

Kāmbā

AFRICAN
RAINFOREST
EXPERIENCES



Everything to Know Before Arrival



About Kamba

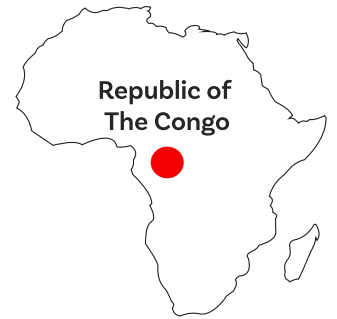
Kamba African Rainforest Experiences (formerly Congo Conservation Company) creates wilderness experiences in the Congo Basin that introduce this remote and fragile region to the wider world. Our goal is to create a sustainable, home-grown economic model that can keep more damaging alternatives at bay.

We operate three lodges in Odzala-Kokoua National Park, with two additional lodges coming soon in nearby Nouabalé-Ndoki National Park. We handle all details for the entire trip, including domestic transportation (by private plane, boat, kayak, and road), all activities, expert guiding, gorilla tracking permits, meals and drinks, and any pre- or post-trip stays in Brazzaville. This allows guests to focus on the rainforest environment and the wildlife that calls it home.

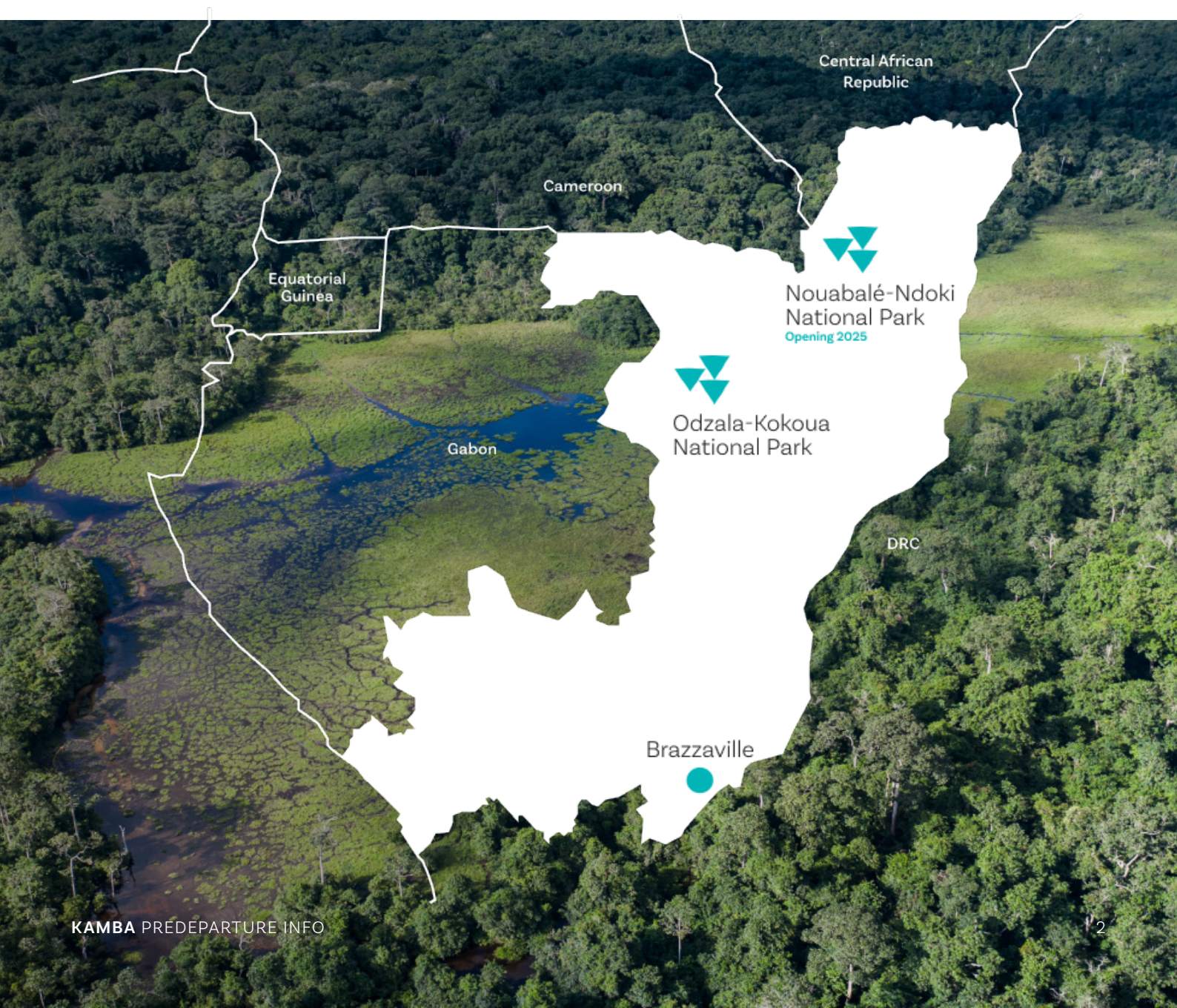


Where We Operate

Kamba operates in the small, welcoming, and peaceful Republic of the Congo, which lies hundreds of miles west of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (a separate country that you may recognize from news headlines). Straddling the Equator in Central Africa and bordered by Gabon and Cameroon, the ROC is in the midst of the Congo Basin, the world's second-largest rainforest after the Amazon, home to stunning biodiversity of animal and plant species, including Western Lowland Gorilla.



