

# Mountain Gorilla Safari

GORILLAS, CHIMPS, AND A BIG GAME SAFARI



## TRIP DATES

2025

July 15-24, 2025

August 22-31, 2025

2026

January 10-19, 2026

February 22-March 3, 2026

July 15-24, 2026

August 22-31, 2026



Wilderness Travel

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# Mountain Gorilla Safari

GORILLAS, CHIMPS, AND A BIG GAME SAFARI

It's one of the planet's great "bucket list" adventures: tracking mountain gorillas in the wild! In Uganda's Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, we give you two exciting days of gorilla tracking. The hikes are steep, but the experience of sitting near a silverback and his family is unforgettable. This adventure is also a great safari as we track chimps in Kibale Forest National Park, explore Queen Elizabeth National Park, and boat along the Kazinga Channel among hippo and big herds of elephant, with a behind-the-scenes visit to the Conservation Through Public Health clinic at Bwindi. Your participation directly funds gorilla conservation!



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# Itinerary

## DAY 1

### ENTEBBE, UGANDA

Arrive in Entebbe, where you will be met for the transfer to the Protea Marriott Hotel, set on the shores of Lake Victoria. This afternoon is free at your leisure. In the evening, we gather for our Welcome Dinner. Overnight at Protea Marriott Hotel...D

## DAY 2

### KIBALE FOREST NATIONAL PARK

Known as the “pearl of Africa,” Uganda is a gorgeous country, and our full-day drive reveals its stunning beauty. Our route brings us through lovely countryside where every type of fruit and vegetable imaginable is grown, and amidst the farmland are traditional villages with their shambas (planted lots). Upon reaching Kyenjojo, in the lower foothills of the Ruwenzoris, we drive through tea plantations and into the tropical rainforest of 296-square-mile Kibale Forest National Park. Kibale is contiguous with Queen Elizabeth National Park at the same pleasant altitudes of 3,000 to 5,000 feet. Our accommodation is at beautiful Ndali Lodge, set on a ridge above a scenic crater lake...BLD

Driving Details: Approximately 6 hours total

## DAY 3

### CULTURAL WALK / KIBALE FOREST NATIONAL PARK / CHIMPANZEE TRACKING

We begin our day on a cultural walk through the community involving seven “stations” in the village. From the KAFRED office, we walk to the town of Bigodi where the guide will discuss the “village of two tribes” and how it has come to be. At the second location, an elderly woman will give a briefing on life as a female including her chores and responsibilities. We’ll also learn from a traditional healer who demonstrates herbal and spiritual treatments and a family who discusses economic activities—everything from handicrafts to beer brewing to agriculture. Other stops include a blacksmith who shows off his skills repairing plastic containers with herbs, a coffee farmer who demonstrates harvesting and processing without sophisticated machinery, and a school visit (only possible on school days). Expect 3-4 hours to complete the entire tour. In the afternoon, we head out with our local tracking guide. Kibale, home to 13 primate species, is said to have the highest density and variety of primates in Africa. We follow good pathways hiking for about two to four hours through a network of beautiful, shaded trails. Our park guides have studied the patterns of the chimpanzee clans for years and know the daily locations of many groups. Once we find a clan of chimpanzees, we’ll hike at a good clip, often off trail through thick vegetation, following these acrobats as they leap from tree to tree on their daily rounds of foraging. The chimpanzee groups are habituated to seeing people and take little notice of us as they play, squabble, and scamper across the treetop canopy. This is an extraordinary opportunity to observe these fascinating and intelligent creatures in the wild. Overnight at Ndali Lodge...

BLD

Driving Details: Approximately 2.5 hours total



## TRIP DETAILS AT-A-GLANCE

- Length:** 10 days  
**Arrive:** Entebbe, Uganda  
**Depart:** Entebbe, Uganda  
**Lodging:** 9 nights hotels and safari lodges  
**Meals:** All meals included (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)  
**Activity:** Hiking / Trekking, Safaris, Wildlife and Natural History  
**Trip Level:** 1 2 3 4 5 6  
2 days of gorilla tracking (2-8 hours on steep and sometimes muddy trails), 2 days chimpanzee tracking on forested trails (2-4 hours each day), 4WD game viewing, rugged road travel

