

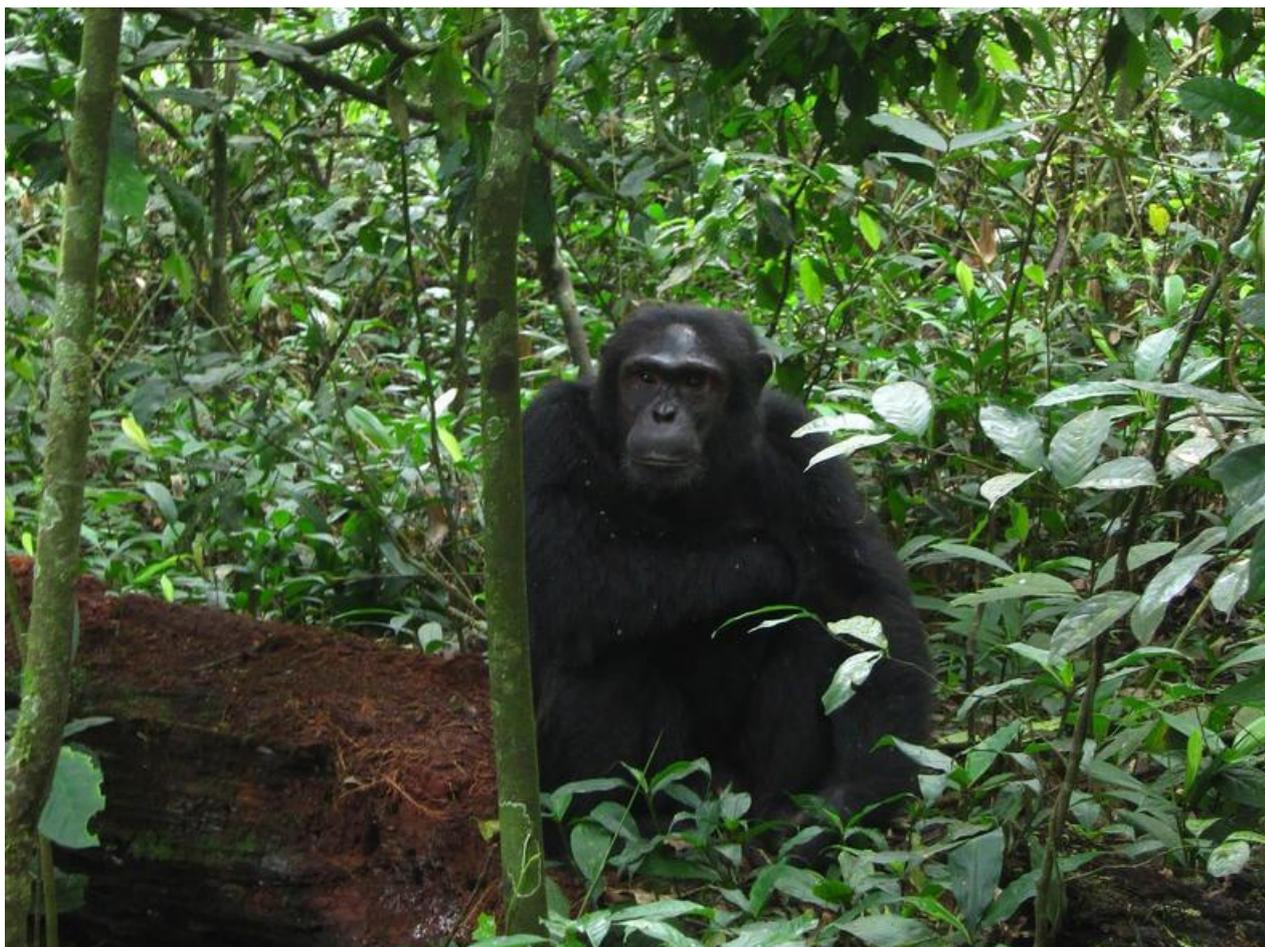


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Tour Notes

Uganda – Gorillas, Chimps and Tree Climbing Lions

Tour Duration – 8 Days



Tour Rating

Fitness ●●●●○ | Off the Beaten Track ●●●○○ | Culture ●●○○○ | History ●●○○○ | Wildlife ●●●●●