We have the only three private lodges in Odzala-Kokoua National Park, in the northwest of the country, and are preparing to open two additional lodges in Nouabalé-Ndoki National Park, around 250 km (160 mi) to the northeast, on the border with Cameroon.



A Tale Of Two Congos

There are in fact two countries called Congo: The Republic of the Congo (ROC) and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), each with its own heritage, culture, rich natural kingdom, and government.

The ROC, where Kamba operates, is a former French colony with its capital in Brazzaville, and is safe and politically stable. The population of 5.26 million speaks mostly French.

The DRC, formerly known as both Zaire and Belgian Congo, is 200 miles east of Odzala and is more than six times the size of the ROC. The capital, Kinshasa, lies directly across the Congo River from Brazzaville. The DRC, population 81.34 million, is the Congo you may hear about in unfortunate news reports; however, the country's political instability has no impact on the ROC or on Kamba's operations.





Who Should Visit

Anyone who wants to immerse themselves in one of the remotest, most remarkable places on earth; encounter rarely sighted wildlife, including Western Lowland Gorilla, Forest Elephant, Forest Buffalo, and African Gray Parrot; and breathe in the immaculate air of a forest barely touched by humanity.

That said, guests should be able to walk at a normal walking pace, unassisted, for more than 8 km (5 miles) a day and for at least 2 hours at a time. While not steep, terrain is uneven and is likely to include walks through beautiful rivers and marshes.

We can only welcome guests 16 years and older to visit any of our lodges, due to the remote location, gorilla tracking requirements, National Park rules, and insurance protocols. Unfortunately, we are not able to make any exceptions to this rule.



When To Visit

The Congolese rainforest has basically two seasons: Wet and Dry. Rain is an essential part of the ecosystem and brings a cooling effect on balmy days. And we have dry days too! Because we are on the Equator, temperatures fluctuate very little, ranging from 25°C to 28°C (77°F to 82°F). Most of our large mammals, including Western Lowland Gorilla, Forest Elephant, and Forest Buffalo, do not migrate and can be found in the area year-round. That makes any time of year a wonderful time to explore the Congo Basin. (Please reach out to inquire about specific wildlife interests so we can recommend an optimal viewing season – remembering that specific sightings are never guaranteed.)

Wet Season

(April–June & September–November)
Average Temperature:
26°–27°C (78.8°–80.6°F)
Average Rainfall:
8–11 days per month;
108–129 mm (4.2–5 in.)

Dry Season

(December–March & June–September)
Average Temperature:
25.7°C – 26.5°C (78.3°F – 80°F)
Average Rainfall:
7.5–8 days per month;
48–132 mm (1.9–5.2 in.)

Getting To Kamba

Guests should book international flights to Brazzaville’s Maya-Maya Airport (BZV), a modern, recently built facility served by major carriers including Air France (via Charles de Gaulle), Ethiopian Airlines (via Addis Ababa), Royal Air Maroc (via Casablanca), and RwandAir (via Kigali). Our team will meet and assist guests with their onward journey to our lodges, or to their hotel in Brazzaville if applicable.

To arrive at Kamba’s lodges, we operate weekly scheduled flights between Brazzaville and our private airstrip at Mboko, in Odzala-Kokoua National Park, on a LET L-410 12-seater plane. Flights are included in the journey cost. The round-trip flights operate Mondays and Thursdays only and take approximately 2 hours. The flight from Brazzaville to Mboko departs at around 1pm. The return flight from Mboko lands in Brazzaville at around 11am. Note that all arrival and departure times are dependent on weather conditions.

Please note the weight limit on these internal flights: 15 kgs (33 lbs) per person in total weight, inclusive of hand luggage.

We also operate all transportation within the park and between the three lodges (Mboko, Lango, and Ngaga).



Pre-Departure Requirements

For each guest, please send the following to Kamba at info@kambaafrica.com.

Immediately after booking

(required for Letter of Invitation):

- Copy of passport (valid for six months after travel)
- Copy of a valid Covid Vaccination Certificate
- Copy of confirmed international flights

Within a month of booking:

- Guest Details and Indemnity Form
- Health Declaration Form, signed by a doctor (required for gorilla tracking)

Prior to departure:

- Copy of Republic of the Congo visa (see below)
- Copy of Yellow Fever Vaccination Certificate (see below)

Obtaining A Visa

A visa is required to visit the Republic of the Congo. We will provide guests with a letter of invitation, which they then present to the nearest embassy or consulate. This application should be submitted at least four weeks in advance of the departure date.

