



FACT SHEET





INTRODUCTION

Gorilla Safari Lodge sits comfortably at the edge of the Bwindi Impenetrable Forest National Park, a primeval forest and lush jungle region in south west Uganda. The lodge is found in Rushaga sector but those trekking in Nkuringo and Mgahinga can still stay with us. Rushaga sector, its the only sector where Gorilla Habituation takes place. This national park is home to wild gorillas, forest elephants and 23 species of bird endemic to the area. Located a 5 minute walk from the briefing point for trekking makes it a sought after lodge for gorilla safaris. After a long day of trekking and ploughing through thick tropical vegetation, hikers can seek solace in knowing that their lodge is just a quick drive away from the entrance to the park.

Banana and guava trees cocoon the lodge, and in the distance there are views of the forest jungle with its ancient canopy of trees decorating the lofty hills. The entrance to the lodge is warm and welcoming. Bold colours from indigenous flora greet you upon arrival, leaving a lasting first impression. The atmosphere is personable, and efficient staff ensure you looked after for the duration of your stay.

The main lodge area houses the dining room, a relaxation lounge, deck/big balcony, where you can sit to sun bathe and also have your meals outside, spa treatment room and a quaint nook where the bar is situated. This remote lodge comprises of 21 individual units, each with private wooden balconies overlooking the wilderness and named after individual gorillas or their tribes. 3 of these units are inter-leading rooms, making them ideal for families. Another 2 rooms are joined, but aren't inter-leading. The lodge is also well equipped for disabled guests, 2 rooms have been designed for wheelchair access with wider doors & bathrooms.

The architecture and decor is comfortable, and all amenities from home are provided. Rooms have solar-powered lighting, en-suite bathroom with hot and cold water and flush toilets. Each unit is designed to look like stand-alone log cabins that blend in with the surrounding rainforest, ensuring that the lodge does not look out of

place in its wild surrounds. Cobbled paths with wooden bannisters join the well-appointed rooms, each of which have been named after individual gorillas or gorilla tribes. Some of the units come with a deep-set standalone bath and a fireplace.

There are plenty of activities and things to do in the area, all of which can be arranged on site for an extra fee. Guests can choose between the full day gorilla conservation experience or the popular gorilla trekking. Either way, Gorilla Safari Lodge is the ideal hideaway to base yourself for a gorilla trekking safari in Uganda.

AT A GLANCE

- Located a 5 minute walk from the briefing point and start of the hike for gorilla trekking in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest National Park.
- The lodge offers both gorilla trekking or a full day gorilla conservation experience
- Golden monkey trekking and forest walks available
- Lodge is ideally situated on the fringes of the rainforest jungle.
- Plenty of alternate activities on offer which include biking, visit to local communities, waterfall walks and more.
- The lodge is a 1½ hour scenic drive from the Kisoro airstrip - accessible from Entebbe Airport.
- Close to the local community arts and crafts for curio shopping.
- Sweeping views of the hills and the Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.
- 21 rooms, two of which have disabled access.
- Child and family friendly lodge (baby sitting available on request).
- Massage and spa treatments.
- Honeymoon room set-up available.

FACILITIES

- WiFi in main area (slow)
- Tea and coffee station in the main area
- Intimate bar area
- Dining area/restaurant where meals are served



- Comfortable lounge leading down from the dining/ bar area
- Deck/Big Balcony to have your meals or sunbathe
- Boma- where traditional stories can be told at the fire
- Guest toilet in main area
- Spa
- Quaint curio shop with basics
- 21 rooms in total, 3 of which are inter-leading rooms
- Family rooms have 3 beds in each unit
- 2 individual rooms are actually joined - ideal for friends
- Rooms are either twin or double (must be requested at time of booking)
- Each room has a wooden balcony with a view
- Balconies have chairs or couches
- Small seating area in rooms
- Conditioner, shampoo and bathroom amenities provided
- Some of the rooms have a stand-alone bath with shower
- A few of the rooms have an indoor coal fireplace for warmth
- Hot water bottles provided
- Dressing gowns in room
- Safe with personal code in rooms
- Wardrobe with hanging space and shelf space
- Mosquito nets
- Bedside lamps and tables
- Solar power, eco-friendly lodge
- Laundry service on site
- Plug points in rooms (Type G, 3 prong square plugs, solar power)

ACTIVITIES

- Gorilla Trekking : Take a fully guided trek into the dense rainforest and meet the gorillas. Guests will be briefed at the start of the trek, and receive a certificate at the end. Tracking gorillas can take anything from 3 hours to a full day - depending on which group you track. You will spend an hour with the gorillas.
- Gorilla Habituation : This activity is unique to the

lodge and is a full day of walking. This experience includes 4 hours with a gorilla family. It is only available in Uganda (Rushaga) and provides an intimate experience observing wild gorillas together with researchers, trackers, rangers and leading conservationists.

