

10 Days Best of Rwanda

Ugandans refer to their country as the 'Pearl of Africa' - a phrase originally uttered by Winston Churchill - and it's easy to see why. It is a country of shimmering lakes, lofty mountains and mysterious forests. On this safari, we discover a country that is slightly off the beaten track offering exciting adventures and memorable wildlife encounters. We visit the gorillas and the chimps as well as the Akagera National Park in eastern Rwanda where a large variety of plains game, as well as birds are found. The safari also includes a visit to the beautiful white-sanded beaches of Lake Kivu in northwestern Rwanda - a perfect winding up of a "Best of Rwanda" tour.



Day 1: Kampala, Uganda

On arrival at Entebbe International Airport you'll be met and transferred to the elegant Kampala Serena. Your one night stay here gets you acquainted to this wonderful east African country.

Day 2: Lake Mbuo National Park

Its a very special place every part of it is alive with; variety, interest and colour contains an extensive area of wetland one of the only two such habitats to be included within a National Park in Uganda.

It harbours several species of mammals; Zebras, Impala, Buffaloes, and birds. comprising bill storks which are found nowhere else in the country. Its sculptured landscape with rolling grassy hills and idyllic lake shore has a varied mosaic of habitats forest galleries, seasonal and permanent swamps and rich acacia wood valleys which all support a wealth of wildlife.

The park is only 260 sq. km being the smallest of the Uganda's savanna National Parks Its mosaic habitat, dry hillside, rocky outcrops, bushes thickets, open and wooded savanna forests, lakes and swamps are home to a surprising diversity of plants and animals.

The second day of our safari offers the rare opportunity to go gorilla tracking. After an early breakfast, we proceed to the park head quarters where visitors assemble at 0700hrs for a briefing on how to “behave” while in the company of a gorilla group. Tracking the gorillas through the forested slopes of the Virungas is a magical experience. The park has four habituated gorilla families living in the afro-montane forests on the southern slopes of the Virunga volcanoes. Our guide treks in this forest every day and has helped researchers in their work. This expert guide knows the life history of many of the different individuals and you'll learn about communication between Gorillas and the importance of dominance in the families. If you are lucky you can get to the gorillas, spend an hour with them, which is a truly amazing experience – before trekking back to the base and returning to the base in time for a late lunch. Some gorilla families, however, are more elusive, and tracking can take a full day, especially when it is wet and muddy.

It is important to bring good hiking boots, long trousers for protection against stinging nettles, some snacks & sweets as well as sufficient amount of water as the rain forest gets hot and humid during the day. We'll spend one hour with the gorillas. Overnight Gorillas Nest (B, L, D)

Day 3: Lake Kivu

On this day, we could opt for a second gorilla trek or a trek to the endangered Golden Monkeys. Better still, we could opt to trek to the grave of the legendary Dr. Dian Fossey, one of the world's leading female scientists. Years after her death, the work she devoted her life to – protecting and studying the mountain gorillas of Africa – has proved highly effective and has resulted in the stabilization and growth of this most endangered of the great apes. (All excursions have to be booked in advance in order to avoid disappointments). We continue on a scenic drive to the white sanded beach of Lake Kivu. Afternoon at leisure. Overnight Kivu Sun. (B, L)



Day 4: Lake Kivu

After all the tracking, we ought to slow down, take it easy, relax and unwind by the beautiful sanded beach of Lake Kivu. It's a full day of relaxation with a chance to update your journal as we prepare for the next leg of our exploratory journey. Overnight Kivu Sun. (B)

Day 5: Akagera National Park

We begin our second part of the safari with a drive to the Western part of Rwanda and onto Akagera National Park on the border with Tanzania. The park could scarcely be more different in mood to the breezy cultivated hills that characterize much of Rwanda. Dominated scenically by the labyrinth of swamps and lakes that follow the meandering course of the Akagera River, the most remote source of the Nile, this is archetypal African savannah landscape of tangled acacia woodland interspersed with open grassland. We arrive in time for lunch at the Akagera game lodge. Early afternoon to relax, take a siesta or simply enjoy the fresh ambience of this beautiful country. Overnight Akagera game lodge (B, L, D)

Day 6: Akagera National Park

Akagera is, above all, big game country! On our morning and evening game drives, expect to see herds of elephant and buffalo emerge from the woodland to drink at the lakes, if lucky we might stumble across a leopard, a spotted hyena or even a stray lion. Giraffe and zebra haunt the savannah, and more than a dozen types of antelope inhabit the park, most commonly the handsome chestnut-coated impala, but also the diminutive oribi and secretive bushbuck, as well as the world's largest antelope, the statuesque Cape eland. Return to the lodge for sundowner and overnight stay (B, L, D)

Day 7: Nyungwe National Park

After breakfast, we continue southwards to Nyungwe Forest National Park with a stopover at Butare Museum arriving late afternoon / early evening. Extending for 970 square kilometers across the majestic hills of southeast Rwanda, Nyungwe National Park is the largest block of montane forest in East or Central Africa, and one of the most ancient, dating back to before the last Ice Age. Overnight stay at Gisakura Guest House (B, L, D)

Day 8: Nyungwe National Park

Early start trekking for the chimpanzees, this can take anything from a few hours to a full day depending on where the chimpanzees are. It should be mentioned that it is not guaranteed to see the chimps as they are unpredictable and can move long distances in one day. Nyungwe is most alluring for its primates: 13 species in all, including humankind's closest living relative the chimpanzee, as well as the handsome L'Hoest's monkey and hundred-strong troops of the delightfully acrobatic Angola Columbus, The Silver monkey, Owl faced monkey and the Grey cheeked Mangabey. The most important ornithological site in Rwanda, Nyungwe harbours almost 300 bird species of which two dozen are restricted to a handful of montane forests on the Albertine Rift. The avian highlight of Nyungwe is the great blue turaco - an outlandish blue, red and green bird which streams from tree to tree like a procession of streamlined psychedelic turkeys; dedicated birdwatchers might never want to leave! After the trek return to base for overnight at Gisakura Guest House (B, L, D)

Day 9: Nyungwe National Park

On our last day in Nyungwe, we undertake a hike to the rainforest, a bird watchers paradise. Overnight Gisakura Guest House (B, L, D)

Day 10: Kigali

We bid farewell to the magnificent rainforest and drive back to Kigali visiting 'The Royal Hut' an route arriving in the afternoon for overnight stay at the Novotel hotel, Kigali. (B, L)

Day 11: Departure Day

On our last day in Rwanda, after breakfast and if time permits, we visit to the genocide memorial centre before transfer to Kigali airport for your onward flight marking the end of a memorable sojourn.
(B) *B-Breakfast, L-Lunch, D-Dinner*

11 Days Best of Rwanda * * Prices in \$ U.S.	
Per person, sharing	January 2008–December 2008
1 pax	\$5,560.00
2 pax	\$3,995.00
3 Pax	\$3,495.00
4 pax or more	\$3,275.00

What's included in the Price of This Trip

- 2 nights accommodation at the Gorilla Nest
- 2 nights at Kivu Sun
- 2 nights at Akagera Game Lodge
- 3 nights at Gaisakura Guest house
- 1 night accommodation at Novotel, Kigali
- One (1) Gorilla Trekking Permit on Day 2