3 – Volcanoes National Park

### Day 2

- 0500 wake-up call & breakfast
- Drive to Ruhengeri (90mins), complete park formalities
- AM: 1<sup>st</sup> Gorilla trek
- Lunch: at lodge
- PM optional excursion to Lake Kivu
- Overnight: Gorillas Nest Lodge
- Meal Plan: Full board

### Day 3

- Breakfast
- 0830 Complete park formalities
- AM: 2nd Gorilla trek
- Late Lunch at Gorilla's Nest
- PM at leisure
- Overnight: Gorillas Nest Lodge
- Meal Plan: Full board

We wake up early, at 5am for breakfast & then depart immediately for the road transfer (90 minutes) to Ruhengeri where we complete the formalities for our Gorilla trip at the National Park Headquarters.

This is one of the most exhilarating and moving wildlife experiences you can have: you get so close to these giant primates, observing them observing you – their almost human movements, innate dignity and social interaction make a unique connection within each of us.



A later start on the second day still gives us plenty of time for the beautiful climb and another hour's guided visit to the Mountain Gorillas made famous by Diane Fossey and immortalized in the film 'Gorillas in the Mist'.

**Gorillas Nest Lodge:** Located 2 kms west of the Kinigi Park Headquarters, the lodge is in a lovely rural setting and ideally situated to the park headquarters for each morning's registration process. There is no electricity in Kinigi - so the lodge operates a generator.

Each public room overlooks green lawns and a semi-circle of 20 double rooms & 2 suites. The rooms all look outwards into the Eucalyptus forest, pyrethrum farms and shambas (farms) beyond. The Lodge is well constructed, but utilitarian: with grass thatched roofs in traditional Rwandese style - not the "rustic luxury safari" style of East and Southern Africa.

**Rwanda:** A tiny landlocked republic in Equatorial Africa, Rwanda lies on the eastern rim of the Albertine Rift and the watershed between Africa's two largest river systems: the Nile and the Congo. Known as 'the land of a 1000 hills' Rwanda is a mountainous country with a moist, temperate year-round climate. It is the most densely populated country in Africa. French, English and Kinyarwanda are the most widely spoken languages and the population of about 8 million people is largely Christian.

**Kigali:** Kigali has been the capital of Rwanda since 1965. An attractive city, it spreads over a number of hills and although it saw some difficult times through the genocide in 1994 and as power changed hands subsequently, it now has a pleasant, buoyant air. The main shopping and commercial area is centred around the Hotel Mille Collines, with the government district on the neighbouring Kacyiru hill. The markets, the handicrafts, the Muslim quarter and a new genocide memorial under construction in Gisozi are some of the main places of interest.

**Social History:** In 1962, under Prime Minister Gregoire Kayibanda, Rwanda gained independence. Ten years later Major General Juvenal Habyarimana came to power. His death in a plane crash in April 1994 unleashed the genocide in which about one million Rwandans are thought to have been killed and nearly twice as many fled into exile. Political and social stability returned to Rwanda in 1999 with the new Government of National Unity.

The early wake-up call is rarely needed as the exciting prospect of the day's adventure grips you.. breakfast can be a little slow but freshly cooked before your eyes and a vital foundation for what will be a strenuous but exhilarating day – eat heartily!





You arrive at the park headquarters to complete the paperwork (take your passport with you) and then a short introduction from your tracker about the group you will visit and the precautions to take.

**Gorilla Trekking:** After approximately half an hour you head off for one of the most exhilarating and moving wildlife experiences you can have: you get so close to these giant primates, observing them observing you – their almost human movements, innate dignity and social interaction make a unique connection within each of us.

The trek to find gorillas can be quite short, but on most days an hour or two of rough hiking each way is necessary. Each visit is by permit and limited to one hour with a professional Gorilla tracker in charge who will coach you in the safety rules and body language required to come close to the Gorilla troops.

The climb begins through the lush terraced farmland of the lower volcanic slopes. As the slopes become steeper and rockier, the vegetation becomes thick and tangled; the guides must use their machetes to help clear a path. Huge trees, clinging vines and undergrowth add to the challenge of swift streams and slippery red mud underfoot. Usually at around 8,000 foot signs of the huge animals become apparent.

Damage to the bamboo trees is an obvious sign as the gorillas relish the young tender shoots and break older stems to suck the sap. The smell of gorilla may waft by in the stray breeze or, if one is really near, it is strong and unmistakable.