- Guided community walks : For years the lodge has supported the local school and the Batwa community living in the area. Find out about the history of the area, meet the Rushaga women and learn about their various arts and crafts.
- Batwa Pygmies : This is a unique experience that introduces guests to the Batwa pygmies from the jungle. This group used to harness honey, use plants for medicinal purposes, and hunt forest animals using spears. When the forest was declared a national heritage site, the Batwa were expelled from the forest. They now live on the outskirts of the forest and mix with local communities.
- Mountain Biking with Guide : Experience Lake Mutanda on bike. An experienced guide will take you through the local villages, farm steads and Matooke (banana) fields. Get to know the locals and their way of life.
- Guided Forest walks to the Bayenda Falls : Experience the heart of the rainforest and learn about the indigenous fauna and flora. Observe the various species of monkeys and birdlife while listening to the cascading sounds of the waterfalls. The walk is 2 hours.

TYPICAL DAY GORILLA TREKKING

The schedule of your day goes according to your chosen activity, and the times will vary.

7:00 - 7:30 : Depart for the national park after enjoying morning coffee and breakfast

7:30 : Sit with all trekking groups, listen to the briefing and find out about the history of the park.



8:00 : Find out who your guide is, along with the name of the gorilla group that you will track. Meet your fellow hikers. Select a porter for your hike.

8:30 : Trekking begins. Hikes can be anything from 3 – 6 hours.

11:30 - 12:30 : Sit back and enjoy your packed lunch courtesy of the lodge.

N/A : When the gorillas are located you will spend a maximum of 1 hour with the primates.

Afternoon : Return to the lodge for a well-deserved refreshment, and settle down for dinner.

LOCATION

Gorilla Safari Lodge is on the boundary line of the Bwindi Impenetrable Forest National Park (Rushaga Sector), close to the starting point of trekking to the gorillas. The area is in the Kisoro region in south-west Uganda.

GETTING THERE

Gorilla Safari Lodge is in a remote area and the journey to paradise is long, but eye-opening and scenic. The quickest route is by air to the Kisoro airstrip.

BY ROAD

From Uganda : Travel from Kampala crossing through the Equator through Mbarara onto Kabale. Continue to Kisoro and branch off at Muko (banyenzaki memorial) and follow the Gorilla Safari Lodge signs on to Rushaga where the lodge is located.

Kampala-kabale = 427kms | Kabale – Muko = 50kms | Muko-Gorilla safari lodge = 25kms

The driving time from Kampala to Gorilla Safari Lodge ranges from 7 - 9 hours.

From Rwanda: Travel from Kigali to Cyanika boarder. Proceed to Kisoro town and continue to Rubuguli and on to Rushaga where the lodge is located. Please follow the signs right from Kisoro town.

Kigali – Cyanika Border = 205kms | Cyanika Border – Kisoro = 54kms | Kisoro – Gorilla Safari Lodge = 35kms

The driving time from Kigali to Gorilla Safari Lodge ranges from 4 - 6 hours.

BY AIR

Guests need to fly into Entebbe International airport. Charter Flights from Entebbe International Airport or Kajjansi to Kisoro Airstrip, with a road transfer from the airstrip in Kisoro to the lodge.

The transfer takes about 1 and a half hours. Guests can choose to overnight in Kampala and catch the connecting flight to Kisoro the following morning.

CHILD POLICY

Children of all ages are welcome at Gorilla Safari Lodge, but they aren't able to trek with the gorillas. Baby sitting is available.

GENERAL TRAVEL INFO

MEDICAL

Uganda is a malaria area, and has one of the world's highest incidences of malaria. You will need to take prescription medicine before, during, and after your trip to prevent malaria. Please consult your local GP about the prescription. There are many anti-malaria prescriptions available that have little to no side-effects.

You will also need a yellow fever injection, which we recommend getting more than 10 days prior to travelling. You will need to travel with this yellow fever certificate/card and will be expected to produce it upon arrival at the airport. You may be asked for it any time you cross a border in the future, so it is best to keep the certificate with your passport.

WHAT TO PACK

Try to keep your wardrobe colours as neutral as possible. Consider packing the following items :

Rain jacket - there is no formal "dry" season
Long trousers, long shirt/top and waterproof hiking shoes for trekking
Hiking socks (fire ants are not pleasant)



Gaitors
Garden gloves
Small day backpack
Compact or easy-to-carry camera with zoom
Hat
Buff
Sunblock
Water bottle
Electrolyte supplements
Jacket
Warm clothes for around the lodge
Waterproof bags for your gear

WEATHER

Gorilla Safari Lodge sits in a valley, which means the temperature varies from cool to cold. The climate is mild and temperatures are fairly consistent. On average, day temperatures reach 25°C and at night it drops to 10°C. Climate varies from region to region within the park due to the contrasting altitudes. The lodge is located at a lower altitude. The climate is generally quite wet, but June and July seem to have the least recorded amount of rain.

WILDLIFE

There are 350 recorded bird species in the forest, with 23 Albertine rift valley endemics, a few of which include : short-tailed warbler, blue headed sunbird and 7 IUCN red data listed species. There are circa 340 mountain gorillas in the forest. The Bwindi Park habitat is also home to over 120 species of mammals, colobus monkeys, blue turacos, 27 species of frogs, reptiles, snakes and other endangered species.