Tour Pace - Busy

Tour Highlights

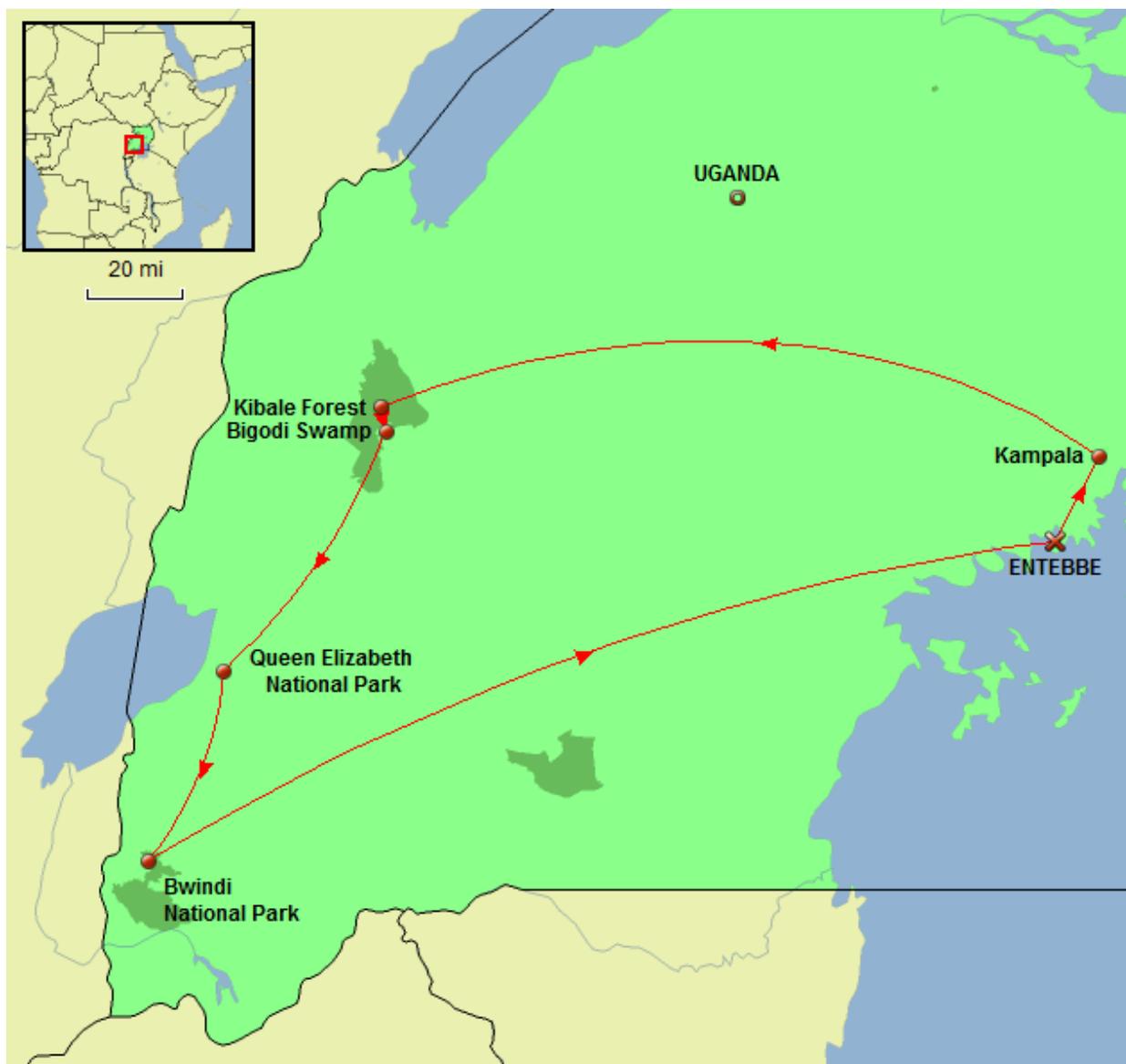
- ✓ An incredible array of magnificent African wildlife all within the space of 1 week
- ✓ Exciting Chimpanzee tracking in Kibale Forest
- ✓ Marvel at the tree climbing lions at Queen Elizabeth National Park
- ✓ Wildlife cruise on the Kazinga Channel in Queen Elizabeth National Park
- ✓ Track Mountain Gorillas in unforgettable Bwindi Impenetrable Forest





