

# ***UGANDA GORILLA ENCOUNTER***



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## **Uganda Escorted Wildlife Safari with Flights**

**Duration:** 17 days

**Departs:** 2023 & 2024

**Stay:** 13 nights camping in tents, 2 nights hotels

**Travel style:** Escorted tour in safari vehicle with flights from Australia

**Booking code:** UGGR17M

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# 17 Days Uganda Gorilla Encounter & Flights

## About the holiday

Karibu Afrika! Welcome to Africa on this once-in-a-lifetime journey through Kenya and Uganda.

Fly to Nairobi in Kenya, then drive to charming Lake Nakuru in to kickstart your safari. The lake is renowned for its brilliant pink flocks of flamingos, but you could be surprised by how many other animals you'll spot here.

Cross into Uganda, passing the Equator towards the amazing natural wonderland of Queen Elizabeth National Park for game viewing. The park has over 500 species of birds and 100 species of mammals, making it one of the most bio-diverse national parks in the world.

Trek in search of chimpanzees, then make your way to the Bwindi Impenetrable National Park to trek for mountain gorillas. See some of the most incredible animals in their natural environment over this extraordinary 2-week adventure.

## Why you'll love this trip...

Travel in a fully-equipped safari vehicle with fantastic crew

Explore amazing places, like The Great Rift Valley, Lake Nakuru & Lake Bunyonyi

Break into smaller groups with expert local guides for the mountain gorilla trek

Meals, transport and wildlife drives are included on this camping safari

## Travel dates

**2023 & 2024** - Monthly departures, please contact us for your preferred date

Note: Departures are subject to confirmation at time of booking. Price can vary depending on your travel date. Surcharges apply during school holidays, Easter and Christmas periods.

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## Holiday Inclusions

### Escorted Tour Package Includes:

**Flights** - International return economy airfare to Nairobi from Australian cities

**Accommodation** - 15 nights accommodation, based on twin share

13 nights camping in tents with shared facilities

2 nights in Nairobi hotels

**Meals** - 15 breakfasts, 13 lunches, 13 dinners

**On Safari** - Travel in a fully-equipped safari vehicle

Services of two crew

Open vehicle game drive as per the itinerary

All road tolls & vehicle taxes are included

### Package excludes:

Local payment of \$950 for Adventure Pass & Trekking Permit

Visa fees (where applicable)

Meals & sightseeing not specified in the inclusions or itinerary

Optional tours & activities

Personal items, such as drinks, snacks, laundry etc.

Gratuities for tour manager, guides & drivers

Travel insurance is essential

Prices are based on twin share, please contact us for single rates

*Subject to confirmation by the airlines, tour company, hotels & local operators.*

*Cancellation fees & booking conditions apply.*

For current prices & further information

Please call our office on 1300 168 910 or email [hello@mytravelxp.com](mailto:hello@mytravelxp.com)

## Itinerary:

Day 1 : Depart Australia for Kenya in Eastern Africa.

Day 2 : Arrive Nairobi

Arrive in Nairobi today, where you will be met and transferred to your tour hotel. The remainder of the day is free to explore at leisure.

Day 3 : Nairobi - Lake Nakuru National Park

We depart Nairobi early and descend into the 'Great Rift Valley', an enormous cleft in the Earth's surface stretching from the Red Sea to Madagascar but with particularly marked escarpments here in Kenya. We stop at a lookout point to take in the magnificent views. Our overnight stop is Lake Nakuru National Park, a relatively small park (by African standards) however prolific in wildlife, sited on the Great Rift Valley floor. The shallow soda lake attracts a huge variety of birdlife - especially flamingos, which may gather in such numbers that (when viewed from above) they form a strikingly pink 'fringe' around the lake-shore. However, Lake Nakuru is not simply a bird sanctuary, it is also home to buffalo, lion, rhino (black and white), leopard, warthog, baboon, antelope, and a variety of smaller animals. A delightful introduction to East Africa's wildlife diversity that we search for in an afternoon game drive with local guides and smaller safari vehicles for a more intimate experience.