IMPORTANT NOTES

- The lodge is remote. This needs to be taken into account during your stay.
- WiFi can be intermittent. You are in the jungle, which means the connection varies from unreliable to stable.
- Gorilla Safari Lodge is located in a valley and has cool to cold temperatures.
- The lodge has a number of winding stairs. Guests who are uncomfortable with stairs should book the

rooms closest to the main area of the lodge.

- Gorilla trekking permits need to be arranged prior to arrival.
- You are tracking both wild and habituated gorillas. There are no guarantees when it comes to sightings.
- If you'd like to give back to the community, we recommend you hire a porter for your trek. Porters have walked in excess of 3 hours in the hopes of being selected to help you carry your bags and navigate the jungle. Please try and support them. Cost is a minimum of 20 dollars cash.
- Tipping is important in Uganda. Try to carry cash with you at all times. Ugandan shillings or US Dollars are widely accepted. There are ATMs in various areas that accept Mastercard and Visa.
- The roads in Uganda are muddy, mountainous and laden with potholes. The city regions can be chaotic. It's advisable to hire a driver for the duration of your stay. Short distances might take hours to drive.
- Children are welcome at the lodge, but will not be allowed to trek with the gorillas.
- The gorilla experience is different to gorilla trekking.

CONTACT US

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UGANDA TRAVEL GUIDE

Uganda certainly lives up to its reputation as being the "Pearl of Africa" and has earned its place on the list of must-see destinations in the world. Uganda is a developing country straddling the equator in east-central Africa. Bordering South Sudan, Democratic Republic of the Congo in west, Kenya in east, and by Rwanda and Tanzania; landlocked Uganda possesses all the natural and wild beauty of its surrounding countries. Game viewing, scenery and pristine surrounds means that Uganda offers its visitors an inimitable beauty unsurpassed by many other countries. It's so rare to find a country that remains completely wild, unspoilt and unmarred by mass tourism.

Uganda is home to the world's longest river (Nile), the third highest snow-capped peak in Africa (Mount Stanley), the source of the Nile (Jinja), wild gorillas, the fascinating jungle Batwa (Pygmy) community, tree climbing lions, the equator, jungles, national parks, forests, over 1066 species of bird, 56 crater lakes, and the deepest lake in Africa (Lake Victoria - the central point of capital city Kampala). And that's not even the full list. Uganda truly is a world-in-one.

The southern region of Uganda provides ample opportunity to enjoy hiking, gorilla and chimpanzee trekking - the major drawcard for these areas. In addition to chimps and gorillas, there are over 20 species of monkey to spot. The lush forest jungle regions of the Bwindi Impenetrable Forest National Park (gorillas) and the Kibale Forest National Park (chimps) have the highest number of primates than any other region in the world.

The landscape of the national parks greatly contrasts that of the dense jungle terrain. The Queen Elizabeth Park - the most popular game reserve in Uganda - is fantastic for a safari, and you might just spot the tree climbing lions in the southern region of Southern Ishasha sector. Another national park to visit is the Murchison Falls National Park, Uganda's largest national park. This is where the rare Rothschild's giraffe can be spotted.

Driving through the rural and farming areas of Uganda you'll notice a plethora of wobbly shacks - evidence that

Uganda's economy is one of great struggle. Despite the circumstances, Ugandans remain friendly, welcoming and humble. A great and proud nation. The hilly and mountainous landscapes are carpeted with tea and coffee plantations, and home to abundant crops. The soil is volcanic and therefore no fertiliser is needed - there's not much that doesn't grow in Uganda. We encourage visitors to sample a few local delicacies such as matoke (steamed bananas), Irish potatoes, chapati, goat stew and groundnut sauce.

The hues of green are stark and give away the fact that the country enjoys a tropical climate and plenty of rains. From forest, to jungle, snow-capped mountains and distant volcanoes; Uganda is where the savannah of East Africa eagerly greets the jungle of West Africa.

UGANDA OBSERVATIONS

- Uganda is remote, untouched, pristine and awe-inspiringly beautiful.
- The country is safe, despite its often corrupt political climate.
- People are friendly and welcoming of tourists.
- The two official languages of Uganda are English and Swahili.
- Entebbe airport is very tight with security. You may have to remove shoes and belts when going through security scans.
- It is customary to hire a driver for the duration of your stay. The roads are mud-soaked, tricky to navigate and there are plenty of hair raising bends up mountain sides.
- Do carry cash with you - there are always local crafts to purchase and tips needed.
- Malaria and yellow fever prevention is a must.
- Uganda is a developing country. Roll with the changes and nuances.
- Apply for your Visa online. It should take 3 - 5 working days. It is still possible to purchase a visa at the airport for 50 dollars, but this is subject to change.
- There are extremes in temperatures because of the varying degrees of altitude throughout the country.

