

EXPLORE!

TRIP NOTES



Gorilla and Chimp Safari (UG 2017)



TRIPDURATION
11
DAYS



Tour Style: Classic
Tour Pace: Moderate

Tour Type: Small Groups
Accommodation
Grade: Standard

Trip Code: UG

Trip Highlights - Gorilla and Chimp Safari

- ✓ Queen Elizabeth National Park - Game viewing in Uganda's finest reserve.
- ✓ Kibale National Park - The best destination for chimp tracking.
- ✓ Rwenzori Walk - An exciting day walk at the foothills of the majestic 'Mountains of the Moon'.
- ✓ Kazinga Channel - An exhilarating cruise looking out for hippo, crocodile, elephant and birdlife.
- ✓ Bwindi National Park - On foot in the equatorial rainforest in search of Mountain gorillas.
- ✓ Ugandan People - Some of the friendliest and most hospitable of Africans.

Trip Essentials

Accommodation: 7 nights Standard Lodge
2 nights Authentic Lodge
1 night Standard Bungalow

Included Meals: 10 breakfasts, 7 lunches, 9 dinners

Start Point: Join trip: Kampala
End Point: Trip ends: Kampala
Transport: Boat, Minibus
Countries: Uganda

Gorilla and Chimp Safari

Join us for a chance to see the incredible primates and wildlife of the Ugandan rainforest. We spend two days in Kibale Forest, the best place in Africa to spot chimpanzees. From our comfortable eco-lodge we explore the forest with a population of over 1000 chimps and 13 varieties of other primates including Red-Tailed monkey, Colobus monkey and many others. We take a day walk in the majestic Rwenzori Mountains also known as 'Mountains of the Moon' and visit local villages around the area. We join a cruise in the Kazinga channel, a real highlight and a chance to observe hippo, crocodile, buffalo and herds of elephants at close range before taking game drives in Queen Elizabeth National Park where we hope to spot the famous tree climbing lions. We then travel deep into the rainforest near Bwindi, where we experience the ultimate wildlife encounter: we get up close and personal with the endangered mountain gorilla in its natural habitat. We also take a swim or a canoe ride in Lake Bunyonyi, surrounded by verdant rolling hills and a walking safari in Lake Mburo.

Why Book this trip

This tour is perfect for travellers who are seeking the ultimate wildlife encounter, coming face to face with the mountain gorilla. Though the real highlight of this tour is the people and colours of Uganda; every day you come across smiling, friendly people with a backdrop of green vegetation and vibrant forest. This is not the Africa that you see on television, but a land of hope, promise and full of life.

Suitability

We've given each of our tours a comfort rating and a tour pace, walking or cycling grade to give you a general idea about the level of activity on each tour and the standard of accommodation you will be staying in at the end of your day's adventure.

Often you'll stay in different styles of accommodation during your tour; so we make an average rating across the entire tour. For more information on where you'll stay each night, please refer to the day by day tour itinerary.

Accommodation Grade: Standard

Our mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en-suite facilities.

Tour Style: Classic

Packed with adventure, these tours offer inspiring destinations and authentic travel experiences at a reasonable price. Using all kinds of transport and accommodation, we'll take you off the beaten track to discover the true heart of the people and places you visit.

Tour Pace: Moderate

These moderately paced tours provide some busy days with plenty of experiences to enjoy, as well as time to relax along the way.

Your trip itinerary

Tour itinerary notes

While our intention is to adhere to the day-by-day itinerary as printed below, a degree of flexibility is built in. Overnight stops may vary from those suggested.

Your Tour Leader

A Tour Leader is an integral part of any Explore tour and your tour will be led by one of our experienced Tour Leaders who have been handpicked and expertly trained. We believe that our Tour Leaders are the key to the success of our tours; they are passionate travellers who are bursting with first-hand local knowledge which they love to share. Your Tour Leader will also take care of all the planning and organisation throughout your journey. Their passionate approach will make this tour fun and inspiring, bringing the destination to life whether you're travelling alone or with others.



DAY
1

Join tour Kampala

Join tour Kampala and transfer to the hotel. Time at leisure to relax by the pool or visit the capital city.

Overnight: **Standard Lodge**
Single Room Available


Swimming Pool Available 

 **Included Meals:** None

DAY 2 Drive to Kibale rainforest

After breakfast we will depart Kampala and head west to Fort Portal. On your way look out for black and white colobus monkeys as many of these primates are hiding in trees along the road. Fort Portal rests in the shadow of the fabled Mountains of the Moon and is famous for the many tea plantations. From this lovely town we will continue to Kibale National Park for a stay within the tropical forest.