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Tour Map Uganda - Gorillas, Chimps and Tree Climbing Lions



Tour Essentials

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Accommodation: | Mix of simple but comfortable hotels and lodges |
| Included Meals: | Daily breakfast (B), plus lunches (L) and dinners (D) as shown in the itinerary |
| Group Size: | Private Tailormade tour – can be booked for any group number |
| Start Point: | Entebbe |
| End Point: | Entebbe |
| Transport: | 4WD safari type vehicles |
| Country Visited: | Uganda |





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Gorillas, Chimps and Tree Climbing Lions

Uganda's rich wildlife is recognised by its people as one of the country's major resources. As such efforts combining tourism and conservation are well developed. Among its well-managed national parks, verdant landscapes of jungles, forests and rivers, plains game and birdlife are as rich as anywhere on the continent. However, for many the major draw is a chance to encounter primates. On this short but spectacular safari, track Gorillas and Chimpanzees and marvel at the big game of Queen Elizabeth National Park, in particular the rare sight of tree climbing lions!

Tour Itinerary Notes

The day-by-day itinerary as printed below is an exemplar and, upon request, can have a large degree of flexibility built in. This may include additional side excursions, stop-offs en route or indeed further days to visit other sites. Overnight stops if you wish can vary from those suggested, and we can also book alternative accommodation to suit individual requirements and budgets.

Tour Guide

Our guides are a key strength, chosen for their knowledge of and passion for the areas in which they work. All of our guides are carefully hand-picked, and are not just passing through these countries, but are usually locally born. Unlike some companies it should be noted we do not send a guide or tour leader from Undiscovered Destinations in the UK as we have every confidence in our locally appointed representative who is responsible for operating the tour on our behalf. Where possible you will have the same guide throughout your trip but on occasions it may be necessary to change the guide at one or more points during the tour. For primate tracking you will be accompanied by expert park rangers to ensure safety of both the primates and travellers.

Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive Entebbe – Kampala (Approximate driving time: one-and-a-half-hours)

Arrive in Entebbe and transfer to hotel accommodation in Kampala. Overnight Urban by City Blue Kampala or similar. No meals or guided activities are included today.

Kampala

Uganda's capital Kampala was built on a collection of hills and was the political centre of the kingdom of Buganda. Its name comes from a corruption of the term 'hills of the impala', a reference to the species of antelope that was once found here in abundance. It was expanded by British settlers following the ratification of a treaty between the traditional king, or kabaka of Buganda and the colonialist and explorer Frederick Lugard, and developed into a trading centre from which animal produce such as skins and ivory were sent to Mombasa along a newly constructed railway. Kampala has few sights as such, but as a busy and bustling city provides a good insight into contemporary urban Africa. It has a great selection of restaurants, bars and clubs and has a fairly hectic and enjoyable nightlife. It's worth making a trip to the Kasubi tombs, the burial places of former traditional rulers of Buganda which are still maintained by female relatives of the deceased today, where one can see royal artefacts from days gone by.

