



Uganda Travel Information

AIRPORT TAX

For all passengers on international departures from Entebbe International Airport, airport tax of US\$ 40 (or the equivalent in Uganda Shillings) may be payable if not included in the price of your ticket. For internal flights, airport tax of Ugshs 3,000 (equivalent to US\$2.50) is payable.

CLIMATE

The climate is warm, though pleasantly varied depending on your location within the country. The Bwindi Impenetrable Forest can get cool during the night because of the vegetation and altitude. The two rainy seasons are April to May for the long rains and October to November for the short rains (although these seasons are less clear of late). Due to the strong nature of Uganda's equatorial sun, we recommend that visitors take the necessary precautions

CLOTHING

The emphasis on clothing is comfort. Very rarely will visitors be expected to conform to a specific dress code (unless something particular is tabled on their itinerary). If gorilla tracking or chimpanzee tracking, something sturdy is recommended to protect against scratches, and a good pair of walking boots, and ideally a good pair of protective leather gloves should also be worn. Safari wear should be loose fitting and relaxed in style with warm clothing for the colder evenings at Bwindi. Most hotels and lodges have laundry services, so an excessive amount of clothing should be unnecessary.

COMMUNICATIONS

In the more populated areas of Uganda, international communication is good, particularly from large hotels. In more remote locations we rely on mobile phone communications. All our drivers carry these phones and national or international calls may be made around the clock. Most areas of Uganda have mobile phone coverage, although in some cases you may have to travel a short distance to reach an area of coverage.

LOCAL CURRENCY

The currency in Uganda is the shilling, and it is available in useable denominations of 50, 100, 200, 500, 1,000, 5,000, 10,000, 20,000 and 50,000 notes. There are money-changing facilities at Entebbe airport and Kampala, which we recommend you use, as it is more difficult to change money while on safari. At the time of writing there is an ATM machine at the Entebbe airport that accepts VISA cards and dispenses the Uganda

Shilling equivalent of US\$270 (Sterling 158, EURO 219) per day. At the time of publication the exchange rate is US\$1=Ushs 1650.

CREDIT CARDS

Outside Kampala and Entebbe, credit cards are only accepted in the largest lodges, and at Gorilla Forest Camp (Visa, Mastercard, JCB and Amex at GFC). Within Kampala, most shops will not accept payment other than cash, and card use is restricted to major banks and hotels. It is wiser not to expect to use one at all.

FOREIGN CURRENCY

We recommend that you carry a mix of cash and travellers cheques for convenience and security, and that you change about US\$200-300 of this into Uganda Shillings at the start of your tour. Cash is more easily exchanged in Uganda, as many facilities are very reluctant to accept payment by traveller's cheque. Please do not sign your travellers cheques in advance, as it is the practice in Uganda for suppliers to request customers to affix their second signature in their presence. Visitors are advised that if they are carrying US Dollar Cash with them, the notes should be no smaller than \$100 denomination, and should have been issued no earlier than 01 January 2000 to ease conversion into local currency at a beneficial rate.

DAYLIGHT

Sunrise is around 0630 hours and sunset at 1930 hours. This varies slightly, depending on location within the country and time of year.

ELECTRICITY

The electricity supply in Uganda is 220-240 volts and visitors from the United States should bring electrical appliance adapters with them.

FOOD AND DRINK

As a rule quotes are based on bed and breakfast in Kampala and Entebbe, and full board on safari. Standards of cuisine are reasonable but vary outside Kampala. We recommend that clients drink bottled water at all times, and do not purchase food at road-side establishments

SMOKING

Smoking (or holding lit tobacco products) in enclosed areas and public places including restaurants is prohibited.

Both the smoker and the owner of the establishment where an offense occurs could face fines of \$10 to \$200 and would have to appear in court.

GORILLA TRACKING

Please see separate guidelines on gorilla tracking.

MEDICAL

There are basic medical facilities and European- and American-trained doctors in Kampala. You are advised to take out your own medical and travel insurance before

coming to Uganda. Most serious illnesses have to be treated outside Uganda, with medical evacuation taking place to Nairobi, South Africa or your home country.