Overnight: **Authentic Lodge**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 3 Chimp Trek in Kibale followed by a Swamp Walk through the Bigodi Wetland Sanctuary

Today the forest opens its doors for sensational chimp tracking. Kibale Forest is reputable for having the greatest variety and highest concentration of primates in East Africa. Enjoy a guided nature walk in the tropical rainforest in search of the wild chimpanzee, redtailed monkey, black and white colobus monkey and many others. After lunch we transfer to Bigodi for a complete different walk. Here you will have the choice to join a guided Swamp Walk through the Wetland Sanctuary, which is famous for the many birds and primates that live in this area. Alternatively, you may decide to go for a Village Walk. Accompanied by a guide who can tell you everything about the traditional customs and lifestyle of the inhabitants, you will follow the village path and visit a primary school, Catholic church, traditional homesteads, learn about the crops and listen to the story telling of a Mzee (elderly man). Both activities are an initiative of the inhabitants of Bigodi Village and the revenues are shared by the local community (you can choose which activity to join locally. This is included in the package). Please note we might have to split the group for the chimp trek (morning and afternoon trek).

Overnight: **Authentic Lodge**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 4 Day walk at the foothills of the Rwenzori Mountains and transfer to Queen Elizabeth National Park

Today you can enjoy the majestic Rwenzori Mountains in their full glory on a guided walk in the foothills of the 'Mountains of the Moon'. As well as enjoying the scenic views, we will get a glimpse into local village life and meet some of the locals and visit a waterfall. After this walk we transfer to Queen Elizabeth National Park, where we spend the next two nights.

Overnight: **Standard Lodge**
Single Room Available

Swimming Pool Available 


 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 5 Game drive Queen Elizabeth National Park; Kazinga Channel river cruise.

The day begins early when we start with a morning game drive and head to the mating ground of the Ugandan kobs. We search for lion, elephant, buffalo and other animals in their natural habitat before returning for lunch. In the afternoon we take a boat cruise along the Kazinga Channel, a natural channel between Lake Edward and Lake George. Thanks to the abundant birdlife as well as the herds of elephants, buffaloes and hundreds of hippos that are cooling off at the shores, this cruise will be one of the highlights of your tour.

Overnight: **Standard Lodge**
Single Room Available

Swimming Pool Available 


 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 6 Short game drive in the Ishasha sector; transfer to Bwindi National Park

After breakfast we head towards the south, passing the southern sector of the National Park (if road conditions allow). This part is called Ishasha and is famous for the tree climbing lions. After a short game drive in this area we continue to Bwindi. While driving

through a verdant countryside, you will pass traditional homesteads and enjoy panoramic views. In the afternoon we will arrive in Bwindi National Park, the home of the endangered mountain gorillas.

Overnight: **Standard Lodge**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 7 Gorilla trek

Today you'll experience what some people define a life changing event: a meeting with the gentle giants of Bwindi! Expect to walk a long distance in steep and muddy conditions, sometimes with rain overhead, before you encounter any gorillas. But it will definitely be worthwhile as you observe them closely while they eat, play and rest, a unique and unforgettable experience! Unfortunately, Mountain gorillas (as opposed to Lowland gorillas) are one of the world's most endangered species so the entrance and gorilla tracking fees revenue generated from tourism in protected parks such as Bwindi, offer them their only chance of survival. Distinct from their cousins who live in the open spaces and lowland forests of West Africa, Mountain gorillas are found at an altitude of between 1520m and 3650m. Gentle giants and vegetarians, they are normally peaceful unless provoked. Our groups have been rewarded with the thrill of very close encounters.


Overnight: **Standard Lodge**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 8 Nature walk and time at leisure in Bwindi

Today you have the option of joining a guided nature/village walk to explore the surroundings of Bwindi. Due to availability issues, we often will have to split the group in 2 for the gorilla trek. Those who didn't take part on the gorilla trek on day 7 will be going on trek today.

Overnight: **Standard Lodge**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 9 Drive to Lake Bunyonyi through coffee plantations and rolling hills

After breakfast we depart to Lake Bunyonyi, the second deepest lake in Africa. The drive itself is very scenic through small villages, coffee and banana plantations and rolling hills. Upon arrival there should be ample time to relax, visit the local village or explore the surroundings by traditional canoe.


Overnight: **Standard Bungalow**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 10 Transfer to Lake Mburo and game drive

Today we head to Lake Mburo National Park, enjoying lunch en route. Lake Mburo is the only National Park in Uganda where you can experience a safari on foot and if we have time this evening we will enjoy a game walk at dusk, otherwise we will make our walk the following morning. With spectacular panoramic views over the plains, our accommodation for the evening is the ideal spot in which to enjoy our last night of the tour.

Overnight: **Standard Lodge**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 11 Drive to Entebbe where the tour ends

After enjoying one final game drive, we depart the protected area and drive back to Kampala, where our tour ends with a transfer to the airport in Entebbe.