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Experience breathtaking encounters with mountain gorillas, with two full days of tracking
- Track chimpanzees on the trails of Kibale Forest National Park
- Safari by 4WD vehicle and boat, track lions with a researcher in Queen Elizabeth National Park
- Cruise along the Kazinga Channel to see herds of elephant and pods of hippo
- Behind-the-scenes visit at Conservation Through Public Health

# Itinerary (cont'd)



*“I wish I was still there.  
Everything about the trip was  
unique and so memorable!”  
Laura C., Whitehouse Station, NJ*

## DAY 4

### KIBALE FOREST NATIONAL PARK / QUEEN ELIZABETH NATIONAL PARK

This morning we enjoy another exciting opportunity to walk among the chimpanzees of Kibale. In the afternoon, a scenic drive through green farmlands and tiny villages brings us to Queen Elizabeth National Park, with gameviewing along the way. This beautiful park, protecting 770 square miles of the western Great Rift Valley, has as its stunning backdrop the Ruwenzoris, the fabled “Mountains of the Moon.” Queen Elizabeth National Park is one of the best-managed parks in Africa and supports a wonderful diversity of wildlife in habitats ranging from lowland rainforest to wetlands to grassy savannas. Due to the park’s beauty and immense variety of species, it has been designated as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. Birders will be interested to know that QENP has recorded 547 avian species. In the late afternoon, we head out on a game drive in the park. Overnight at Elephant Plains Lodge...BLD

Driving Details: Approximately 3-4 hours total

## DAYS 5-6

### QUEEN ELIZABETH NATIONAL PARK / KAZINGA CHANNEL / LION TRACKING

On these two days, we enjoy game viewing by 4WD vehicle in the park’s lake-dotted savannas, as well as a two-hour trip by boat in the Kazinga Channel, which runs through the park and links Lake Edward and Lake George. On this meandering waterway, we view large concentrations of hippo. Elephant and other wildlife often come to the water’s edge to drink, and the birding is excellent. We’ll have the opportunity to don our researcher hats for a few hours while using telemetry to track lion prides. The lion is one of the most sought-after safari species, and one of the most impressive to observe. Living in prides



of around 15 individuals, lions adhere to strict social structures. Groups consist of related females and their cubs that are often born around the same time and raised communally. In the afternoon of Day 6, we'll drive to our next lodge for dinner and overnight...BLD each day

Driving Details: Approximately 2 hours total each day, not including game drives

## DAY 7

### BWINDI / MAHOGANY SPRINGS LODGE

This morning, we enjoy a 2-hour game drive in the Ishasha sector of Queen Elizabeth National Park before heading to Bwindi Impenetrable National Park.

Set on Uganda's western border, Bwindi is one of the most biologically diverse areas on Earth, recognized by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site. The park protects a remnant of a once-vast primeval forest that stretched from the Virunga Volcanoes to the Ruwenzori Mountains. There are 113 species of mammals in the park, including rare forest elephant, 200 species of butterfly, over 360 species of birds, and an enormous variety of trees, including 10 endemic species. Among the 11 resident primate species are 310 magnificent mountain gorillas, half of the world's population of this elusive and highly endangered mammal. Bwindi is dense with both montane and lowland forest vegetation, making it one of Africa's most superb wildlife environments, with mountain gorillas as the main attraction. Overnight at Mahogany Springs Lodge, a quiet retreat set just outside the national park...BLD

Driving Details: Approximately 6 hours total, including game drive

## DAYS 8-9

### BWINDI / GORILLA TRACKING / CONSERVATION THROUGH PUBLIC HEALTH (CTPH)

These days are set aside for the incomparable experience of tracking, then quietly observing the mountain gorilla clans that reside in Bwindi's montane forests. While here, we'll enjoy a private, behind-the-scenes tour at Conservation Through Public Health (CTPH), learning about this award-winning NGO's work spanning the fields of conservation and local community health. CTPH has three integrated strategic programs: Wildlife Conservation, Community Health, and Alternative Livelihoods. A doctor from CTPH will be our guest at dinner on one of the nights at Bwindi. We have an orientation talk with the local trackers at the park headquarters on the etiquette of gorilla tracking, then break into small groups to search for the Mubare, Habinyanja, or Rushegura clans with a ranger guide. The tracking can be physically challenging. Each day we leave early in the morning and hike through dense, sometimes steep and muddy forests at altitudes of up to 7,500 feet for two to eight hours, depending on where we find the gorillas. But the rewards are tremendous and the rigors soon forgotten when we spot a gorilla family and become absorbed in watching these gentle creatures. We bring picnic lunches and eat in the forest. When we're not observing mountain gorillas, we have