Day 2: Kampala - Kibale Forest (Approximate driving time: five to six hours)

After an early breakfast, we travel to Kibale Forest National Park. Driving south via Hoima to Fort Portal we pass through countryside punctuated by traditional homesteads, farms and tea estates. Arrive at your lodge situated superbly on the edge of a beautiful volcanic crater lake in time for a late lunch. After lunch, stretch your legs with a nature walk in the alluring verdant surroundings. Overnight Crater Safari Lodge. (BLD)



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Please Note: *It is also possible to fly to from the capital to an airstrip close to Kibale. Contact us if you would like us to quote for this option.*

Day 3: Kibale Forest Chimpanzee tracking and Bigodi Swamp

After breakfast enjoy one of the trip's highlights, Chimpanzee tracking in Kibale Forest National Park, reputed to have the greatest variety and highest concentration of primates in East Africa. Escorted by an expert ranger we walk in the tropical rainforest searching out wild chimpanzees, red-tailed monkeys, black and white colobus monkeys and many others. Although chimp sightings are not guaranteed, visitors stand a very high chance of hearing and seeing our distant cousins as they groom and bond with one another, a sight never to be forgotten. Later, for those wishing to keep active, take a rewarding but easy walk at Bigodi Swamp community project accompanied by a local community guide. The swamp is an oasis for birdlife and it is also common to see several primate species on the walk. If time allows, after the Bigodi swamp walk, visit the local community to discover how coffee is grown, harvested, roasted, and prepared to drink. There's also a chance to learn how banana beer is brewed from bananas and sorghum – the bananas are mashed not so much by hand as by foot! Subject to permission it's possible to visit a women's group supported by the lodge, and the school where the kids will sing to you. Overnight Crater Safari Lodge. (BLD)

Please Note: *Long sleeves and trousers and robust walking shoes/boots are recommended in Kibale Forest.*

Kibale Forest and Chimp Tracking

Bordering Queen Elizabeth National Park, Kibale Forest is one of the best places in all of Africa to see chimpanzees in the wild. In addition to chimps it is also home to another twelve primate species, with around sixty mammal species in total, including lion, leopard, buffalo, elephant and the giant forest hog although these tend to be difficult to see. The chimpanzees here are habituated to the presence of humans, and although sightings are not guaranteed, the chances of encountering them are good. Closely related to humans, chimpanzees live in large communities headed up by an alpha male. Although they eat mainly fruit, there have been cases of them hunting monkeys in groups as well as using tools to catch termites. Once widely spread throughout Africa, their habitat has been reduced by deforestation and the encroachment of human settlements, and chimpanzees can now be found in twenty-one countries.

Day 4: Kibale Forest - Queen Elizabeth National Park (Approximate driving time: three hours)

After breakfast we drive towards Queen Elizabeth National Park, and on arrival immediately set out on a game drive with the Rwenzori Mountains as a spectacular backdrop. After lunch at the lodge we cruise on the Kazinga Channel to view buffalo, hippo, elephant and other animals drawn to the water to drink and cool off. European migratory birds, including flocks of terns and gulls may also be observed in the area. Overnight Park View Safari Lodge. (BLD)

Queen Elizabeth National Park

Queen Elizabeth National Park is almost two thousand square kilometres in size, pressed up against the border with the Democratic Republic of Congo. Mostly made up of savannah grassland, it also contains forest, swamp and lakes. Almost 100 mammal species and a remarkable 606 bird species makes this superb safari territory, with elephant, a profusion of hippos, the elusive giant forest hog and handsome Ugandan Kob all regularly sighted around the Mweya Peninsula. This boasts a marvellous waterfront setting in the shadow of the Rwenzori Mountains. Like Murchison Falls, the park's wildlife declined dramatically in the 1970's and 80's but is now on the increase once more.