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

Accommodation and Meals

Food & Drink

Included meals: 10 breakfasts, 7 lunches, 9 dinners included in the price of this trip. Please be prepared to pay for non-included meals. Please note that costs for drinks and meals can vary depending on location.

Budgeting for your Trip

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the trip 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.

Uganda

Lunch £: 6.00

Dinner £: 12.00

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.

Uganda

Bottle of Beer £: 1.50

Water £: 1.00

Other Sightseeing & Activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations.

Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Optional Excursions

Lake Mburo - Night game drive in search of leopards - US\$30 per person.

Bwindi - Guided community walk - US\$25 per person; Guided nature walk to waterfalls in Bwindi Forest - US\$70 per person; Basket weaving community visit \$20 per person.

Tipping - Local Crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognised part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. Accordingly, you should allow approx. US\$ 40 for tipping.

In order to make things easier for you, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

Foreign Exchange

Uganda

ATM Availability: Very limited and unreliable.

Credit Card Acceptance: Unreliable

Travellers Cheques: We do not recommend travellers cheques

Local Currency: Ugandan Shilling.

Recommended Currency for Exchange: You should take the majority of your spending money in US Dollars cash some of which to change into Ugandan Shillings. Please be aware that notes issued pre- 2006, or are not the "Big Face" kind, are not normally accepted in East Africa at all. Take mixed denomination bills in good condition and note that higher Ugandan Shilling rates are available for larger (\$50- \$100) US Dollar bills. Dirty and torn US Dollar notes are NOT accepted at all in Uganda. GBP Sterling is easily exchanged in Kampala only.

Where to Exchange: Your Tour leader will advise you

Joining your Trip

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.

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found on our website at www.explore.co.uk, in the tour specific dates and prices section.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer. For more information please refer to <https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers>.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer please refer to <https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers>.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Important Information

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore 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. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

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The Adventure Travel Experts

CAMPBELL IRVINE
DIRECT TRAVEL INSURANCE



Travel Insurance is essential. If you have not already arranged cover, please contact our recommended Travel Insurance providers www.campbellirvinedirect.com/Explore who offer Travel Insurance specifically designed to cover travel with Explore or call **Campbell Irvine Direct** on Tel: 020 7938 1734

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Travel Aware

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Advice follow the link at www.explore.co.uk/travel-safety

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We strongly advise that you register with the FCO to receive updates to the travel advice for your chosen destination. A hard copy of the current FCO Travel Advice for your chosen destination is available by contacting cr@explore.co.uk or 01252 379438.

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Visa Information

Ugandan entry visas are required by UK, AUS, NZ, CAN and USA citizens and should ideally be obtained before departure. A visa authorisation document is mandatory in order to apply for all visas either on arrival or via an Ugandan Consulate prior to departure. You can apply for your visa authorisation document (with a validity of approximately 3 months) via: <https://visas.immigration.go.ug/>. Visas can be obtained on arrival for some nationalities, but this takes time as queues can be long and processing slow. Other nationalities should consult the relevant consulate. You are required to have 6 months remaining validity on your passport to enter Uganda.

You should confirm all visa related issues with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on **0208 5431846**.

Vaccinations & Protection

Uganda

We recommend protection against malaria, measles, tetanus, typhoid, hepatitis A, polio and yellow fever. Consult your travel clinic for latest advice on different prophylaxis available against malaria. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/> and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed before departure.

Preparing for your Trip

Climate

Uganda

Although conditions are tropical, hot and humid in the centre and west, the rest of Uganda has a pleasant and comfortable climate. The dry season is generally from December to early March and June to the end of August/early September. Temperature can vary from around 28°C during the day to 12°C in the evening. High mountain areas become much cooler at night. Most of Uganda experiences a double rainy season. Rainfall is moderate, only exceeding 1250mm a year in the higher areas. But it may rain at any time of the year, particularly in equatorial rainforest such as Bwindi. Lake Victoria influences the local weather patterns considerably and ensures the surrounding region is wetter than elsewhere. Additional information and climate charts can be accessed at <http://www.explore.co.uk/> weather. Seasonal weather patterns can be unpredictable. Up-to-date information on the weather worldwide can be found by following the BBC weather link on this page.

Clothing

Temperatures are warm and humidity is high all year round. But as much of our route in Uganda is driving across high country or at a reasonable altitude, warm clothing is needed particularly at night and in the early morning. Do not bring green fatigues or camouflage jackets/trousers that might be considered of military origin. Lightweight, hard wearing gloves are useful for protecting hands during the gorilla and chimp search. Long sleeved shirts and long trousers are recommended for protecting arms and legs.