If guests are unable to obtain a visa in advance, we can, with proper notice, arrange for a visa upon arrival to be issued at the airport in Brazzaville. Please inquire at info@kambaafrica.com for further information.

Health & Safety

Yellow Fever: A yellow fever vaccination is required to enter the Republic of the Congo. Guests will be required to show a certificate of vaccination (“yellow card”) upon arrival in Brazzaville.

Malaria: Our lodges lie within a malarial zone; guests should consult with a medical professional on which antimalarial medication to take. We strongly recommend bringing tropical-grade insect repellent and spraying clothes with permethrin prior to departure to prevent mosquito and tick bites.

COVID-19: Guests participating in gorilla tracking will be given a rapid PCR test prior to departing Brazzaville for Mboko airstrip, and an additional rapid test prior to their first gorilla encounter. This is to prevent transmission of the virus to the gorillas. Currently, there are no COVID-19 vaccination or testing requirements to enter the Republic of the Congo.



What To Pack

When packing, please keep in mind the 15kg weight limit on the internal flights between Brazzaville and Odzala-Kokoua National Park. (We can store any excess baggage for you in our Brazzaville office.) On international flights, we highly recommend packing essential items and two days' worth of clothing in carry-on baggage in case checked luggage is misdirected. Soft-sided luggage is recommended.



Equipment & Other

All camera equipment should be suitable for humid and possibly wet environments. Lighting conditions can be challenging in the forest; gorilla welfare protocols prohibit flashes, and the typical viewing distance is at least 10 m (32 ft). A macro lens is helpful for photographing insects and plants. You will need to carry all your own equipment. Advance clearance is required for drones and large-scale camera equipment; please contact us for more information.

- Sunglasses & sunscreen
- Binoculars (night vision a bonus)
- Camera equipment
- Anti-fog spray for lenses, spare batteries and memory cards or film
- Adaptors (lodges use European plugs; 500W max)
- Zip-lock bags and a lightweight dry bag for electronic equipment
- Torch or flashlight (headlamp recommended)
- Noise-canceling headphones (recommended especially for flight to Odzala)
- Personal toiletries (shower gel, shampoo, conditioner, and body lotion provided)
- Biodegradable sanitary products, if possible
- Medication (EpiPen recommended for those with severe allergies)
- Insect repellent (tropical-grade - natural products such as citronella are not recommended)

Clothing

As the rainforest and bai environment can be muddy and wet, we recommend bringing enough suitable clothing (including socks) to allow time for laundered items to dry in the often humid and wet conditions. Ideal clothing is quick-drying; lightweight; dark green, khaki, or brown; and has long sleeves or trouser legs. Black, blue, and other dark-colored clothes are not recommended, as they may attract tsetse flies near the water. Avoid wearing bright colors in the forest.

- 2 to 3 fast-drying shirts with long sleeves
- 2 to 3 pairs of fast-drying long pants
- Comfortable, closed-toe walking shoes, ideally lightweight and fast-drying (not sandals or heavy boots)
- Water shoes, booties, or old running shoes (which may be left behind) for river activities
- A light fleece or jumper for evenings and early mornings
- 2 pairs of socks per day, preferably lightweight and fast-drying
- Sun hat
- Bathing suit
- Rain jacket
- Casual clothes and comfortable shoes for relaxing at the lodge



Paperwork

- Passport with 2 blank pages
- Visa and Letter of Invitation
- Yellow fever vaccination record
- Cash in USD or EUR (see Currency, below)
- Printed copy of travel and medical insurance, including policy reference number, name of insurer, name(s) of covered person(s), and emergency contact number(s). Please also include contact information for a friend/family member in your home country.

Brazzaville

Brazzaville is very safe, with one of the cleanest city centers in Africa. Many guests enjoy spending one or two nights in the colorful, vibrant capital before or after their Kamba journey. We are pleased to make arrangements for rooms at the Radisson Blu, considered the best hotel in town. We can also arrange for a three-hour city tour, which includes lunch at the delightful riverfront Mami Wata Restaurant, as well as other excursions. Please inquire at info@kambaafrica.com.



Currency

The Republic of Congo is a cash country, with limited acceptance of credit cards. The Radisson Blu in Brazzaville does accept credit cards (except for Amex), as does our office in Brazzaville. Guests are advised to arrive with plenty of USD or EUR in cash to use for purchases in Brazzaville and for tips at the lodges. ATMs are available in Brazzaville, but compatibility with U.S. or European cards is not guaranteed.

Note that if you plan to use or exchange US dollars, most establishments only accept notes dated 2013 or newer, in denominations of \$5 or greater, and in good condition.

At our lodges, only cash is accepted in either USD, EUR, or Congolese Francs (XAF).

If you have any further questions,
please visit our comprehensive
FAQs, or just reach out at
info@kambaafrica.com.