Day 5: Queen Elizabeth National Park Safari – Tree climbing lions (Approximate driving time: two hours)

This morning we explore a different part of the park, all the while looking out for wildlife. Later in the afternoon take a game drive on the Ishasha plains in search of lions famed for their unusual habit of tree climbing. Overnight Ishasha Jungle Lodge. (BLD)



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Day 6: Queen Elizabeth National Park - Bwindi Impenetrable Forest (Approximate driving time: five hours)

After breakfast a morning game drive through the Ishasha plains allows another chance to spot the tree climbing lions and other wildlife before we leave Queen Elizabeth National Park bound for Bwindi Impenetrable Forest. En route we pass through memorable highland scenery often referred to as 'little Switzerland'. We can take our time on this beautiful drive stopping for plenty of photo opportunities of the verdant terraced hillsides. Overnight Gorilla Safari Lodge. (BLD)

Please Note: *It is also possible to fly from Queen Elizabeth National Park to an airstrip close to Bwindi Forest, but we recommend this beautiful drive to appreciate the rural splendour of Uganda.*

Day 7: Gorilla Tracking at Bwindi Impenetrable Forest

After an early breakfast we travel the short distance to park HQ for an important briefing about your gorilla trekking adventure. Small groups, led by highly experienced gorilla trackers; head out across the slopes of the volcanoes in search of the gorillas. Although the hike can be physically demanding, anticipation ensures that adrenaline levels remain high, and the beauty of the forest itself is memorable. One of Africa's major wildlife highlights, encountering gorillas at close quarters is a humbling experience. Time spent just metres from our not-too-distant relatives as they eat, rest, play and bond with young, passes all too quickly. Although it's natural to want to take photographs, some minutes simply absorbing the scene without wanting to frame it is highly recommended. One hour is the maximum time permitted with the gorillas in any encounter. If your trek was relatively short, you may have time later today for a guided nature walk around the lodge and the surrounding communities. Overnight Gorilla Safari Lodge. (BLD)

Please Note: *Subject to availability, and for a supplement, you can opt for a Gorilla Habituation experience occupying most of the day and enabling you to be with the gorillas for up to four hours.*

Please Note: *Long sleeves, trousers and robust walking boots are recommended in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest.*

Gorilla Tracking

Deep in the heart of central Africa, the volcanic mountains that straddle the border of Uganda, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo are home to the last surviving mountain gorillas in the wild. Numbering roughly 650 in total, the population has dwindled due to pressure of a shrinking habitat, poaching, and the effects of war in the Congo and Rwanda. Today numbers appear to be stabilising, but the gorillas are still seriously endangered. Actually, tracking the gorillas is an adventure in itself and can take all day. Please ensure you have the right hiking boots and clothing, are reasonably fit and able to walk in challenging terrain. Sightings are not guaranteed, although chances are good. Sitting high in the dripping forests just a few yards away from a family of mountain gorillas is a truly remarkable experience. Watching them feed is to feel an extraordinary bond with these hugely powerful creatures – the fact that they will calmly tolerate a group of humans nearby is a testament to their placid nature, and it engenders an extraordinary feeling of trust. At times it is easy to see how closely related we are, but you are always aware that you are in the presence of a group of completely wild animals; a knowledge that fills you with awe.

Day 8: Bwindi Impenetrable Forest – Entebbe for departure

Today we start early and have a long drive of around 8 hours, plenty of time to reflect on the incredible wildlife and scenery you have witnessed on this Ugandan adventure. We arrive in Entebbe by late afternoon and transfer to the airport for your late evening departure or perhaps you may wish to extend your stay in Uganda. (BL)

Please Note: *An internal flight can be arranged for a supplement to avoid the long drive back to Entebbe. Contact us if you wish to explore this option.*



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Inclusions/Exclusions

Inclusions:

Airport transfers
All accommodation as per itinerary or similar
Private transportation on tour
Services of English speaking guide / tour leader
Meals as listed (B – Breakfast, L – Lunch, D – Dinner)
Entrance fees for sites listed as part of the itinerary
1 Gorilla permit per person
1 Chimpanzee permit per person

Excluded:

International flights
Items of a personal nature
Supplements for Chimpanzee and/or Gorilla habituation experiences
Supplements for choosing to take flights between parks instead of travelling by road
Any airport taxes
Travel Insurance
Visas if applicable
Drinks
Tips (discretionary)

Important Information

Foreign Travel Advice Warnings

We constantly monitor the advice posted by the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). In particular we will always advise clients of any travel warnings. At the time of writing the Foreign and Commonwealth Office does not advise against travel to any of the areas within Uganda that we visit on our tours. Please feel free to contact us should you have any specific concerns or if you would like to know in detail what measures are being taken to ensure visits remain trouble free and without incident.