*“This trip offers an extensive look at a beautiful country that is still off the beaten path. The variety of environments and animals, from savanna to rainforest, is amazing, and the itinerary was very well thought out.”*

*Jack S., Evergreen, CO*



## Itinerary (cont'd)



*“This was a once-in-a-lifetime experience. A wonderful adventure in a beautiful land.”*

*Bruce H., Santa Fe, NM*

time to observe some of the amazing varieties of bird, butterfly, and animal species that make their home in this unusual park. With two full days here, we're ensured of encounters with these elusive creatures. On Day 9, we enjoy a festive Farewell Dinner. Overnights at Mahogany Springs Lodge...BLD each day

### DAY 10 ENTEbbe / DEPART

We bid farewell to our Trip Leader this morning and board our regularly scheduled flight back to Entebbe. Day rooms are included at the Protea Marriott Hotel, with check-out time at 6:00 pm. The afternoon is free to relax at the hotel. In the evening, transfer to the airport and depart on homeward-bound flights...BLD

Driving Details: Approximately 1.5 hours total (Bwindi Impenetrable National Park to Kihiki Airstrip)

Flying Details: Approximately 1 hour total (Kihiki to Entebbe)



# Trip Cost, Payment & Insurance

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## TRIP COST

### Prices are per person, valid through 2025

\$8,595 (6-7 members)

\$9,095 (4-5 members)

Single supplement: \$1,395

Internal airfare: \$500 (subject to change)

Chimp permits (2 treks): \$500

Gorilla permits (2 treks): \$1,600

*Please contact us for future years' pricing*

To offer the lowest possible cost, our trips are priced according to the number of participants on the trip. All costs are per person, based on double occupancy. If you wish to have a single room, you must pay the single supplement fee. Please note that Wilderness Travel staff, or guests of Wilderness Travel such as travel writers, photographers, or leaders-in-training, are not included in the tier pricing count.

## CURRENCY EXCHANGE RATE

Because the prices published for our program are set so far in advance of the trip dates, we are occasionally faced with exceptional cost increases and/or currency fluctuations that affect the actual cost of running the trip. In most years, no price changes are necessary. However, we do reserve the right to raise or lower the trip price if there is a significant change in costs or exchange rates. If this is the case, your final invoice will reflect the difference in trip cost.

## TRIP COST INCLUDES

- Expert leadership of a Wilderness Travel Trip Leader and local guides
- Accommodations, based on double occupancy
- All meals included as indicated in the Detailed Itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
- Guaranteed window seating in LandCruisers
- Safari camp staff
- Membership in Flying Doctor Society
- Land transportation, airport transfers for passengers as noted, baggage handling

## TRIP COST DOES NOT INCLUDE

- Travel to and from the arrival and departure location as indicated in Detailed Itinerary
- Additional hotel nights outside the trip's scheduled dates
- Optional gratuities to Trip Leaders or staff (tipping for trekking porters is included)
- Optional travel insurance
- Other expenses of a personal nature (some alcoholic beverages, laundry, etc.)
- Visa fees

## PAYMENT SCHEDULE

At time of reservation: \$2700

90 days prior to departure: Balance

Please note that this differs from our standard policy. In addition to the standard deposit of \$600 per person to confirm your trip, a nonrefundable and non-transferrable deposit of \$2,100 is required to secure your chimp and gorilla permits (\$500 per person for the chimp permits and \$1,600 per person for the gorilla permits).

## CANCELLATION AND TRANSFER FEE SCHEDULE

Minimum fee (Gorilla and Chimp Permits): \$2100 per person

61-90 days prior to departure: 25% of trip cost

46-60 days prior to departure: 50% of trip cost

45 days or less: 100% of trip cost

Please note that this differs from our standard policy.

