

Asilia



DESTINATION
MANAGEMENT SERVICES

PRE-DEPARTURE GUIDE FOR

Uganda

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GENERAL INFORMATION

The Republic of Uganda is situated on the African equator and is bordered by Kenya, South Sudan, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda and Tanzania. The country, which is roughly the size of the United Kingdom, has some of the most beautiful and varied scenery in East Africa.

Inspired by its abundant colour and natural beauty, Winston Churchill dubbed Uganda the 'Pearl of Africa' in 1908, and this description holds true to this day. The country has 10 national parks, is the source of the White Nile (which begins its journey northwards from Lake Victoria), and is perhaps most famous for being home to around 880 mountain gorillas. Uganda is also a

haven for bird lovers, with more than 1,000 bird species recorded in the country, and 150 of these endemic.

Few other places in the world allow you to trek in search of gorillas one day, visit chimpanzees the next, and go on a game drive the following day, all without the larger number of tourists who flock to Kenya and Tanzania. And while its natural wonders are plentiful, the overriding feeling when in Uganda is the warmth and welcoming nature of the Ugandans themselves, who welcome you like family.



FACT BOX

Capital city:	Kampala
Land mass:	241,551 km ²
Population:	c. 42.8 million
Currency:	Uganda Shilling (UGX) and US\$
Dialling code:	+256
Time zone:	GMT +3 hours

PLASTIC BAGS AND SINGLE-USE PLASTIC

Uganda has made it illegal to produce, sell and use plastic bags. Please pack eco-friendly bags for your trip. Ziploc bags specifically used to carry toiletries will be permitted.





VISAS

Visas are required by almost all nationalities visiting Uganda and generally cost between US\$50 and US\$100. To determine whether you require a visa to enter Uganda, please contact the Ugandan Embassy in your home country.

The East African Tourist Visa (EATV) covers Rwanda, Kenya, and Uganda, costs US\$100 and is valid for 90 days.

Travelers into Uganda are required to obtain a visa in advance of arrival [here](#). We recommend to apply no later than one week prior to travel. A visa can no longer be obtained on arrival in Uganda. Please check all visa requirements carefully before you travel, as regulations changes frequently.

www.visas.immigration.go.ug



HEALTHCARE

MALARIA

Malaria is present in Uganda and it is strongly advisable to take malaria prophylactics before, during and after your visit. Please consult a medical professional regarding which prophylactics will be suitable for you. In addition, please take precautionary

measures to reduce the risk of being bitten by mosquitoes. Use insect repellent, sleep under a mosquito net and wear a long-sleeved shirt and long trousers with closed shoes in the evenings.

VACCINATIONS AND YELLOW FEVER

You may be asked to provide proof of your yellow-fever vaccination on an official yellow-fever vaccination certificate to enter Uganda. Please consult a medical professional at least six weeks before your date of departure for advice on

this as well as other vaccinations you may need. The rules change regularly and Asilia Africa cannot be held responsible for this information.

MEDICAL FACILITIES

Good medical facilities and pharmacies are available in Kampala, however, we advise that you bring your own small medical kit (with painkillers, cough drops etc), as camps and lodges may have limited supplies. Asilia Africa provide a form of “gap cover” allowing emergency evacuation of guests to take place without

needing to first obtain authorisation from the guests travel insurance/medical cover provider. In the event of an emergency, it allows us to act without delay in the best interests of your health. For further information please refer to our Incident and Emergency document found [here](#).



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FOOD AND WATER

Hotels, camps and lodges provide either bottled water or filtered water for drinking. Please do not drink the tap water. Avoid food

and drinks from street vendors and under no circumstances should you bathe in rivers and lakes.



MONEY

The Ugandan shilling (UGX) is the principle currency, although US dollars are widely accepted. Please note that dollars printed before 2009 are not accepted. You can convert money to Ugandan shillings at banks and private forex bureau (bureau de change). Both are closed on Sundays and public holidays. ATMs can be found in Kampala, at

Entebbe International Airport, and in nearly all major cities. A growing number of places accept credit and debit cards, Visa is more widely accepted than Mastercard. AMEX will prove more difficult still. Please note that there may be a surcharge levied for using cards and it is advisable to have some local currency for smaller shops and stalls.



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CLIMATE

Thanks to its equatorial location, Uganda enjoys pleasant temperatures all year round. Due to their high altitudes, the Bwindi Impenetrable Forest and Kibale National Park can be much cooler during the night, while national parks such as Queen Elizabeth and Murchison Falls are a lot hotter.

There are two rainy seasons per year: The long rains, which start mid-March and continue until the beginning of June, and the short rains, from mid-September to the end of November. Rainfall at these times can be heavy, although it is still perfectly feasible to travel. The dry seasons are from June to mid-September and from December to February.

Average monthly rainfall (cm) – varies according to location

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Bwindi Impenetrable Forest	8.75	11	13.5	17	12	5.25	4	9.25	13.25	16	16.25	11.5

Average monthly temperature (°C/°F) – highs

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Bwindi Impenetrable Forest	25/77	25/77	25/77	24/75	24/75	24/75	25/77	25/77	25/77	24/75	24/75	24/75



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DRESS CODE

Uganda is a relatively conservative and religious country. Women should dress conservatively in cities, towns and villages — knee-length shorts or skirts, with tops that cover the shoulders.

When out on safari at Murchinson Falls or Queen Elizabeth national parks, light layers of clothing in neutral safari colours of green, khaki and beige are best. Dark colours, such as navy or black, can attract tsetse flies and are therefore best avoided, as are bright colours such as yellow, red and purple.

