

TRAVEL PLANNING FOR RWANDA

Stress free travel

This document offers helpful information on travel in Rwanda as well as advice on **health planning** and **what to pack**.

Passport and visas

Visa requirements may be subject to change at any time - check before you travel!

Nationals of all countries can receive a visa on arrival at Kigali International Airport and all land borders. A **return ticket** must be shown and your passport must have a validity of **at least 6 months** on the **day of entry** in Rwanda. You are also advised to have **at least three blank pages** available in your passport on arrival. It is also possible to obtain a visa ahead of time through Rwanda's online e-visa system: **CLICK HERE**.

As of **March 2020**, single-entry tourist visa fees are waived for citizens of Commonwealth, La Francophonie and African Union member countries, plus other select countries. For all other nationalities, a single-entry tourist visa costs US \$50 and all are valid for 30 days.

The East African Tourist Visa (EATV) which covers Rwanda, Kenya and Uganda, costs US \$100 and is valid for 90 days. Please note that East African visas, are not valid for travel to Tanzania. If you visit Tanzania between two other participating East African countries (e.g Kenya & Rwanda) your East African Visa will become null and void and you will need to obtain a new East African Visa.

Your health

Rwanda is a safe and secure destination, however, it is a good idea to take a few precautions.

If you are planning to travel to Rwanda along with other countries in East Africa, you should consult your GP before travel. Whilst visiting your doctor, you should take the opportunity to review your current state of health, the medication that you are taking and any allergies that you may have.

Although Rwanda does not require Yellow fever vaccinations for visitors coming from non-endemic countries, they **are** required for travellers coming from **endemic** countries and before travelling to most East African countries. If you are traveling to any other African country **before or after Rwanda**, it is strongly recommended that you obtain a Yellow Fever vaccine to ensure you meet requirements. Please make sure you check the **latest requirements** before you travel.

Much of East Africa is at altitude and the sun is hot. Particularly if you are fair skinned, you may burn easily. It is therefore necessary to take precautions by applying high factor sunscreen and to stay out of the direct sunlight. We would advise you to wear a hat whilst you are out in the mid day sun. Please also remember to drink plenty of fluids to stay **hydrated**.

Useful information

Security

Your safety is of utmost importance to us. Whilst you travel with us you can rest assured that you are in good hands. Our camps and lodges in both Rwanda and Kenya, all employ a team of day and night guards who are always on call and will escort you to and from your rooms to keep you **safe** throughout your stay.

Water

All of our camps and lodges have systems of **reverse osmosis** filtration installed and it is from these systems





that all of your **drinking water** is derived. We would strongly encourage you to pack your own **reuseable** water bottle which can be refilled as often as you like. Alternatively you will be provided with a Governors' Camp Collection branded metal bottle at the first of our camps/lodges that you arrive at.

Tipping

Tipping is customary in Rwanda though not mandatory. Please speak to the lodge manager if you would like advice on tipping guidelines for the staff or for your guide, porters or trackers on your gorilla trek. Please ask for our **Gorilla Trekking Document** which offers further advice.

Photography

We understand that you will want to take as many pictures of your holiday as possible, but before you begin to take pictures of houses or people, ask for their **permission**. In some cases, you may be required to offer a tip for those pictures. Your driver or guide is the best person to ask for advice.

Wild animals

Never approach or attempt to feed a wild animal, even if they appear harmless. You may hear sounds outside your room during the night - do not be alarmed! Please do not step outside your tent or room at any stage to investigate, during the night.

Charity and donations

Many visitors to Africa feel a strong urge to help the less fortunate whom they may encounter during their travel, or when visiting a local village or school. It is best to seek an appropriate opportunity to buy gifts or supplies while you are traveling, rather than carrying them along from home. Many of our camps and lodges in both Rwanda and Kenya are actively involved in working with their local communities to sustain schools, clinics and other projects. Ask about this when you are there and visit the school, clinic or project if you can. A donation to something you have seen on the ground will bring you more satisfaction (and directly help the neediest).

Resist the temptation to offer 'hand outs' to kids on the side of the road. This only encourages dependency on such generosity and teaches these children that begging brings reward. A rather fun idea is to gift a football (soccer ball). Africans love soccer yet not all the children have a ball with which to play.

SACOLA (Sabyinyo Community Livelihood Association)

Sabyinyo Silverback Lodge was designed and built by Governors' but is owned by a community trust called **SACOLA**. Governors' runs and leases the lodge from SACOLA, and SACOLA uses rental fees to finance its socio-economic development and conservation objectives in the area. Sabyinyo guests are more than welcome to ask about our partnership with the local projects and see how they can get involved in uplifting the lives of those less fortunate.

Voltage

Rwanda is 220 - 240 volts. Please note, the lodge is connected to the Electricity Grid in Rwanda. Power appliances can be run/charged 24 hours a day.