- **Accommodation:** *Punda Milias Camp - Camping in twin share tents with shared facilities*
- **Meals included** *Lunch, Dinner*
- **WIFI:** No

Day 4 : Lake Nakuru - Eldoret

From Nakuru we continue northwest and climb in altitude towards the town of Eldoret en route to the Ugandan frontier. We cross from the Southern Hemisphere to the Northern Hemisphere today over the Equator, enjoy some time here learning a little about its significance and taking photos before moving onwards to Eldoret. The name 'Eldoret' is based on the Maasai word 'Eldore' meaning stony river due to the stony bed of the nearby Sosiani River. The town is the 5<sup>th</sup> largest in Kenya and is the fastest growing with a population of approx. 194,000. We camp outside of the town in a unique campsite. It is created on a hilly forest tribal land, which was once home to members of the ancient Sirikwa tribe. Preserved on the site are excavations with stone sides, commonly called Sirikwa holes, which are believed to have been roofed and occupied by the inhabitants of a bygone age.

- **Accommodation:** *Naiberi Overland camp - Camping in twin share tents with shared facilities*
- **Meals included** *Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*
- **WIFI:** No

### Day 5 : Eldoret - Kampala

We cross into Uganda, Winston Churchill's 'Pearl of Africa', a country with beautiful natural scenery and a rich mosaic of tribes and cultures. Travelling through Uganda you will be captivated by its sheer overwhelming beauty and friendly people. Our first night we camp in the capital city Kampala, which is an attractive hilly city, bustling with roadside traders, markets and busy matatu (mini-bus taxi) stands.

- **Accommodation:** *Red Chilli Camp - Camping in twin share tents with shared facilities*
- **Meals included** *Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*
- **WIFI:** Yes

### Day 6 : Kampala - Queen Elizabeth National Park Area

From Kampala, we travel west towards Queen Elizabeth National Park, across the Equator again, through fertile green terraced hillsides, lush banana plantations, steep mountains and tangled forests with herds of Ankole cattle with their incredible long curving horns roaming the roads and paddocks. We camp a short distance from the Queen Elizabeth National Park. Here you will have the opportunity to relax and unwind, take a walk in the surrounding areas and mingle with the local community.

- **Accommodation:** *Simba Camp - Camping in twin share tents with shared facilities*
- **Meals included** *Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*
- **WIFI:** Yes

### Day 7 : Queen Elizabeth National Park Area

This morning we enter the Queen Elizabeth National Park and take in the magnificent views of the mountains that separate Uganda from central Africa as well as Lake Edwards and Lake George. Queen Elizabeth National Park has over 500 species of bird and 100 species of mammals making it one of the most bio diverse national parks in the world and if we are lucky, we may get to spot these animals en route to Kyambura Gorge for the trek to see the chimpanzees. Unlike their larger cousins the mountain gorilla, chimps live mostly in the trees and so our viewing is usually peering high into the forest canopy. However, the experience of seeing man's closest relative in the wild is a memorable one.

Chimpanzee Trek permits are issued by the wildlife authority in groups of up to 8 people per group. Depending on our group size, we may trek on the afternoon of Day 4, morning of day 5 and afternoon of Day 5 or morning of day 6.

- **Accommodation:** *Simba Camp - Camping in twin share tents with shared facilities*
- **Meals included** *Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*
- **WIFI:** Yes

## Day 8 : Queen Elizabeth National Park - Lake Bunyonyi

We leave the picturesque hills of the national park and make our way to the lush and stunning 'Lake Bunyonyi' ('Place of many little birds'). This lake is 27 km long, 7km wide and at an elevation of 1950 metres above sea level is surrounded by undulating hills between 2200m to 2478m high. With a depth of nearly 900m in parts this lake is the second deepest lake in Africa (the deepest being Lake Tanganyika in Tanzania). With twenty-nine islands that can be visited by local boats, the lake is a great place to unwind, relax and explore on the days that we don't trek to see the mountain gorillas.

