



UGANDA GORILLA TREKKING TRIP EXPECTATIONS

Flights & Transfers

- Flights between Uganda and Northern Tanzania's parks are about 1-2 hours.
- The 33-lb weight limit, including both your soft sided duffel and small carry-on bag, is **STRICTLY** enforced.
- Upon arrival in Uganda, you will be met and transferred via 4x4 safari vehicle to your lodge.

Entry Requirements

- A \$50 USD single entry ordinary/tourist visa is required to enter Uganda. You can apply for your visa online at <https://visas.immigration.go.ug/#/>; we recommend 30 days prior to your departure
- **Please note** – due to the Uganda online application system limitations, you will be required fill in a trip duration of at least 7 days in the appropriate field, even if you will not be in the country for 7 days.
- After applying, you will get a visa letter that acknowledges you are eligible for approval. Final approval will be done at the point of entry.
- **YOU MUST bring a printed copy of your visa letter to the point of entry. This is required for approval!**
- Travelers who will be visiting other East African countries within a 3-month period can also consider an East Africa Tourist Visa (EATV). Please note, Tanzania is not part of the EATV program and requires its own visa.
- For travelers who will be traveling to Uganda via Rwanda, please apply for an East Africa Tourist Visa prior to your departure.
- Please visit <https://immigration.go.ug/> for the latest visa requirements.
- Please visit <https://ug.usembassy.gov/covid-19-information-page/> for the latest COVID-19-related requirements for travel to Uganda.

Yellow Fever Vaccination

- Please speak to your travel doctor for the most up-to-date yellow fever policies for Uganda.
- Please note that policies fluctuate often.
- Those who are unable to get the vaccination due to medical reasons must show a doctor's letter.

Accommodations & Meals

- Comfortable rooms have en suite bathrooms and pleasant décor.
- During the trek you will have picnic lunches from the lodge.
- Breakfast and dinner service is provided at the lodge.
- Most dietary requirements can be accommodated with advance notice, preferably at least 60 days prior.

Electrical Power

- Batteries can be charged at your lodge.
Current is 240 volts, and plugs are square sockets, with 3 prongs, Type G. A multi-plug adapter set, available in most electronics stores (and larger airports), will include a current converter and every plug type you'll need.

Weather Conditions

- Weather conditions vary seasonally but generally don't affect the possibility of viewing gorillas.
- Sporadic rain may occur any time of year, so bring a lightweight waterproof jacket/poncho.
- Year-round, temperatures do not vary much; highs in the low 60s – low 80s, and mid 40s – mid 60s at night.
- It tends to be predictably rainier in March through April as well as in September through November.

Essential Physical Considerations

- Parks in Uganda reach elevations of over 8,500 feet (Bwindi Impenetrable National Park) to 13,000 (Mgahinga Gorilla National Park) but gorillas are generally found at around 7,500 feet.
- Gorilla trekkers will be taken through a trek briefing at park headquarters, where you will be able to choose between short, medium, and long trek options. Allocation is done at the discretion of the park authorities.
- Gorilla viewing can never be guaranteed and may require anywhere from one to six hours of hiking.
- Hiking can be strenuous, covering steep forest paths and relatively ungroomed trails.
- General physical fitness is required, and every effort will be made to accommodate a reasonable pace for the group; however, it is not likely that individuals in a group will be able to turn back separately from the group.
- Waterproof hiking shoes with good traction and ankle support recommended. Sneakers are not appropriate.

Personal Porter

- At your trek briefing, you will have the opportunity to hire a personal porter for your gorilla trek.
- You will not be allowed to wear a backpack in the presence of gorillas; we strongly recommend a personal porter to carry personal items such as camera, water bottle, backpack, etc. *(\$15-20 per person, per trek plus an additional \$15 tip per trek)*

Money & Valuables

- Do not bring non-essential valuables, due to the remote location and baggage allowance on your flights.
- US Dollars are accepted in Uganda. Bills must be clean, un-torn, and the series date on bills should be less than 10 years old. There are few ATMs; credit cards (Visa and MasterCard) are accepted at major lodges but not small gift shops.
- Plastic bags are not permitted in Uganda; waterproof stuff sacks (nylon or vinyl) are recommended for cameras and other items that cannot get wet (Ziploc bags, grocery bags, garbage bags are not allowed).

Gorilla Viewing Rules

These **essential** rules are in place to protect both you and the rare gorillas you have traveled so far to see.

- A maximum of eight tourists are allowed to view the gorillas at any one time, minimum age 15.
- Plan to wear a mask on your trek, enough to refresh masks several times during the day.
- If you have an infectious illness, such as a cold etc, you will not be permitted to view the gorillas.
- While it is likely that you will see gorillas, it cannot be guaranteed.
- Each trekking group will be visiting a separate group of gorillas; each is allowed one hour max. with the gorillas.
- Gorilla viewing permits are not refundable or transferrable for any reason.
- Viewers should maintain a distance of at least 20 feet from gorillas. No touching is allowed. If a gorilla comes close, don't make any sudden movements, but move back calmly without disturbing them.
- Do not do anything that may cause stress; respect their space, speak quietly, and avoid fast movements.
- If a gorilla should charge or vocalize at you, do not be alarmed. Stand still, look away from the gorilla, and follow your guide's directions.
- Do not eat or smoke on the trail or in the presence of the gorillas, and do not spit anywhere in the park.

Gorilla Viewing Rules *(cont.)*

- Do not defecate in the forest. If it is unavoidable, a hole of at least eight inches must be dug and covered.
- Do not use flash cameras.
- Do not wear bright colors as this may disturb gorillas; do not wear camouflage as it is associated with the military.

Packing Considerations for Gorilla Trekking

Due to fluctuating temperatures on any given day, layering clothing is recommended.

- Cotton is not appropriate for hiking; it absorbs water quickly and dries very slowly, which can lead to hypothermia.
- Long sleeves, long pants, gaiters, and gloves can help protect from thorns and nettles.

ESSENTIALS	
1	Hiking boots; waterproof with ankle support
1	Gaiters <i>(please bring your own pair per traveler. Available for an additional cost at the lodge gift shops)</i>
1	Shell jacket; waterproof, windproof <i>(Gore-Tex or similar technology)</i>
1	Fleece
RECOMMENDATIONS	
2	Convertible hiking pants <i>(not cotton)</i>
2	Long-sleeved shirts <i>(not cotton)</i>
2	Short-sleeved t-shirts <i>(not cotton)</i>
1/day	Lightweight hiking socks <i>(wool)</i>
1	Gloves <i>(gardening gloves work well)</i>
1	Trekking pole <i>(provided at trail head)</i>
1	Hat <i>(wide-brimmed or with visor for sun protection)</i>