## TRAVEL INSURANCE

We highly recommend you purchase travel insurance. You can take advantage of a comprehensive Travel Protection Plan designed for Wilderness Travel by Travelex, or purchase other insurance on your own. See our website for details: [www.wildernesstravel.com/insurance](http://www.wildernesstravel.com/insurance)

# Extend Your Adventure!



To help you make the most of your adventure, we've created several exciting trip extensions. For detailed information, including full itineraries and complete pricing, please visit our webpage and click on "Extend Your Trip": [www.wildernesstravel.com/trip/uganda-kibale-mountain-gorilla-safari/](http://www.wildernesstravel.com/trip/uganda-kibale-mountain-gorilla-safari/)

## MASAI MARA NATIONAL RESERVE EXTENSION

Set at an altitude of about 5,000 feet, the Masai Mara National Reserve is breathtakingly beautiful with the wide Mara River, one of Kenya's largest rivers, snaking through its green, tree-studded grasslands. The river is home to many hippos and enormous groups of elephant that wander through the lush marshes along the river's edge. Among the plains game found in the Mara are eland, topi, zebra, giraffe, and Thompson's and Grant's gazelle, and buffalo graze here in abundance. There are also some of the rare and endangered black rhino, not always easy to find but a wonderful sight when encountered. The Mara is one of the best places in Kenya to see lion, as there are numerous roaming prides.

Please note: Naibor, Rekeru, and Mara Plains camps are small and exclusive and often fill well in advance; early booking is recommended. There is a 33-lb. weight limit on flights to/from the Masai Mara.

*4 days. From \$5695*



## GORILLA TRACKING IN RWANDA'S PARC NATIONAL DES VOLCANS EXTENSION

Join your ranger-guide for the exhilarating experience of tracking and observing the mountain gorilla clans that reside in the spectacular montane forests of Parc National des Volcans, where researcher Dian Fossey was based for 13 years. The hiking terrain ranges in altitude from 3,800 to 8,500 feet and preserves one of the largest natural forests in East Africa.

*5 days. From \$3795.*



## MURCHISON FALLS EXTENSION

Explore legendary Murchison Falls, the country's first national park, where you will have thrilling wildlife encounters in this uncrowded, yet spectacular park. The great Nile River funnels through a 20-foot-wide rocky gorge here, creating a thundering cascade. On a private excursion, you'll boat up the Nile right to the base of the falls, and enjoy fabulous game viewing in the delta area downstream (fantastic birding—more than 450 species!). The park is also only one of the few places in the world that you can see endangered Nubian (Rothschild) giraffe, and your visit supports their protection.

*5 days. From \$5795.*



# Arrival & Departure

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Upon confirming your trip reservation, we will send you a Welcome Packet that includes a list of documents (passport, visas, etc.) required for your trip. Please feel free to call if you would like this information before making your air arrangements.

## ARRIVAL & MEETING PLACE

Entebbe, Uganda

**Suggested Airport:** Entebbe International Airport (EBB)

**Suggested Date & Time:** Day 1, before 5:00 pm

**Meeting Place:** All trip members will be met at the airport on Day 1 and transferred to the Protea Marriott Hotel. Hotel check-in begins at 2:00 pm. A complimentary transfer is provided from the Entebbe Airport to the group hotel for all trip members no matter what day they arrive.

## DEPARTURE

Entebbe, Uganda

**Suggested Airport:** Entebbe International Airport (EBB)

**Suggested Date & Time:** Day 10, after 5:00 pm

A complimentary airport transfer is provided for all trip members from the group hotel to the Entebbe airport no matter what day they depart. Day rooms at the Protea Marriott are included until 6:00 pm on Day 10 (check out time is strictly enforced). If you wish to extend your day room to a full overnight room on Day 10 (at additional cost), please see the attached Extra Services Request Form for more information.

## INTERNATIONAL AIR TRAVEL

You are responsible for making your own arrangements for flights to and from Uganda. Airlines with the most convenient schedules for this trip include:

**British Airways** (via Nairobi)    **Delta/KLM Airlines**

[www.ba.com](http://www.ba.com)

[www.delta.com](http://www.delta.com)

[www.klm.com](http://www.klm.com)

**Virgin Atlantic** (via Nairobi)    **Kenya Airways**

[www.virgin-atlantic.com](http://www.virgin-atlantic.com)

[www.kenya-airways.com](http://www.kenya-airways.com)

British Air and Virgin Atlantic have a more spacious economy class that is an inexpensive alternative to business class. British Air calls it "World Traveler Plus" and Virgin Atlantic calls it "Premier Economy."