HEALTH

There are no mandatory vaccinations required for visitors to Uganda. Malaria is prevalent in certain parts of Uganda, and all visitors should consult their doctor and take the currently effective prophylactic prescribed. Our vehicles are equipped with medical kits for the treatment of minor wounds and ailments.

HOTEL CHARGES

Clients are usually expected to settle their extras in Uganda Shillings

LANGUAGE

The official language of Uganda is English, with Kiswahili and Luganda also being widely spoken

LUGGAGE

Luggage should be kept to a minimum, and is best restricted to one main soft-sided piece and an overnight bag. Kampala Hotels provide storage facilities. Clients on flying safaris should note that weight restrictions apply.

PHOTOGRAPHY

The choice of camera accessories is very limited, although most types of film is now available in Kampala. Flash photography is not allowed while gorilla tracking, and clients should bring their own high-speed film to compensate for this. Clients should also bring a sufficient supply of batteries, as recharging is sometimes impossible on safari. Local people should be asked before their photograph is taken. Photographing military installations, government buildings and policemen is prohibited

SECURITY

Despite common misconceptions, Uganda has had a stable, progressive and democratic government for over ten years. Security measures in the national parks have been significantly enhanced. Clients should take the usual precautions when travelling abroad in unfamiliar surroundings, and We recommend that clients take a taxi rather than walk at night

TIME

Uganda is three hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT)

TIPPING

Please see separate guidelines on tipping.

VISA

Visa requirements vary according to the country of origin, and should be checked well in advance with the nearest Ugandan Embassy or High Commission. At the time of writing, a visa may be secured on your arrival at Entebbe on payment of a fee of US\$50 for a single entry visa. Visitors may have to queue to apply for the visa on arrival, which may lead to some delays.

General Packing List (please refer to separate gorilla tracking equipment list on gorilla tracking guidelines)

- 1) Binoculars
- 2) Sunglasses- preferably polarizes and on a string. Eye-glass holder comes in handy
- 3) Bush hat/ cap
- 4) Khaki casual clothing for safari (3 changes)
 - i. 2 shorts: 2T – shirts/short sleeved shirts: 1 pants/ light jeans, 1 long- sleeved shirt.
- 5) Casual clothes (2 changes)
 - i. 1 or 2 slacks: 1 or 2 sport shirts: 1 casual long sleeved shirt: and/ or 1 blouse: 1 dress
- 6) 1 pair thick – soled shoes (tennis / running shoes)
- 7) 1 pair shoes for evening wear
- 8) Sweatshirt, fleece or sweater
- 9) Light wind breaker / jacket
- 10) Gloves / mittens – (important in the months of June/ July/August to dress in layers)
- 11) 4 pairs of socks and underwear
- 12) Bathing suit
- 13) Flashlight that take at least 2 batteries, plus extra batteries
- 14) Basic medical kit
 - i. Band –Aids: antiseptic cream: 1 course of antibiotics: Tylenol/Advil: laxative: anti –diarrhea:
 - ii. Eye drops: anti- histamine cream. (There are first aid kits in all camps and lodges)
- 15) Personal medications
- 16) Small bottle of Mosquito/ insect repellent (the camps usually have spray in rooms)
- 17) Malaria tablets
- 18) Suntan lotion and moisturizing cream
- 19) Day backpack (small) – for use in the vehicle and on walks.
- 20) Personal toiletries: small shampoo, shaving cream, skin and hair moisturizers, etc. Most camps and lodges supply small quantities of soap and shampoo.
- 21) Small packet of washing powder
- 22) If you wear contact lenses we recommend that you bring along pair of glasses
- 23) Tissues/“Wet Ones”
- 24) Camera: charger/ converter/ adapter for 220/240AC voltage + 3 batteries. Cigarette lighter adapter
- 25) Visas, tickets, passports, money
- 26) A photocopy of your passport, visas, credit card numbers, and airline tickets (to be kept separately)
- 27) Large plastic zip-lock bags
- 28) Texas/ Thongs/flip-flops – optional.