Over the next two days the group will be split with one group trekking to the mountain gorillas while the others relax at Lake Bunyonyi to enjoy the many activities on offer.

### **Lake Bunyonyi**

There are many activities to do here such as hiring canoes to visit some of the lakes islands, visit local tribes and villages, visit the local orphanage, bird watching and nature walks. Alternatively, just relax around camp, catch up on your travel diary or postcards to home.

### **Mountain Gorilla Trekking**

This region of Africa is home to the world's remaining 700 mountain gorillas, many of which inhabit the Bwindi Impenetrable National Park. [We may travel into neighbouring Rwanda to trek for the gorillas on rare occasion].

On the day of our trek we gather in the early morning to meet our local guide and tracker. Walking in small groups we trek into the thick rainforest. The trek can be demanding at times with uneven terrain and hilly rainforest but the privilege of spending time with a family of these gentle primates makes the effort well worthwhile. To many people the day's trek and time with the gorillas remains their most exciting wildlife encounter in Africa.

The usual procedure, once we have located the gorilla 'family', is to squat or sit down and simply observe them for around an hour - the time set by the Uganda Wildlife Authority (the national body charged with controlling and maintaining the gorillas in Uganda). Gorillas are sociable creatures, living in groups between 12 and 20 individuals, usually led by an 'alpha male' (the 'silverback' - so called because of the silver hair on his back which grows once the male gorilla attains maturity). Most people find that the gorillas are remarkably human-like at close quarters - particularly in the social interaction between family members and in 'play' activity in which the young engage.

Photography is permitted (although not with a flash and there are restrictions for those who wish to use a video camera.)

Your permit allows you one trek and gorilla viewing (time limited to one hour). However, because the authorities maintain strict limits on the number of visitors allowed to view the gorillas each day we may spend several days in the area while all passengers in our group complete the trek and viewing.

**NB:** Depending on the availability of the gorilla permits the tour itinerary may vary in day to day running order which is based on the brochure itinerary. From time to time we may have to trek on different days. If at any chance our Gorilla trek should be in another neighbouring country, e.g. Rwanda (instead of Uganda) this may entail extra visa fees although we shall endeavour to advise you before departure of any significant changes to the tour itinerary. Please take the above itinerary as a guideline only. **This applies to Day 8 - 10 of this tour.**

- **Accommodation:** *Lake Bunyonyi Overland Stop/ Gorilla Trek area - Camping in twin share tents with shared facilities*
- **Meals included** *Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*
- **WIFI:** Yes

Day 9 : Lake Bunyonyi rest days or Gorilla trek day

If not trekking, today is free to explore the surrounding area, discover the Islands by boat on Lake Bunyonyi or relax back at camp catching up on some well-deserved rest and relaxation.

- **Accommodation:** *Lake Bunyonyi Overland Stop/ Gorilla Trek area - Camping in twin share tents with shared facilities*
- **Meals included** *Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*
- **WIFI:** Yes
- **Optional Activities:** *Island boat trips US\$25 - US\$80, Village Walk US\$10, Traditional Dance US\$60, Bird Watching US\$20, Canoe Hire US\$10*

Day 10 : Lake Bunyonyi rest days or Gorilla Trek day

Today is a trek day or a day at leisure to enjoy the many optional activities in Lake Bunyonyi. Whether relaxing on the shores of this deep Crater Lake with a good book or heading out to the village and orphanage to gain an insight into the everyday life of Ugandans in this area - you'll no doubt wish you could stay in this beautiful part of Africa for longer.

- **Accommodation:** *Lake Bunyonyi Overland Stop/ Gorilla Trek area - Camping in twin share tents with shared facilities*
- **Meals included** *Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*
- **WIFI:** Yes

Day 11 : Lake Bunyonyi - Kampala

Leaving Lake Bunyonyi we make our way back across the Equator (stopping for a photo opportunity if we did not stop on route to Queen Elizabeth National Park) through lush pasture lands and the northern reaches of Lake Victoria (largest lake in Africa) to Kampala where we will overnight.