There are many online consolidators for booking travel, but for more personal help arranging air transport, you can contact Exito Travel at 970-818-8459 in the US or Canada. They are very adept at putting flight itineraries together, to even the most far-flung places. More information can be found on Exito's website at [www.exitotravel.com](http://www.exitotravel.com).

Depending on your routing, it is necessary to depart from the US one or possibly two days prior to Day 1 of the trip itinerary. The name on your airline ticket must match the name on your passport exactly, and your passport must be valid for at least six months after your date of return to the US.

**Please do not purchase your tickets until you are confirmed on the trip and have reviewed your proposed air schedule with our office.** Once your tickets have been purchased, please send us a copy of your airline schedule so we can reserve your airport transfers.

## EXTRA HOTEL NIGHTS

We are happy to arrange additional hotel nights for you in Entebbe. Please see the Extra Services Request Form to book these reservations.

## INTERNAL FLIGHTS

Your charter flight tickets will be issued by our local office and will be given to you by your Trip Leader.

# Accommodations



## PROTEA MARRIOTT HOTEL

*Entebbe, Uganda*

*Day 1 (1 night), Day 10 (dayroom)*

This relatively new hotel is right on the shores of Lake Victoria, just a quick drive from the airport. Well appointed guest rooms are spacious and offer all the modern amenities, and at the end of the day, you can relax on the terrace with a drink while admiring the superb lake views. Nearby attractions include the Entebbe Botanical Gardens and the Uganda Wildlife Education Centre.

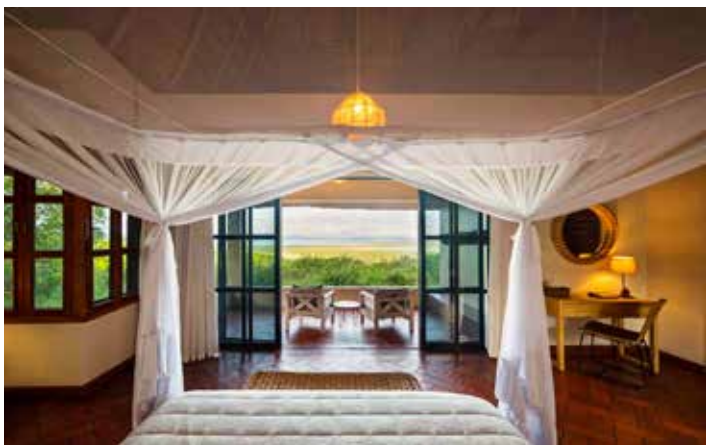


## NDALI LODGE

*Kibale, Uganda*

*Days 2 to 3 (2 nights)*

Perched on the rim of an extinct volcano above Lake Nyinambuga, this family-run lodge was built by a British tea farmer and has the wonderful atmosphere of an English country home. The setting is amazing, facing the Mountains of the Moon, and the eight simple cottages feature four-poster beds with mosquito netting and en suite facilities with hot running water and flush toilets. Candlelight and oil lamps provide a romantic “Old Africa” feel, as there is no electricity in the lodge, and no noisy generators to disturb the setting. The cottages and main lodge have solar lights. The dining room opens onto Lake Nyinambuga, and meals are served family style.



## ELEPHANT PLAINS LODGE

*Queen Elizabeth National Park, Uganda*

*Days 4 to 5 (2 nights)*

Perched high on the western edge of the Albertine rift among 80 acres of wilderness, the views from this lodge are some of the best in all of Queen Elizabeth National Park. The six guest cottages and two family cottages all have private verandas, large windows, en-suite bathrooms with tubs and showers, and views that overlook Lake Kikorongo where large numbers of elephant and buffalo congregate. The communal lounge is a great place to enjoy a gin and tonic or a glass of wine from the cellar, and you can take a plunge in the outdoor swimming pool where views of the open grasslands can't be beat. The restaurant has an international menu and both indoor and outdoor seating. We love the lodge's commitment to conservation—electricity is solar-powered, and the lodge was constructed with reclaimed, local materials.