It should be noted that this information applies to British citizens. Other nationals are asked to check the current position of their respective government.

Accommodation and Meals

Hotel Check-in Times

As a general rule most lodges allow check-in from 11am. Hotels can be as late as 2pm. Please note that the price of your tour does not include guaranteed early check-in. Therefore please advise us if you would like to ensure that your room is available for an earlier arrival. This is particularly relevant on the first day of the tour and for early morning arrivals. One option is to pre-book and pay for an extra night at the beginning of your tour which will guarantee your accommodation is available irrespective of what time you arrive. Please contact us for information and costs.





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Accommodation Rating

Hotels and lodges on this tour are of a comfortable tourist class standard. They are not luxurious lodges. Accommodation on this tour will have private bathrooms. In general you will find your hotel has a restaurant and/or bar.

We welcome solo travellers and single rooms will be allocated subject to the applicable tour supplement. Please note that on occasions you may not always be allocated a double or twin room, as some hotels have designated single rooms. These may be smaller in size. However, the supplement payable takes this into consideration.

Food & Drink

The daily meal basis is shown in the tour itinerary; breakfast (B), lunch (L) and dinner (D). Please note that lunch may be a picnic. Drinks are not included and will be payable locally in cash.

Dietary Requirements

If you have any special dietary requirements you must notify us at the time of booking. While we will make every effort to cater for you, we cannot guarantee that this will be possible.

Budgeting for your Tour

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the tour price, any optional sightseeing, souvenirs and items of a personal nature such as laundry.

Food

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch £5-10 / Dinner £10-15

Drink

The prices for drinks can vary greatly depending upon location and the prices detailed below are an average guide. In general you would expect that drinks purchased in a supermarket or local bar to be less expensive, whilst drinks in an upmarket bar or restaurant may be more expensive.

Bottle of water £0.50 / Bottle of Beer (local) £1.00

Tipping – Guide and Drivers

Tipping is common practice in Africa. If your local guide and driver have been helpful then a reasonable amount to tip would be between \$5-10 a day for the guide.

It is not essential to tip the guides/rangers when tracking the gorillas or chimpanzees but if you feel that the experience merits a tip then it will be greatly appreciated.

Foreign Exchange

ATM Availability: ATM machines can be unreliable

Credit and Debit Card Acceptance: Credit cards are widely accepted in hotels, lodges and restaurants

Local Currency: Ugandan shilling (Ush)

Recommended Currency for Exchange: The easiest currency to exchange is the US dollar, but notes smaller than US\$50 attract less favourable rates of exchange

Where to Exchange: Your guide will advise you



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Joining your Tour

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will receive an airport transfer, both on arrival and departure include in the tour price. In order that the transfer can be arranged please ensure that you advise us of your flight information once available. Please advise the date, time and flight number for your arrival/departure. If we have not been advised of this information at least 2 weeks before travel, then you will be required to make your own way to the hotel on Day 1 of your tour.

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Undiscovered Destinations that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country and be valid for the entire duration of your holiday.

Visa Information

British nationals need a visa to enter Uganda. With effect from 1 July 2016, Uganda has introduced an 'e-visa' system. You should [apply online for an 'e-visa'](#) as far in advance of travel as possible and at least 2 weeks prior to your departure. If successful, you'll receive an authorisation document by email, which you should print out and give to immigration officials on arrival in Uganda (or at the Ugandan High Commission or other Ugandan diplomatic mission overseas if you wish to apply for a visa to be issued in their passport in advance of travel). A standard single-entry visit visa costs \$50, and you'll need to bring this amount with you in cash (US dollars only) on arrival. Check the [Ugandan Directorate of Citizenship and Immigration Control website](#) for the latest information on visa fees.