Kampala is a hotspot for great food and entertainment. If time allows, take the night out and try the local cuisines and enjoy the hospitality and friendliness of the local Ugandans.

- **Accommodation:** *Red Chilli Camp - Camping in twin share tents with shared facilities*
- **Meals included** *Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*
- **WIFI:** Yes

#### Day 12 : Kampala - Jinja

Leaving Kampala we drive the short distance to the town of Jinja on the banks of Lake Victoria and the Nile. It was in 1862 that the British explorer John Hanning Speke recognised Lake Victoria as the 'source of the Nile' settling a long running dispute about Africa's (and the world's) longest river. From this modest monument the Nile begins its 4132-mile course through Uganda, Sudan and eventually Egypt to the Mediterranean Sea.

Our camp is situated on the grassy banks overlooking the Nile River. It is here that we usually have the option to try river rafting - an exciting day out for those enjoying the thrill of 'white-water'. There is also the opportunity to make some difference to local children at a local school project: 'Softpower' is a locally run voluntary programme aimed at building and improving schools in the Jinja area to which your contribution of a few hours of painting or plastering is always most welcome. Other activities at Jinja include mountain biking, quad biking, village walks and even cruises!

- **Accommodation:** *Nile River Explorers - Camping in twin share tents with shared facilities*
- **Meals included** *Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*
- **WIFI:** Yes

#### Day 13 : Jinja

Enjoy a free day in this magical place and the many optional activities on offer. Adrenaline lovers can head to the world class rapids and try rafting - an exciting day out for those enjoying the thrill of 'white-water'. Those seeking a more relaxing day can visit the local community or simply just relax at camp.

- **Accommodation:** *Nile River Explorers - Camping in twin share tents with shared facilities*
- **Meals included** *Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*
- **WIFI:** Yes
- **Optional Activities:** *Quad Biking US\$80, White-water Rafting US\$140, Community School Project US\$45, Nile Cruise from US\$25, Nile SUP from US\$20, Kayak from US\$20, Fishing Trips from US\$80, Mountain Biking from US\$30*

#### Day 14 : Jinja

Enjoy a last day on the banks of the Nile exploring the surrounding community, the town of Jinja and discover the beauty of the river Nile as you relax on its banks or indulge in the many optional activities on offer.

- **Accommodation:** *Nile River Explorers - Camping in twin share tents with shared facilities*
- **Meals included** *Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*
- **WIFI:** Yes
- **Optional Activities:** See day 13

#### Day 15 : Jinja - Eldoret

After our refreshing stop at Jinja, we retrace our steps across the border to the Kenya's frontier and onwards to Eldoret, where we will camp for the evening. Tonight, you can celebrate the last evening of your Gorilla Encounter with your fellow travellers and exchange stories, emails and laughter around the campfire one last time.

- **Accommodation:** *Naiberi Overland Camp - Camping in twin share tents with shared facilities*
- **Meals included** *Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*
- **WIFI:** No

#### Day 16 : Return to Nairobi

This morning we make our way south to the Capital city 'Nairobi' where our tour ends on arrival in the late afternoon. Overnight Nairobi

- **Accommodation:** *Hotel*
- **Meals included** *Breakfast*
- **WIFI:** *Yes (Nairobi accommodation)*

#### Day 17 : Depart Kenya

You will be transferred to the airport today flights your flights to Australia. We hope you have had a wonderful African adventure!

***Note:** The day by day descriptions published are intended as a rough guideline only. Travel by nature is unpredictable, weather patterns, game migrations, road conditions, public holidays, travel restrictions and a multitude of other factors may necessitate itinerary changes that ultimately are for the client's benefit. It is essential that clients are flexible in this regard.*

For answers to any questions, please call 1300 168 910 or email  
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2. Your booking will then be confirmed to you in writing and you will be required to pay a deposit to secure your reservation.
3. At this time, you must take out travel insurance for your holiday to protect you against any unforeseen circumstances.
4. 90 days prior to departure you will be asked to make the balance payment for your trip (you will be notified if your supplier requires earlier payment).
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