Money

The **Rwandan Franc** is the currency of Rwanda but US Dollars are widely accepted at many hotels, lodges and camps. Most properties (including Sabyinyo Silverback Lodge) will accept payments from **major credit cards** - Visa and Mastercard. We suggest that you carry a combination of cash (preferably US\$ and local) as a 'just in case'. Small notes are helpful for purchasing goods in local markets or tipping porters etc.

International telephone + WiFi

The dialling code for Rwanda is + **250**. Rwanda has quite a widespread mobile network with an extensive range of 4G and 3G. Our lodge has WiFi in the main areas and in the rooms.

Climate

Generally temperate year round, but be prepared for colder weather and rain. Please see our suggested packing list further on for a guideline on what to bring with you.

Laundry service

Governors' Camp Collection offers **complimentary** laundry services throughout our properties with a 12-24hr turnaround. This is **not a specialist service** and garments requiring special care should not be sent to the laundry. **** Note that we do not wash any underwear** due to cultural reasons but bras will be laundered if needed. Laundry powder is provided in guest bathrooms incase you need to wash your own underwear.

Luggage restrictions

If your East African journey includes a safari in Kenya, you will most likely find yourself on a light aircraft at some point. Due to **strict weight and space restrictions** on small aircraft in Kenya, we strongly suggest that you adhere to the below packing guidelines:

- **Baggage allowance on regional flights in Kenya is strictly 15 Kgs (34lbs) per passenger, inclusive of hand luggage in soft bags.**
- **Excess baggage will be charged at prevailing rates of the airline, and only carried subject to space availability.**

If you arrive with oversized/overweight baggage for these flights, you will be asked to repack into suitable bags which comply with internal airline regulations. Please bear this in mind when you are packing for your trip with us as failure to do so may result in a delayed departure or even a missed flight. If your regional flights are booked with Governors' Aviation we offer **storage facilities** for any **excess** luggage at our office at Wilson Airport, for collection on your return to Nairobi.





Suggested packing list

Sabyinyo Silverback Lodge is at 8,250 feet above sea level and can get quite cold at times!

The below is an outline of what we suggest you bring. Depending upon how long you are travelling for you may wish to adjust quantities and items to suit your needs.

CLOTHING

1 x pair **lightweight** trousers (khaki or similar muted colors). Good for daytime.

1 x pair **waterproof (Gortex)** trousers which help against stinging nettles as well as the rain. It's worth packing these waterproofs in your backpack and then putting them on **over** your trekking pants if and when you encounter stinging nettles or rain.

1 x pair of jeans or 'smart casual' evening attire trousers for dinner etc.

3 x t-shirts. It's a good idea to make use of 'layers' which you can put on or take off as the day heats up or cools down.

1 x long sleeved t-shirt or turtleneck is ideal for the trek itself.

1 x fleece for the evenings and early mornings (you can leave this behind in your transfer car at the start of the trailhead once the day has warmed up a bit).

1 x wind breaker/light waterproof jacket incase you get some rain.

1 x pair of comfortable, **waterproof**, sturdy walking boots for the trek.

1 x pair of **comfortable** closed-in shoes (trainers or similar), flip flops (optional).

Underwear and socks for 3 - 5 days. Bring socks that are long enough to tuck your trousers into, as an extra precaution to stop the safari ants from getting in underneath your clothing.

Sleep wear (light weight sweats double up nicely as undergarments for a trek).

Sunglasses and sunhat.

****Please note that waterproof jackets, gloves (with a protective layer for protection against nettles), Gaiters (prevents water entering your shoes and keeps your feet dry!) and small backpacks (to carry your waterbottle, snacks and other trekking gear) are all available to be borrowed from the lodge if you prefer, rather than carrying your own.**

TOILETRIES: Sunblock, face cream and lip balm with a good SPF. **Please note** that we provide the following across **our** camps and lodges: dressing gowns, shampoo, conditioner, body lotion, body wash, hand wash, cotton buds, cotton wool & laundry powder (Please bring your own toothbrush, toothpaste and ladies sanitary items).

ELECTRONICS: A small flashlight or torch (we do provide these in your room), power bank and various charging cables that you require (you can also charge your electronics in your room - through USB and multi-socket charging ports), camera, spare batteries and extra memory cards, and binoculars (especially if you have a keen interest in birds).

OTHER ITEMS TO CONSIDER: A good book to read, a deck of cards or other travel friendly sized games, your own **reusable** water bottle (please help us minimise plastic!)

An aerial photograph of a lodge nestled in a lush, green forest valley. The lodge is a long, single-story building with a dark roof and a chimney, surrounded by dense trees. In the background, rolling hills and mountains are visible under a clear sky. The overall scene is serene and scenic.

Please note

That plastic bags are strictly **banned** in Rwanda! Please make sure that you do not carry any (including duty free shopping bags) with you into the country. Zip-lock bags/travel pouches are fine to use.

If you have any questions or concerns about travel to Rwanda or your stay with us, please do not hesitate to email us on info@governorscamp.com