

Seats strictly limited



Affordable Africa

Uganda Explorer with Gorilla Trek

Fully Escorted Africa Safari

18 days from **\$10,349*** per person twin share

Includes airmfares ex Australia

Departs Melbourne: 29 May 2024

- Uganda Wildlife Education Centre
- Lake Mburo National Park
- Bwindi Impenetrable Forest
- Gorilla trek (permit included)
- Village and Birding walks
- Queen Elizabeth National Park
- Tree Climbing Lions of Ishasha
- Kazinga channel
- Rwenzori Mountains view
- Murchison Falls National Park
- Chimpanzee trek (permit included)
- Victoria Nile boat trip

Join us on our Uganda Explorer with Gorilla Trek. A fully escorted camping safari that blends the thrill of wildlife encounters with the richness of authentic cultural experiences in 'The Pearl of Africa'. Tailor-made for adventurous souls, avid photographers, dedicated birdwatchers, and passionate naturalists, Uganda offers unique diversity in wildlife, natural beauty and friendly locals.

The weather, roads and local conditions can vary enormously. Traveling in a custom-built 4x4 adventure truck will offer the reliable strength needed on the rugged conditions in Uganda with improved comforts. Key features include; adjustable seats; individual luggage lockers and charging facilities; built-in stainless steel kitchen and large windows for panoramic views. Bring an open mind and a spontaneous disposition to best enjoy the adventure.

Starting in Entebbe, we will volunteer at the Uganda Wildlife Education Centre (UWEC), an important institution dedicated to preserving Uganda's wildlife while promoting conservation through their education programs.

Visit the mystical Bwindi Impenetrable Forest for an opportunity to trek up the misty forest slopes to spend time with magnificent mountain gorillas. A rare and humbling encounter that will leave an indelible mark on your soul. Delve into the heart of local culture with village walks and birding excursions, fostering connections with the communities that call this enchanting place home.

Continue through the sprawling savanna and sparkling lakes of Queen Elizabeth National Park, known for its tree-climbing lions. Further north, we cross the waterways of the Kazinga Channel, with its banks lined with hippos, buffalo, and elephant. Travel through rural villages and tea plantations.

Visit the awe-inspiring Murchison Falls National Park, and have the privilege of tracking chimpanzees on foot in the enchanting Kaniyo-Pabidi Forest. A cruise on the Nile river concludes our adventure, providing a final glimpse into Uganda's untamed beauty and commitment to sustainable eco-tourism.

Following the success of many unique Explorer Group Safaris since 2006, and due to popular demand, we have scheduled another adventure to the fascinating continent of Africa.

In May 2024, I will be leading a camping safari through Uganda. A peaceful country of extremes and renowned for its spectacular wildlife and pristine wilderness areas. Uganda is a safe and diverse destination for wildlife enthusiasts, adventure seekers and anyone who wants to experience the unique beauty of East Africa.

This tour is not just a safari; it's an immersion into the heart of East Africa's biodiversity and conservation efforts. We will also spend time supporting the efforts of the Uganda Wildlife Education Centre in Entebbe.

Travel with highly qualified local guides through the vast and diverse landscapes through rural villages and pristine wilderness. We will be travelling in June which is the start of the dry season. This will improve driving conditions and make it easier to hike through the dense forests in search of Gorillas and Chimpanzees. With clear skies and moderate tropical temperatures, there should be little to no rain at this time of year.

Having had the privilege of working as a Professional Safari Guide and Lodge Manager in some of the best lodges in southern Africa, I have experienced what I believe to be true wilderness. I wish to introduce to you to more of these areas and hope to instil a deeper understanding and appreciation of these delicate eco-systems and the communities that live on the edge of these protected spaces.

We have created an affordable adventure with an opportunity to travel with like-minded explorers. A new adventure awaits, and I look forward to sharing it with you.

Regards,
Mike Papenfus



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Or book at your local licensed travel agent

Day 1: Melbourne - Entebbe. Fly from Australia to Entebbe via Dubai.

Day 2: Arrive Entebbe.

Met on arrival and transfer to Uganda Wildlife Education Centre (UWEC) for overnight in Entebbe.

Accommodation: UWEC Bandas / Africa Cottages - 3 nights.

Day 3 - 4: Uganda Wildlife Education Centre (UWEC), Entebbe. (B,L,D)

The next 2 days, starting as early as 7am, the groups will be allocated to various volunteer programs depending on their level of experience or training. The programs can go on for as long as 6 or 8 hours a day for the duration of time your stay at the educational centre.

Some of the volunteer programs include: Conservation Education, Captive Breeding of Endangered Wildlife Species, Entertainment through Education for Children, Horticulture, Hands on care of Captive Wildlife, Rescue and Rehabilitation of Sick Wild Animals, Food preparation and feeding, Animal Husbandry, Veterinary Services and Marketing and Outreach.