This is not a technical climb but it can be a scramble/slide/swing experience as the Gorillas make their way through incredibly lush and dense vegetation – where they go you have to follow. As you near you hear sounds: loud crashes or dull reverberating thuds. The sounds and traces around you stimulate you beyond all normal levels of endurance! When you are within 200 metres you will meet their accompanying trackers, here you leave your bags behind and then you approach these amazing giants, so close and so mesmerising – the hour is over before you have had your fill.



**The Mountain Gorilla: gorilla gorilla berengei - Mountain Gorillas** were made famous by Diane Fossey who dedicated her life to their future and immortalised them in the film '**Gorillas in the Mist**'.

There are no more than 668 Mountain Gorillas remaining in the world today, of which 355 live in the Virunga Volcanoes. In the past poaching and habitat destruction were the main cause for concern. However with publicity, tourism and education regarding the plight of the Mountain Gorilla, the authorities have been able to halt this rapid decline.

There are few animals in Africa about which so many legends circulate. His enormous size, his extraordinary strength and the fact that he lives in mysterious forests of luxuriant vegetation have contributed to his mystique. The troop consists usually of a dominant male and up to five or more females and their young. It is basically a stable family with the young only leaving after they reach sexual maturity. Females join another group while young males remain solitary until they have an opportunity of forming their own troop.

This primate is of impressive dimensions; some males (such as Guhonda the silverback of Sabinyo Group that you may visit) attain over six feet in height and weigh more than 440 pounds. The head is massive and the huge jaws are equipped with powerful teeth.





Far from being an aggressive animal, as the legends claim, the gorilla is gentle and peaceful in its habits. It is only when threatened that he adopts an intimidating attitude in which he howls in a most frightful way and beats his chest with his fists. Should visitors find themselves in his presence at this moment, they will be advised to assume a submissive, non-threatening attitude. Once his confidence has been restored, the gorilla goes on about his business accepting the intruder.

After lunch you can visit Lake Kivu – an interesting afternoon trip to the beautiful lakeshores: lovely views and local fishing activity.

## Day 4 – Queen Elizabeth National Park, Uganda

### Day 4

- **Early breakfast & check-out**
- **Drive to the Cyanika border with Uganda**
- **Complete border formalities**
- **Drive on to Queen Elizabeth National Park**
- **Lunch at Camp**
- **Overnight: Ishasha Wilderness Camp**
- **Meal Plan: Full board**

We get up early for breakfast and depart for the Cyanika border with Uganda, and continue onto Queen Elizabeth National Park – Ishasha sector in search of the famous tree-climbing lions.

**Queen Elizabeth National Park – Ishasha Sector:** The Ishasha sector of QENP is so very contrasting to that of the Mweya Peninsular, Kasenyi and the Crater Lakes area of the park. Ishasha is a vast low-lying savannah plain lying south of the equator in the Albertine Rift Valley.

The Ishasha River separates the larger Parc national des Virunga in the DR Congo with which it shares an international boundary. This area is renowned for its "tree climbing" lions, whose habit of lounging in the upper branches of old fig trees is not usually found in other lion populations. You can also see Hippo, herds of Buffalo, Uganda Kob, Topi, and many Elephants there.



**Ishasha Wilderness Camp:** This camp is situated inside the Ishasha sector of Queen Elizabeth National Park on the Ntungwe River, and is an idyllic retreat for people who truly enjoy the wilderness.

It is the only exclusive camp in the Ishasha sector, allowing guests to enjoy their game viewing without the hustle and bustle of lots of other vehicles and people, often experienced in other sectors of the park. On a clear day one can see the Virunga Volcanoes to the south and the Rwenzori Mountains to the north!

With only ten tents, guests are able to enjoy the feeling of exclusivity in pristine surroundings. Each spacious tent, which overlooks the pretty Ntungwe River, has two large beds, shady verandah and its own en suite bathroom and dressing area, providing hot water bush showers and an eco-friendly flush toilet. Power is provided by solar energy.

A central dining area, also under canvas, provides a comfortable environment for meals and an outdoor lounge area beside the river, is great for bird watching during the day, and in the evening we relax around a cosy fire and discuss the day's events - all this combined offers a truly African bush experience... in total comfort.