Equipment

Take a torch (ideally a head torch), insect repellent and a personal water bottle. Binoculars will be useful for game viewing as is a camera with telephoto lens for close-up wildlife shots. Accommodation has mosquito screening where necessary so nets are not required. Walking poles are strongly recommended. A hat and long socks so you can tuck your trousers in for the gorilla trek are also recommended.

Footwear

Sturdy walking boots for the tracking and sandals or trainers/light shoes for travelling.

Luggage: On Tour

One main piece of baggage (a soft bag or holdall for ease of loading onto vehicles) plus a daypack.

Luggage allowance on trip: 15Kg

General Information

Country details

Uganda

Population: 32,369,558

Size of Country: 236,040 sq km

Major Language: English, Swahili

Religion: Christian, Roman Catholic, Islam

Time Difference to GMT: +3

Electric Supply & Plugs

Uganda

3 Pin Flat

Why Choose Explore

We've been creating award-winning pioneering adventure holidays for over 30 years, earning the trust of thousands of delighted customers, who feel safe in our hands. Our tour leaders have expert local knowledge and our tours are designed to take you off the beaten track to see the most exotic, inspiring and dramatic places in the world.

- With over 30 years' experience, we are passionate about what we do.
- Pioneering small group adventures, self-guided, private journeys & tailor-made holidays.
- Award-winning tour leaders who you can trust.
- Responsible travel is and always has been one of the driving principles of Explore.

Our adventure holidays are full of exciting things to see and do, exploring in small groups travelling by bus, boat, plane, rickshaw, camel, or any number of unusual forms of transport. Often you will stay in family-run hotels and village houses and enjoy authentic local cuisine. In this way, it's easy to discover the true heart of the people and the place you travel to – and make some new friends along the way. Each tour is uniquely different, so please feel free to browse through our tours to see what may whet your appetite.

Cool Earth

Explore are proud to support Cool Earth in their effort to reduce global carbon dioxide levels through the prevention of deforestation in the South America rainforest. Cool Earth focus on areas in immediate danger of deforestation, supporting local communities to be forest guardians. To date 350,000 acres of rainforest has been protected. Saving rainforest also protects rare animals and plants, allows local forest communities to maintain their way of life, and protects a major source of oxygen and fresh water. When you travel on an Explore holiday we make a donation to Cool Earth that exceeds the impact of our customers flights each year.

Earth Matters

We are passionate about sustainable travel and work hard to create tours where your holiday delivers real benefits to the local communities. We minimise our impact by travelling in small groups, respecting local cultures, reducing waste and offsetting 100% of the CO2 from our flights.

When you travel with Explore, you are directly contributing to local economies and helping empower the people you meet. We currently support a range of charities and good causes, including: Toilet Twinning (helping to flush away poverty), Lone Buffalo Foundation (a community project based in Laos providing creative skills for young people) and have recently supported women's cooperatives in Borneo and Morocco. We are a member of Tourism Concern's Ethical Tour Operator Group (www.tourismconcern.org.uk) and support their campaign for fair and ethical tourism. We also care passionately about the world's wildlife and actively support and promote the Born Free Organisation and Mahouts Elephant Foundation.

Booking Your Holiday

Peace of mind - book with confidence

You can book your Explore holiday with confidence, as all monies paid to us for your trip are fully protected. Explore is a fully bonded tour operator licensed by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and by ABTOT.

The air holiday packages (Tours including flights) that we advertise are ATOL protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's Licence granted by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is ATOL 2595. In addition, As a member of the Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited (ABTOT), Explore has provided a bond to meet the requirements of the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992. Please note that packages booked outside the UK are only protected when purchased directly with Explore.

Reserving your place

To reserve your place on this tour you will need to check availability on the Explore website or through our dedicated call centre based in the UK where you can. Our tours can fill up quickly so you are advised to book as early as possible. If your chosen date is 'Available' or 'Guaranteed' we will be able to provisionally hold you a space for up to 48 hours.

For Self-Guided holidays and Private Journeys simply choose your date of travel and let us know so we can confirm all ground services.

The easiest way to confirm your booking is through our website. When you are ready to book, we normally require a 10% non-refundable deposit, but for some holidays this may be more to cover such items as permit fees, internal flights or other non-refundable services. If your travel starts within 60 days of booking, full payment will be required at the time of booking

100% No Surcharge Guarantee

The price paid for our holidays is no longer subject to change. Once booked and confirmed we will guarantee the price you pay will not increase, whatever the circumstances. You will not be approached to pay fuel surcharges unlike the vast majority of other adventure tour operators. The price guarantee applies to all new bookings departing between 1st January 2016 and 31st December 2017.

Trip Itinerary Versions

Itinerary details may vary depending on departure date and alternative itineraries for this tour may exist. Please refer to the dates and prices page on our website to check which itinerary operates on each departure date.

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.

Please note: 2017 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing in 2017. 2018/19 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing from 1st January to 31st December 2018.

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