Please note the following vaccinations are required for participants who wish to volunteer at the wildlife hospital and the chimpanzee close-up/ caregiver experiences:

Health/ Vaccinations/ boosters Requirements include: Hepatitis A (20 years), Hepatitis B (5 years), Measles (MMR) (10 - 15 years), Meningococcal meningitis (ACWY strains) (3 years), Polio (10 years), Tetanus (10 years) vaccine, Rabies (2 years after completion of initial dose), A negative TB test/ chest X ray or other test are required.

Meals, accommodation and keeper's / professional fees are included. Staying in traditional-styled furnished cottages (6 Double Occupancy and 2 Family Bandas), adjacent to the Kidepo exhibit where you can see a variety of animals including the Giraffe as they gracefully walk about.

Day 5: Mbamba wetlands. (B,L)

Pick up from UWEC Entebbe a half day tour to the wetlands, departure will be by boat from Banga beach. Mabamba wetlands is a Ramsar site and hosts over 300 bird species including the Shoebill. Uganda's most sought after bird with peculiar looks and massive size. The wetlands are located west of Entebbe on the northern shore of Lake Victoria, covering 2424 ha with thick marshes of papyrus, water lilies and other wetland grasses. Return by back to Entebbe for overnight.

Accommodation: Lake Heights Hotel - Entebbe - 1 night.

Day 6: Entebbe - Lake Mburo. (B,D)

Depart Entebbe and head south west through verdant green hills and countless villages. Stopping frequently at local markets, including a drum market, and at the equator we'll experiment to see which way water really drains from a bath. Lunch on the equator (own expense). Arrive at our camp in the late afternoon.

Accommodation: Camping - Lake Mburo - 1 night.

Day 7: Lake Mburo - Bwindi. (B,L,D)

This morning we enter Lake Mburo National Park early for a game drive. Lake Mburo is one of a group lakes scattered like jewels between the hills. The park is known for its herds of plains game, and especially for the numerous hippos in the lakes.

Leaving Lake Mburo, travel through a lush tropical landscape of rolling green hills covered with a patchwork of banana plantations and market gardens. Look out for the impressive, long-horned Ankole cattle. The roads are rough as we pass remote villages, often shrouded in mist, toward the Bwindi Impenetrable Forest. We set up camp for the night at the edge of the forest and prepare for the gorilla trek the following day.

Accommodation: Camping - Bwindi Forest, Bwindi - 3 nights.

Day 8 - 9: Bwindi - Gorilla Trekking. (B,L,D)

The Gorilla trek is undoubtedly the highlight of the entire tour. The mountains and tropical forests are spectacular in their own right, but spending time with a group of Mountain Gorillas is an experience that really defies any description. Many people are moved by the obvious kinship we share with these magnificent animals. We split into small groups and trek up into the forest, each group led by a local guide, in search of a different family of Gorillas. The going can be quite tough. Make sure you are physically fit and come prepared for a hike through dense forest, up steep, muddy paths over uneven terrain.

The gorilla permits are limited, with strict rules to minimise the impact on the gorillas. We allow two days for trekking to ensure everyone gets their chance. Be prepared to be flexible with the timing and the location of your trek. On occasions when permits are only available on our 2nd day in Bwindi, we will visit Lake Bunyoni on arrival. Where permits are spread over both days, those not trekking have the option to visit a local village, led by a local guide. The surrounding forest also offers fantastic birding.

Day 10 - 11: Bwindi - Queen Elizabeth National Park (Ishasha). (B,L,D)

Leaving the mountains and forests behind us, we descend to the vast grasslands, humid forests and fertile wetlands of the Queen Elizabeth National Park. The Ishasha area is renowned for its tree climbing lions, over 600 bird species and 10 primate species including chimpanzees. The abundant plains game, including the locally abundant Uganda Kob, will not disappoint. We will spend 2 nights here and have a full day to game drive extensively, especially in search of the tall fig trees for lions. The lakeshore and river banks support a massive hippo population. Buffalo and Elephant are also abundant.

Accommodation: Camping - Ishasha, Queen Elizabeth National Park - 2 nights.

Day 12: Queen Elizabeth National Park (North). (B,L,D)

Today we travel the length of the park, looking for animals all the way, through the Maramagambo Forest and over the Kazinga Channel which links Lake Edward and Lake George. A boat cruise on the Kazinga Channel is an opportunity to search for wildlife along the shoreline. Set up camp on the shores of Lake George inside Queen Elizabeth National Park. Local wildlife including Warthog, Waterbuck and Bushbuck are frequently spotted passing through the camp site.

Accommodation: Camping - Kasenyi Lake Retreat and Campsite, QENP North - 1 night.