### ISHASHA WILDERNESS CAMP

*Queen Elizabeth National Park, Uganda*

*Day 6 (1 night)*

Set within the southern Ishasha sector of Queen Elizabeth National Park, exclusive Ishasha Wilderness Camp is an idyllic retreat. Each spacious tent has en suite bathrooms and a private veranda overlooking the Ntungwe River. The thatched central lounge and dining area is a great place to enjoy superb meals and relaxation, and it's wonderful to gather around the outdoor fire pit to sip sundowners and share tales of the day. Since the camp is set within the national park, you may see wildlife wandering through camp (there are resident troops of colobus and vervet monkeys).



### MAHOGANY SPRINGS LODGE

*Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, Uganda*

*Days 7 to 9 (3 nights)*

You'll feel like part of the family at this quiet retreat, set just outside the national park in a beautiful location overlooking the mountains. The spacious cottages have a large en suite bathroom and private terrace, an ideal spot for relaxing and taking in the views. Panoramic terraces around the front of the main building also provide beautiful views of the forest and river (and you might even see gorillas crossing the river outside of the lodge!). In the evening, relax in the lounge with its double-sided fireplace and settle in with a book from its library.

These are our signature accommodations for this trip. Although it is highly unlikely, we may make substitutions when necessary. To see more photos and descriptions, please visit our *Mountain Gorilla Safari* webpage and click on "Accommodations."

# Trip Leaders

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Wilderness Travel Trip Leaders have a passion and a joy for creating an unforgettable journey. We are extremely proud of them and the incredible travel experiences they make possible. For more information about our Trip Leaders, including client comments about them and which specific trips they will be leading, please visit our webpage and click on “Trip Leaders”: [www.wildernesstravel.com/trip/uganda-kibale-mountain-gorilla-safari/](http://www.wildernesstravel.com/trip/uganda-kibale-mountain-gorilla-safari/)

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## FRANCIS KYALIGONZA

Francis was born and raised in Entebbe, Uganda, and still resides there with his family near the shores of picturesque Lake Victoria. After completing secondary school, he pursued a career in tourism and earned a diploma in Tourism, Tours & Travel. Since 2007, he has honed his skills as a driver-guide throughout Uganda, and attended training courses in hotel management, tourism, and general guiding. Francis’ favorite animal is the elephant as “they carefully associate with other animals, peacefully, unless it acts in self-defense.” Francis enjoys interacting with people, Ugandans and visitors alike, and has a great sense of humor. He’s rarely seen without a smile on his face and is eager to share his passion for Uganda with his guests.



## ROBERT SUNDAY

Robert was born and raised in Western Uganda and earned a university diploma in Wildlife Conservation. For the last 14 years, he’s been guiding in Uganda and increasing his expertise in birding and mammals. His favorite activity on safari is, of course, birding, as it creates more opportunities to spot other wildlife since a lot of patience is given to birds’ lives” (his favorite bird is the African fish eagle). Robert is a member of the Uganda Safari Guides Association (USAGA) and has taken courses in tourism principles at Katwe/Queen Elizabeth National Park, vehicle mechanics, first aid, general guiding, photography, and birding. When not on safari, you’ll find him swimming, playing soccer, and relaxing with a good book. It wouldn’t be a stretch to say that he’s gifted at language—he speaks eight!—English, Kiswahili, Luganda, French, Rutooro, Runyankole, Rukiga, and Lukonzo.

# Trip Details

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## WHAT THE TRIP IS LIKE

This trip is rated Level 3+, Moderate. During game drives in our 4WD vehicles, we guarantee window seating for all—there's no taking turns on who gets the window seats. We use five- or seven-passenger safari vehicles (never minibuses!), and all vehicles have roof hatches for easy wildlife viewing and photography. A cooler of drinks and refreshments is carried aboard. And our 4WD vehicles can go virtually anywhere, an important feature when we're tracking game. Please note there are some long driving days over rough roads and dusty dirt tracks.

The hikes to see the mountain gorillas can last anywhere from 3 to 6 hours over moderately steep, thickly forested, and uneven terrain, and the climate will be hot and humid. Gorilla tracking will occasionally feel strenuous as we hike uphill to follow the clans, but we will take breaks along the way. The shape you're in will be an important factor in your enjoyment of these hikes. Make an effort to get in good physical condition with hiking, biking, running, or other kinds of exercise beyond your normal routine. A brisk 30-45 minute walk every other day over moderately steep terrain can do wonders for your conditioning.