Activities include game drives, bush walks, bird watching and visits to community projects.



## Days 5 & 6 – Queen Elizabeth National Park

### Day 5

- **Wake-up call & breakfast**
- **AM game drive en route to Mweya Lodge**
- **Lunch: at lodge**
- **PM game drive**
- **Overnight: Mweya Lodge**
- **Meal Plan: Full board**

### Day 6

- **Breakfast**
- **Early morning trip on the Kazinga Channel**
- **Lunch at lodge**
- **PM at leisure**
- **Overnight: Mweya Lodge**
- **Meal Plan: Full board**

We drive on in search of the famous tree-climbing lions then on to Mweya Safari Lodge at Kazinga Channel - Queen Elisabeth National Park. This beautiful park is dominated on its northern border by the snow-capped peaks of the Rwenzori Mountains—the famous “Mountains of the Moon.” 20 years ago the park had the highest density of wildlife of any park in Africa but these populations were severely depleted during Idi Amin’s regime.

Thankfully today they are well on their way toward recovery. Uganda Kob occur in the thousands as well as numerous Defassa Waterbuck, Bushbuck, African Buffalo, Topi, Warthog and Elephant. Giant Forest Hogs are fairly common in and near the forested areas as well as Lion and Leopard.

Our second day begins with an early morning trip on the freshwater Kazinga Channel, which joins Lake Edward and Lake George and is home to the largest concentration of Nile Hippos in the world. The birding here is excellent, ranging in size from the tiny, brilliant Malachite Kingfisher to the giant Goliath Heron.



Queen Elizabeth National Park, almost 2,000 sq. km, is bordered to the North by the Rwenzori Mountains and to the West by Lake Edward, and is divided in two sectors, the North and the South. It used to be one of the most beautiful and richest parks in East Africa. Unfortunately, like in other Ugandan parks, most of the game was decimated by retreating troops during the civil wars. The beauty remains though, with sprawling cacti, savannah, forests, rivers and lakes. Now that the country is at peace, the game is slowly recovering from the onslaught and the park steadily regaining its past grandeur.



The park is well worth a visit even if just to see the hippos and the birds on the Kazinga Channel, which links Lake Edward and Lake

George. From the launch trip on the Channel, one can watch hundreds of Hippos at close range, spreading their mouths wide and rushing to the water. The birdlife is spectacular and includes pelicans, fish eagles, kingfishers, cormorants and saddlebill storks. Buffalos and waterbucks come to the water to cool off, and occasionally you may see elephant, lion and crocodile.

**Mweya Safari Lodge:** This lodge is located in Queen Elizabeth National Park. Queen Elizabeth National Park is located in the southwestern region of Uganda and it is virtually unspoilt.

Situated on a peninsula of the Kazinga Channel in the heart of Queen Elizabeth National Park. The lodge boasts luxury, which combines both international standards of comfort and an authentic African ambience. When you enter the lodge, elegance, luxury and tranquillity spring to mind. Everything about this lodge whispers quality.

At Mweya Safari Lodge you will be able to relax by the crystal blue waters of the swimming pool, which has magnificent views of the Kazinga Channel. Take a dip before your meals or after a day of sightseeing. The experience is refreshing. Mweya Safari Lodge offers a world-class restaurant with foods that will tantalize your taste buds. Here you will find foods from all around the world. The presentation of this food is superb and the restaurant boasts attentive service as well as quality.



The Tembo Bar is a great place to unwind and watch a dramatic close to your day. Sit back with a glass of your favourite drink and watch the sun set over the beautiful landscape of Uganda, an experience not to be missed.

After all the days activities are completed, whether its been touring or conferencing, guests at Mweya Safari Lodge may retire to their room of luxury. All standard rooms are individually decorated and come with their own private bathroom.

The Deluxe room, suites and cottages are also exquisitely furnished. These rooms are air-conditioned.

Guests who are looking for the ultimate in luxury can book the plush presidential cottage or maybe you would rather the regally appointed accommodation of the royal cottage. These rooms are regal and of grandeur.



The British Queen mother stayed in this cottage back in 1954. It is definitely stunning. This cottage is available to the members of the public providing of course there is no royalty in residence.