Uganda Wildlife Education Centre (UWEC)



The shoebill (Balaeniceps rex)



Tree climbing lions of Ishasha



Colobus Guereza



Day 13: QENP (North) - Ruwenzori Mountains, Fort Portal.

(B,L,D)

Enjoy breakfast and sunrise over Lake George. A final morning drive and exit the park in the north. We pass through the town of Kasese, before stopping at a viewpoint for lunch with the spectacular Ruwenzori Mountains in the distance. The "Mountains of the Moon" rise over 5000m above sea level, with slopes covered in tropical forest and the highest peaks permanently snow-capped, a bewildering sight considering their proximity to the equator. Glaciers high up form one of the sources of the waters of the Nile River. Tonight we camp amongst the tea plantations near Fort Portal surrounded by tropical forest and extensive botanical gardens. The surrounding tropical forest attracts a wide variety of birds and animals, including Vervet and Colobus monkeys.

Accommodation: Camping - Kluges Guest Farm, Fort Portal - 1 night.

Day 14: Fort Portal - Murchison Falls National Park & Victoria Nile.

(B,L,D)

Today is a long and scenic drive over some rough roads, so we leave early this morning. Passing through the luminous green tea plantations surrounding Fort Portal before taking the long road, via Hoima and Masindi. We enter Murchison Falls National Park in the afternoon, where we spend the next two nights.

Accommodation: Camping - Budongo, Murchison Falls - 2 nights.

Day 15: Murchison Falls.

(B,L,D)

A diverse and spectacular park bisected by the Victoria Nile, which plunges 45m over the remnant rift valley wall, creating the dramatic Murchison Falls. Below the falls, the Nile flows quietly across the rift valley floor into Lake Albert. This stretch of river provides one of Uganda's most remarkable wildlife spectacles. Regular visitors to the riverbanks include Elephant, Giraffe and Buffalo. Hippos, Nile crocodile and aquatic birds are abundant permanent residents. The southern part of the park is heavily forested, great habitat for chimps, with the northern part, where we game drive, open savannah with abundant plains game, including the relatively rare Rothschild's Giraffe. Getting to the northern part of the park means crossing the Nile using the ferry at Parra, an adventure all on its own.

We will track chimpanzees on foot, game drive in the park, view Murchison Falls, and take a boat cruise on the Victoria Nile River. The program is flexible, depending on the season, road conditions and availability of bookings, but all these activities will be included.

Day 16: Murchison Falls - Masindi.

(B,L,D)

Spend a good part of the day in the park, before exiting. Arrive late in the afternoon at Masindi - our stop for the night. Tonight, we stay in the comfort of a local hotel or lodge. Unwind and relax on the cool terrace, or enjoy head to the historic Hemingway Bar for a refreshing drink and farewell toast to our adventure.

Accommodation: Masindi Hotel, Masindi - 1 night.

Day 17: Masindi - Entebbe.

(B,L)

Depart after breakfast and return to Entebbe. Our final drive takes us through local villages and rural farmland and brings us back to the bustling city of Entebbe. Transfer to the airport for return flight to Australia.

Day 18: Arrive Australia.



Murchison Falls

Prices per person twin share ex Melbourne		
Departs	Twin Share	Single Supp
29 May 2024	\$10,349*	\$612*

Price includes all pre-paid taxes

→ Call about our airfares ex other Australian cities →

Price Includes:

- Return economy class airfares from Melbourne to Entebbe with Emirates Airlines via Dubai. Subject to confirmation.
- Accommodation, tours, meals and transfers as indicated in the itinerary.
- 10 nights camping in custom dome tents. The camping tour provides all equipment, including camp stretcher beds, tents, camp chairs. Travellers can bring supplementary mattress if desired.
- Travellers are required to bring sleeping bags, towels and travel pillows.
- Guests have the option to upgrade into accommodation on certain nights of the tour. This must be booked in advance at an additional cost.
- 5 nights comfortable hotel and traditional-styled cottages.
- *Prepaid taxes and park fees. Subject to alteration until final payment has been received by our office.
- Escorted ex Australia by Mike Papenfus.

Notes

- *Prices are correct at time of printing but are subject to availability, currency fluctuations and surcharges and are only guaranteed when paid in full.
- Deposit of \$2000 per person due within 7 days of confirmation.
- Ask about our companion register for single travellers.
- ^ Single accommodation not applicable to UWEC accommodation.
- Optional extensions to South Africa, Kenya & Tanzania can be offered post safari, please contact us for details.
- Tour is based on a minimum of 15 passengers travelling together. Therefore should final number not reach this minimum number it will be necessary for this tour to be costed accordingly.



Custom-built 4x4 Adventure Truck



Baringo Giraffe (Giraffa camelopardalis), Murchison Falls National Park, Uganda



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