For Bwindi Impenetrable Forest and Kibale National Park, you may want to pack slightly heavier clothing to protect against stinging nettles and thorns. Sturdy walking shoes that have already been broken in are a must, and lightweight, waterproof jackets and trousers will definitely be useful. You may also want to consider bringing gardening or leather gloves, as well as gaiters and walking poles.



WHAT TO PACK

- Layers, including long- and short-sleeved shirts, and trousers
- A warm fleece or jumper
- Lightweight waterproof jacket and trousers
- Comfortable but sturdy shoes for everyday wear
- Broken-in waterproof walking shoes or hiking boots for gorilla or chimpanzee trekking
- Gaiters and walking poles for gorilla or chimpanzee trekking
- Flip-flops
- Swimming costume
- A sunhat or baseball cap
- Sunglasses
- Reading glasses (for those who wear contact lenses, cleaning fluid is not readily available)
- Sunscreen
- Insect repellent
- Toiletries (most camps will provide shampoo, shower gel and soap)
- A small torch (flashlight)
- Any batteries, plug adaptors and charging equipment required for your devices
- A good pair of binoculars

Pro-tip: When you are trekking in the rainforests, bring a warm sweater in a waterproof bag in your backpack, for when you finish your hike.

LOCAL LAWS AND CUSTOMS

Homosexual activity is illegal and not tolerated in Uganda's conservative society. We advise LGBTQ+ travellers to be

mindful of Ugandan law and exercise discretion when in public spaces.

INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS

Uganda's Entebbe International Airport is located approximately 40 kilometres south west of the Kampala city centre. Uganda's central location means it is well connected to other major transport hubs in Africa, as well as several European capitals. It is also possible to connect through Istanbul, Doha and the UAE.

As well as commercial flights arriving into Entebbe, it is also possible to arrive in Uganda via light aircraft from the Masai Mara and Serengeti. Land border crossings with neighbouring Rwanda and Kenya are also possible.



LUGGAGE

Many international airlines have a baggage allowance of 20 kilograms or more per person, but please check this with your individual airline. Please be advised that on light-aircraft flights such as those connecting Entebbe International Airport to Bwindi Impenetrable Forest National Park, luggage is limited to

one soft-sided bag per person with a maximum weight of 15 kilograms. No hard-shell bags are permitted. It may be possible to pay more for your flights to get additional luggage allowance; please ask your consultant for details.

KEEPING IN TOUCH

Uganda has an excellent mobile phone network covering almost the entire country, and international calls can be made easily. If you are spending an extended amount of time in Uganda, you may want to consider buying a local SIM card, which is readily available, even in small towns and villages. The main service provider is MTN.

With regards to internet connectivity, most high-end hotels in Kampala will offer some kind of wireless broadband, but it will be more difficult to guarantee Wi-Fi at remote lodges and camps.

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PUBLIC HOLIDAYS *(dates below are from 1 June 2024 – 31 May 2025)*

• Martyrs' Day	3 June	• NRM Liberation Day	26 Jan. (27 Jan. in lieu)
• National Heroes' Day	9 June	• Archbishop Janani Luwum Memorial Day	16 Feb. (17 Feb. in lieu)
• Eid al-Adha	7 June (Estimated)	• International Women's Day	8 March
• Independence Day	9 Oct.	• Eid al-Fitr	31 March (Estimated)
• Christmas Day	25 Dec.	• Good Friday	18 April
• Boxing Day	26 Dec.	• Easter Monday	21 April
• New Year's Day	1 Jan.	• Labour day	1 May

ELECTRICITY

Electricity is available at 220/240 volts AC, 50Hz. Primary socket type is the British BS-1363 (British Standard). Adaptor plugs will be available in some lodges but we advise that you bring at least one with you. Please be aware that the power supply is subject to cuts and voltage fluctuation, even in major cities.

On safari, most of the lodges are powered by generators or inverter systems (though many lodges are slowly introducing solar-power

systems). These are often turned off during parts of the day and night to reduce noise and fuel consumption. Due to their high power usage, the use of hairdryers is not permitted by many safari camps.

Please also note that in some camps and lodges, power sockets for charging are only available in the main area. Please ask if you require more details about this.

TIPPING AND GRATUITIES

We must stress that tipping is not compulsory or expected; rather it is an extra reward for excellent service. If you are pleased with the service you receive, then you are more than welcome to tip your guide or the staff at the various lodges and camps. Gratuities can be increased or decreased depending on the level of service you are given.

Tipping is usually done at the end of your safari, and you are welcome to tip individual staff or place tips in the gratuity box, usually located in the main mess area. Tips from the gratuity box are distributed among all camp staff. Tips for guides should be directly handed to them at the end of the safari.

Tips can be made in the local currency, US Dollar, Euro or Pound Sterling.

A guideline for tipping:

- Host/butler: US\$20 per couple per day
- General Lodge Staff (tip box): US\$20 per couple per day
- Safari Guide: US\$20 per couple per day
- Gorilla trekking guide: US\$10 per guest
- Porters: US\$5-10 per guest
- Transfers drivers: US\$10 per couple per day



CONTACT DETAILS

We hope you have found this information about Uganda useful. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact your travel consultant or visit our website, www.asiliaafrica.com.

Below is an emergency contact number for when you are travelling in Uganda.
You can call it 24 hours a day for any issues. Please take it with you when you travel.

Emergency number: +27 72 710 4045

And, of course, you can also reach the Cape Town office on +27 21 418 0468 during office hours 8 am - 5 pm