### Days 7, 8 & 9 – Kibale Forest

#### Day 7

- **Early breakfast & check-out**
- **AM game drive**
- **Lunch at Mweya Lodge**
- **PM drive to Kibale Forest**
- **Overnight: Ndali Lodge**
- **Meal Plan: Full board**

#### Day 8 & 9

- **Breakfast**
- **Spend 2 days hiking in the forest in search of primates**
- **Picnic lunch**
- **Overnight: Ndali Lodge**
- **Meal Plan: Full board**

We spend the morning game driving in Queen Elisabeth National Park. After lunch we set off for Kibale Forest, travelling north through Ugandan villages and small traditional farms of millet, sorghum, beans and maize. The lush rolling hills of this region provide good photo opportunities as we look out for Black-headed Gonolek, Fan-tailed Widowbird, Double-toothed Barbet, Long-crested Eagle, and the numerous sunbirds and weavers that perch near the road. As we approach Fort Portal in the foothills of the Rwenzori Mountains, we enter Uganda's famous tea plantation region. We arrive at Fort Portal, then continue to the Kibale Forest arriving late afternoon.



Kibale Forest has well marked trails making the forest easily accessible. We spend these 2 days hiking in the rainforest in search of primates. Commonly seen species include Red-tailed Monkey, Grey-cheeked Mangabey, and both Red Colobus and Black-and-white Colobus Monkeys and the impressive, elusive Chimpanzees.

Chimps are abundant here, and there is a high likelihood of observing them as they make their nomadic treks along forest trails and forage for fruit in the canopy above. Black-and-white-casqued Hornbill, Great Blue Turaco, Grey Parrot and Narina's Trogon are just a few of the many colorful central African birds we hope to find here. We explore a nearby-forested swamp that is excellent for viewing birds, primates and magnificent butterflies. On the way back to the lodge night game drives may yield glimpses of Greater and Needle-clawed Galago, Palm Civet, Mongoose, African Civet or Serval Cats.

**Chimpanzees:** These near human primates dwell in the forests along the Albertine Rift valley and westwards into Central and West Africa. Chimps are so very different to Gorillas – more aggressive towards each other, more vocal, more agile and considerably more mobile. They feed on a much greater variety of food than other primates – this being necessary to support their “almost human” sized brain.



**Ndali Lodge** is perched on the rim of an extinct volcano, which, since its demise, has filled with water to become the breathtaking Lake Nyinambuga – 250 acres in size and 130 metres deep. There is a main thatched lodge with spacious sitting room, reception area and dining room flanked by 8 cottages providing luxurious accommodation for 16 guests.

The cottages, face west to offer a panoramic view to the spectacular 'Mountains of the Moon', were designed by Capt. Mark Price and are built of local stone and thatch. The interiors are imaginatively and comfortably furnished, the decor emphasising the use of local materials.

Each cottage, large enough to accommodate a family, has en-suite facilities with bath, shower, WC and hand basin and a private verandah, perfect for watching the sun setting behind the Rwenzori Mountains, the snow-capped peaks of which are clearly visible on a clear day.

At night the dining room is festooned with candles - the lodge has no electricity or generators to destroy the tranquillity and atmosphere. The sitting room, reception and dining room open out onto Lake Nyinambuga and are connected by two open passage-ways or breeze-ways: fruit bats, owls and frogs like to use them as a highway to the crater lake. Breakfast is on the verandah overlooking the lake: freshly squeezed passion fruit juice (from Ndali's vines when in season) and homemade bread with wild honey go down well with a full English breakfast.

All Ndali's water comes directly from the lake, pumped up hydraulic ram based on technology invented in the 1770's.



## Day 10 – Murchison Falls National Park

### Day 10

- **Early breakfast & check-out**
- **Drive to Murchison Falls via Hoima & Buitaba Escarpments**
- **Late lunch at camp**
- **PM game drive**
- **Overnight: Nile Safari Camp**
- **Meal Plan: Full board**



We depart in the early morning for the famous Murchison Falls National Park, via Hoima and Buitaba Escarpment. The Park is bisected by the vast and beautiful Nile River. This is Uganda's largest National park and is a scenic wonderland with rolling grasslands, river valleys, the meandering Victoria Nile and Lake Albert. Sir Winston Churchill described Murchison Falls National park as 'Kew Gardens and London Zoo' all rolled into one!