Regulations do frequently change though, so we advise all nationalities that you check the current requirements with your nearest embassy for up to date advice.

Passports

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, valid for at least six months after the date of leaving Uganda.

We strongly advise that your passport contains a minimum of two blank pages, as this may be a requirement of the local immigration authorities. In addition certain countries will stipulate that the two blank pages are opposite each other. If you are unable to meet these requirements you may be refused boarding by your airline or denied entry by the immigration authorities.

For specific information about the requirements for your destination please check with the country's embassy or consulate. Alternatively UK citizens can visit www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice.

Vaccinations & Protection

As with travel to most parts of Africa, we strongly recommend that you contact your doctor's surgery or a specialist travel clinic for up-to-date information, advice and the necessary vaccinations. For a visit of less than one month, almost certainly you will be advised to have immunisations against the following: Diphtheria and Tetanus, Hepatitis A, Typhoid, Meningitis.



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Anti-malaria medication is also required and the use of a DEET-containing insect repellent is highly recommended. A yellow fever certificate must be shown to enter Uganda and make sure your yellow fever vaccination is up to date.

The legal status and regulation of some medicines prescribed or purchased in your home country can be different in other countries. If you're travelling with prescription or over-the-counter medicine, read this guidance from NaTHNaC on [best practice when travelling with medicines](#). For further information on the legal status of a specific medicine, you'll need to contact the embassy, high commission or consulate of the country or territory you're travelling to.

Preparing for your tour

Climate

The wet seasons in Uganda are generally speaking from March to May, and mid-September to November. However it is possible to travel in the rainy season although journeys can sometimes be more difficult but in general you will see fewer tourists. The weather is actually very difficult to predict in Uganda and even in the so called dry seasons you should expect rain showers. Being on the equator temperatures by day remains warm all year round in the dry season. The high is usually around 30 degrees in Kampala outside of the rainy season. At higher altitudes of course in locations such as Bwindi Impenetrable Forest, nights in particular can be quite cool.

Clothing

When it comes to clothing it is usually recommended that lighter clothes are worn through the day, and warmer ones at night. A hat is also advised to be worn through the day to protect from the sun, along with at least one piece of waterproof clothing for any days that the weather may be wet or windy. Long sleeves and long trousers are recommended for chimpanzee and gorilla trekking. It is advisable to tuck socks into your trousers when trekking in the forest and swamps to avoid ant bites which whilst not dangerous can be uncomfortable. Some people like to wear robust gloves on the chimpanzee and gorilla treks as it is common that you will need to hold on to trees/branches to maintain balance and this helps to avoid cuts and scratches.

Equipment

The first thing on your list should be a first aid kit. Whilst there is no undue cause for alarm, travellers are best advised to travel well-prepared: adequately immunized, with sufficient supplies of prescription drugs, along with a medical kit. Suncream/sunblock is a must. Insect repellent, including a bite spray is essential for the tropical forests and swamps. A porter can be hired at the start of the gorilla trekking to carry your essentials. People find this useful as the terrain can be difficult. Walking poles will be useful if you have them, although in Bwindi a walking stick can be provided by the porters.

Footwear

Footwear is a main priority on this tour. Comfortable walking boots are recommended for the walks in Kibale Forest, Bigodi Swamp, and Bwindi Impenetrable Forest. Outside of these places lightweight shoes and sandals for travelling will be suitable.

Luggage on tour

Your luggage should not exceed 20kgs (44lbs). One large suitcase/rucksack, and one small hand luggage rucksack is acceptable.



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Electric Supply & Plugs

Generally electrical supply is 240V/50 Hz. British three-pin plugs are mainly used.

Tour Itinerary Versions

Please ensure that you have an up-to-date copy of these tour notes immediately before you travel, as from time to time our itineraries may be amended, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers. You will be informed of any major changes to your tour but small changes may just be added to these tour notes. These notes were prepared on 19th October 2020.