Any African safari is an adventure, and the traveler to Africa should bring along flexibility, a sense of humor, and an openness to the unexpected.

Our accommodations will be in comfortable hotels, safari lodges, and tented camps with spacious tents equipped with en suite facilities.

## GAME DRIVES & WILD ANIMALS

During drives and walks, we can at times get quite close to wild animals. Being very quiet improves everybody's chances of observation. In the interest of safety, your Trip Leader explains limitations on movement while on game drives, in the safari vehicles, and around camp. Specific guidelines are in effect for the viewing of chimpanzees and gorillas—both for their protection and for your own. Incidents with wild animals are extremely rare on safaris, but no trip can guarantee immunity from such incidents. Wilderness Travel is not to be held responsible for incidents involving the behavior of wildlife.

## WILDLIFE VIEWING

In Uganda, the wildlife is truly wild. Unlike some of the Kenya and Tanzania game parks, the wildlife here has not

been exposed to a great number of humans. Except when viewed from the launch trips on the rivers, Uganda's wildlife has a healthy, natural shyness of our vehicles. Here we have an opportunity to observe natural behavior. Binoculars are strongly recommended for observing animals as well as birds. They will also be helpful for observing chimpanzees and monkeys who spend much of their time high up in trees. We recommend 10-power if you are interested in seeing and identifying smaller birds.

## CHIMPANZEES

Within the reserve, chimpanzees are wild and free to roam wherever they choose. Their movements are influenced not by people but by ecological and social factors. We track chimpanzees by following their morning vocalizations—they tend to call most just after sunrise. Once we hear these calls, we walk as quickly and quietly as possible to find them, as they may only call a few times. Chimps do not associate in permanent groups and the number encountered during a visit cannot be ascertained beforehand. As their movements are difficult to predict, finding them is dependent on their behavior and we cannot guarantee we will see them.

### Essential Guidelines For Viewing Chimpanzees

Wild chimpanzees are very active and temperamental animals. Their response to visitors will be determined in part by the visitors' behavior. It is important that the initial approach to the chimps is quiet and calm. If the chimps are feeding, it will be possible to observe them quietly. Once they settle down, the local guides will search for the best possible vantage points and visitors can move around and speak softly. If the animals are traveling, so will the visitors. If the chimps are resting on the ground, visitors must try to be especially calm and quiet. If a chimp starts a threatening display, stay close to the guides and do not run away. If visitors do not disturb or annoy the chimps, it is unlikely they will be aggressive. Binoculars are essential for viewing chimps high up in the trees. Find a comfortable spot, lean back, and enjoy watching them feed, groom, and interact. Chimpanzees are very susceptible to human diseases, especially respiratory ones. To reduce the risk to the animals, visitors are not allowed to eat or smoke while in the forest. It is not possible to approach within 16 feet of the chimps. This not only protects the animals, but also reduces the risk of aggression from them. It must be remembered that chimpanzees are intelligent and curious, but also very excitable. Visitors must not encourage contact

# Trip Details (cont'd)

at any time. Photographing chimpanzees can be difficult. They spend much of their time feeding in trees and are often backlit. Flash photography is not permitted as the flash seems to bother them.

## GORILLAS

The gorillas we visit have been habituated by park rangers over many years to tolerate the presence of small groups of visitors. The habituation process involves locating the family each day by following their trail of the previous day and then staying with them for as long as the “habituator” is tolerated. In the early stages of the habituation process, the gorillas are very nervous, and the dominant male attempts to intimidate the habituator by chest beating and repeated bluff charges, while the members of his family move away and remain hidden. As the gorillas become more used to these daily visits, the behavior of the adult male becomes less volatile and the daily observation period is gradually extended. Slowly the gorillas come to understand that the observer, whom they recognize, poses no threat to them and so curiosity overcomes fear and they begin to show themselves more readily. At this point, visitors can be taken to the gorillas for the daily visit, starting with one and slowly building up to a maximum of eight people per family of gorillas per day.

### Essential Guidelines for Viewing Gorillas

The minimum age for all gorilla tracking participants is 15 years. In order to protect gorillas from communicable diseases, to which they are very susceptible, gorillas cannot be touched by humans. Any traveler with an obvious cold or other communicable illness will not be allowed to participate in the treks. Groups may remain with the gorilla family for a maximum of one hour. It is very important to follow the instructions of your guide at all times. He or she works with the gorillas every day and understands them

very well. Always remain in a compact group close behind the guide. The guide will locate the dominant male of the group and will attempt to position you in such a way that the gorilla can see you at all times. It is very important that the dominant male knows exactly where you are and for this reason you must always remain together in one group.