**Murchison Falls National Park:** This is the largest park (3,840 km<sup>2</sup>), and one of the high points of any visit to Uganda. It is cut in half by the Nile. The land is covered by savannah and tall grassland, with thick bush and woodlands in the higher and wetter areas of the south and east. Closed canopy forests are restricted to the Rabongo area, where ironwood predominates, and small strands along the south bank of the Nile.

The park hosts more than 50 species of mammals, and elephant herds now number several hundred. There are substantial numbers of buffalo and Rothschild's giraffe, and six species of primates, including chimpanzees. Four hundred and forty-two bird species have been recorded.



One of the prime attractions in the park is, of course, the world famous **Murchison Falls**. The trip by launch to the foot of the falls is an adventure that should not be missed. The most impressive and breathtaking view is at the top, where the Nile forces its way through a seven-metre gap in the rocks and tumbles 40 m down. A path leads from the parking above all the way to the bottom and offers spectacular views of foaming waters rushing into the gorge, with a deafening roar. The river then calms down and winds its way to Lake Albert.



**Nile Safari Camp:** Situated on the banks of the Nile, halfway between Murchison falls and Lake Albert, Nile Safari Camp is an exclusive tented camp exuding the atmosphere of untrammelled tropical Africa. Blending unobtrusively into the riverine woodland. The camp has six comfortable double tents &

six traditional log chalets, each with en suite toilet & shower and a spacious private wooden verandah facing the Nile. From your verandah, you can watch as elephants emerge from thick papyrus beds to drink at the river, while the air is shattered by the distinctive cry of the African Fish Eagle.



The camp rustles with colourful birds, butterflies lizards and choruses of frogs and insect calls, and grunts of the Nile's prolific hippos. You can relax by the Tamarind Bar or laze around the swimming pool, or sit on the deck, cold drink in hand, beneath the shade of a giant cluster fig tree.

It has elevated deckings to relax by the fire, with the atmosphere full of tropical adventure. Nile Safari Camp comes closer to the spirit of

Africa in the heart of Uganda, the pearl of Africa.

## Day 11 – Nile River & Murchison Falls

### Day 11

- **Early wake up call & breakfast**
- **River launch excursion to Murchison's Falls**
- **Picnic lunch**
- **Overnight: Nile Safari Camp**
- **Meal Plan: Full board**

We board our river launch for an excursion to the foot of Murchison Falls. The ten-mile journey to the foot of one of Africa's most powerful and dramatic waterfalls, the Murchison Falls is a memory you will cherish forever. At this point, the mighty Victoria Nile is squeezed through a mere 15- foot- wide gorge and released over a sheer cliff in a cataclysm of thunderous white water.

En route are large herds of Hippopotamus plus enormous Nile crocodiles, African buffalo, Waterbuck, Elephants and Rothschild's Giraffes. For birding enthusiasts: Goliath and purple Heron, Rock Pratincoles, and Red-throated Bee-eaters, and the possibility of seeing the rare and strange Shoebill Stork.



## Day 12 – Budongo Forest Reserve

### Day 12

- **Wake up & breakfast**
- **Full day visiting Budongo Forest Reserve**
- **Picnic lunch**
- **Overnight: Nile Safari Camp**
- **Meal Plan: Full board**





A full day will be spent visiting the acclaimed Budongo Forest Reserve, which lies at the edge of the Albertine Rift Valley and to the south of Murchison Falls. It is the largest tract of natural forest in East Africa and boasts



Uganda's largest population of Chimpanzees and over 350 bird species. In addition to Chimpanzees, there are Colobus and red-tailed Monkeys, tree Pangolins, African giant squirrels and over 250 butterfly species.

The mahogany forest of this reserve contains the largest population of chimps in Uganda and one of the country's best birding sites, the 'Royal Mile'.

**The Budongo Forest Reserve** is south of Murchison Falls National Park, on the road from Masindi. It is the most extensive mahogany forest in East Africa and contains Uganda's largest population of chimpanzees.

Chimpanzee tracking is one highlight of a visit to Budongo Forest. One troop of chimps is becoming habituated and there is an even chance of sighting them on any particular occasion.

Another highlight is the "Royal Mile", possibly the best birding site in Uganda. Birds include Nahan's Francolin, Ituri Batis and Jameson's Wattle-eye, Chocolate-backed, and Blue-breasted Kingfishers and White-thighed Hornbill.