If the dominant male approaches very closely or even charges, it is very important that you do not move backwards: remain exactly where you are. The guide may suggest you adopt a submissive posture by sitting down slowly. If a young gorilla approaches, under no circumstances should you make any move to touch it. The guide may try to discourage it from touching you, as this can create a dangerous situation with the dominant male.

Avoid sudden movements or loud noises because they can be particularly disturbing to the gorillas. Do not move any vegetation to get a better photo opportunity. Shaking the vegetation is a gorilla threat display! Or, the gorilla may interpret it as an attempt to take away his food—not a good idea when in the company of a 400-pound gorilla. Flash photography is not permitted.

Often the gorillas are found in very dense vegetation where visibility is poor. The guide will very carefully try to maneuver the group of visitors into a better position, but this is slow work, so please be patient. Never forget that these gorillas, while tolerating your presence, are still totally wild animals.

## WEATHER

The climate in Uganda is considered “modified tropical”—similar to the equatorial climate of other East African countries like Kenya and Tanzania, but slightly modified by its altitude, which ranges from 3,500 to 4,500 feet. Daytime

Average Daily Max/Min °F												
Kabale (near Bwindi)	The average monthly temperatures are around 64°F and can fall to 50°F at night. Relative humidity is between 90-100% in the morning and decreases to between 42-75% in the afternoon, all the year around.											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Entebbe	84/61	84/61	82/63	82/63	81/63	81/61	81/59	81/61	81/61	82/61	82/61	82/61
Mbarabara (near Bwindi)	81/57	81/57	81/59	79/59	79/57	79/57	81/55	81/57	79/57	79/57	79/57	79/57
Rainfall - Inches												
Entebbe	2.6	3.0	5.6	7.6	6.8	3.3	2.5	3.4	3.7	5.1	6.4	4.0
Mbarabara (near Bwindi)	2.0	2.4	4.2	4.7	2.9	1.0	1.1	3.0	4.6	4.6	5.6	3.1

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temperatures are usually in the 70s and 80s, and humidity is fairly high. You can expect to experience some rain during the course of the trip. Like Kenya and Tanzania, Uganda has two annual rainy seasons, one between March and May and one between October and November.

#### June, July and August

During these months, the country is refreshingly green and the weather is coolest, especially in the higher altitudes, with a high of 70°-80° and a low of 40°. Riding in the safari vehicle can be chilly some mornings, but the temperature usually warms up by 10:00 am.

#### September, October and November

These are delightful times to visit Uganda and can be compared to springtime in the US. The jacaranda and other trees are bursting into blossom and the days are warmer. The high temperatures are 75°-85°F, with a low of 65°F. Scattered rains occur in November and early December. These “short rains” just freshen the country and lay the dust, although they can sometimes be heavy.

#### December to March

These are Uganda’s “summer” months. The temperature range is from 80° to 90° during the day (coastal areas are hotter and can range from 80° to 100°). The evenings range from 50°F to 60°F.

#### April and May

The rainy season (the “long rains”) occur during these months.

## CHOOSING THE RIGHT TRIP

Adventure travel often involves exotic destinations, unusual levels of physical exertion, or activities you may not have participated in previously. We work hard to help you choose the right trip for you, paying attention to your individual interests, abilities, and needs. If you have questions about the level of comfort or any of the activities described in this itinerary, please call Wilderness Travel at 1-800-368-2794 and ask for the Africa Manager or email us at [africa@wildernesstravel.com](mailto:africa@wildernesstravel.com).

## REFERENCES

We’d be happy to put you in touch with a past client that has traveled with us on this or a similar trip.

## VISIT OUR WEBSITE

At [www.wildernesstravel.com](http://www.wildernesstravel.com), you can book your trip online or find out about added departures, last-minute deals, and one-time Limited Edition adventures that aren’t listed in our catalog. You can also access our complete library of detailed itineraries filled with enticing photos and videos, read bios of our Trip Leaders, find descriptions of trip accommodations, and check real-time availability of any trips that interest you.



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