## Day 13 – Depart

### Day 13

- **Breakfast & check-out**
- **Transfer to airstrip**
- **Fly private charter to Entebbe Airport**
- **Connect international departure flight home**
- **Meal Plan: all meals**

After breakfast and checking out we fly by private charter to Entebbe to connect with our international departure flight home.

## Safari Arrangements

### Included in the price of your safari

- **ALL accommodation and meals on safari as indicated in this itinerary (meal plan)**
- **ALL government hotel taxes and service charges**
- **ALL Gorilla permits**
- **ALL Land transport in specially built safari vehicles**
- **ALL National Park, entrance fees & nature walks**
- **ALL visits to cultural & heritage sites**
- **ALL tips and gratuities to airport & hotel/lodge porters**
- **ALL Origins administrative, development and operational costs**
- **ALL portage and airport assistance**
- **Bottled mineral water with all meals and in Origins Safaris vehicles**
- **English speaking guide**
- **Temporary Flying Doctor (AMREF), emergency evacuation to Nairobi**

### Not included: (unless specifically requested)

- **Personal Laundry, beverages and other personal expenses**
- **Tips to bar staff for personal beverages or room service**
- **Gratuities to driver / guides**
- **International Flights/Visa fees**



## Safari Check-list & General Information

- **Children:** 15 years & under are NOT permitted to visit Gorillas
- **Clothing:**
  - warm clothes including a fleece or light wool sweater
  - lightweight wool socks
  - long-sleeved shirt
  - sleeveless 'bodyvest' or waistcoat with plenty of pockets
  - strong waterproof walking boots
  - sturdy trousers – lightweight advised to release moisture
  - gaiters (to protect lower legs from mud, wet & scratches)
  - sunglasses
  - sun screen
  - a soft, narrow-brimmed hat (peaked/baseball caps not recommended)
  - breathable lightweight rain poncho/parka & rain hood
  - small backpack to carry water
  - gloves recommended to those with sensitive skin or allergy to nettles
- **Communications:**
  - International telephone communication good from Kigali
  - European & American mobile phones with a roaming agreement work in Rwanda. Internet facilities are available at Novotel in Kigali
- **Currency:** Rwandaise Francs: current exchange rate approx 1 US\$ = 550 Rw Francs Any excess Rwandaise Francs are not exchangeable overseas, nor can they be converted back into foreign currency in Rwanda. Airport departure tax from Nairobi & Kigali should be included in ticket price.
- **Diet:** please advise any special dietary requirements in advance. Local specialities: chicken & fish.
- **Electricity:** 230/240 volts at 50 Hz. 2-pin (round) sockets. Some guest houses do not have 24-hour power, but arrangements for recharging batteries can usually be made.
- **Fitness Level:** The standard trek is a strenuous hike of between 1-4 hours each way, (2-3 hours more usual) tracking in thick forest at heights up to 3,000m traversing steep-sided mountains and ravines can be tough, arduous and wet. Visitors must be fit, in good health and properly equipped. Comfortable, tried and tested walking shoes with deep grip/tread are vital.
- **Health:** Anti malaria tablets are essential & visitors should seek current medical advice before travelling; any personal medication required should be carried in hand luggage. Warning: Gorillas are susceptible to most human diseases and if you are knowingly carrying a contagious disease (especially flu) DO NOT attempt to trek.
- **Guides & Chauffeurs:** English speaking
- **Language:** English & French, although Swahili is understood
- **Mineral Water:** Bottled mineral water is advised and included with meals in the tour price
- **Park Rules:** A National Parks Guide will accompany all groups to the gorillas, and on entry to the National Park will advise you of the rules for Gorilla observation
- **Passport:** All travellers to Rwanda must have a valid passport
- **Permits:** These are mandatory for Gorilla viewing. Permits are non-refundable except for medical reasons and a medical certificate has to be provided. Gorilla viewing can be denied at short notice because of national park or border closures, security changes or gorillas going out of range. In such circumstances refunds are at the discretion of the authority and are not within the company's control. Obtaining a gorilla permit therefore is not a guarantee of seeing a Gorilla
- **Time:** Rwanda is 2 hours ahead of GMT
- **Visas:** Currently for Rwanda: Travellers from the UK, USA, CANADA, GERMANY, SOUTH AFRICA & SWEDEN DO NOT REQUIRE VISAS. NB Under special circumstances we can assist in obtaining visas on arrival in Kigali. Please contact us well in advance.