

HARVARD

ALUMNI TRAVELS



UGANDA SAFARI & PRIMATE TREKKING

JUNE 2-16, 2022

DETAILED ITINERARY

Explore Uganda—the “pearl of Africa” as described by Sir Winston Churchill—on this 13-day safari, which combines wildlife viewing with local conservation and education projects. Highlights include thrilling encounters with the mountain gorillas in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest National Park and the chimpanzees of Kibale National Park. Explore the River Nile near its source during two days in Murchison Falls National Park, renowned for its many bird species as much as its famous falls. Enjoy game drives in Queen Elizabeth National Park and take a boat cruise on the Kazinga Channel. Visit an NGO that supports conservation through education and health projects and join school children in building beehives to help keep elephants out of their fields. This magnificent country is rewarding for the first-time traveler or a veteran of African safaris.

GROUP SIZE: Up to 12 guests

PRICING: \$18,995 per person double occupancy / \$20,595 single occupancy

STUDY LEADERS: RICHARD WRANGHAM is the Ruth Moore Professor of Biological Anthropology at Harvard University. His major interests are chimpanzee and human behavioral ecology, the evolutionary dynamics of violence, and ape conservation. He received his PhD in Zoology from Cambridge University in 1975, was a Research Fellow at King’s College in Cambridge from 1977 to 1980, and taught at the Department of Anthropology at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor from 1981-1989. Since 1987 he has studied wild chimpanzee behavior in Kibale National Park, Uganda. He has been President (2004-2008) of the International Primatological Society, and Ambassador for UNEP/UNESCO’s Great Ape Survival Project (GRASP). Wrangham was awarded a MacArthur Foundation Fellowship in 1987 and is a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the British Academy. His most recent book is *The Goodness Paradox* (Random House, January 2019).

ELIZABETH ROSS is the founder and executive director of the Kasiisi Project, a U.S. based charity supporting conservation of Kibale National Park, Uganda through programs promoting education, health, and care for the environment in rural, forest edge primary schools. She received a PhD in Immunology from Edinburgh University in 1979. In 1980-81 she and Richard Wrangham studied the adaptation of farming and hunting peoples in the Ituri Forest, Democratic Republic of the Congo. Since 1987 she has made annual visits to Kibale National Park, Uganda, where she founded the Kasiisi Project in 1997. The project invests in 14 government schools and more than 8000 children. In 2008, Ross and Wrangham edited a book describing the ways in which biological researchers and charity workers can successfully cooperate in the services of habitat conservation, *Science and Conservation in African Forests: The Benefits of Long-Term Research*. Ross has led wildlife and conservation safaris in Uganda and Tanzania since 2008.

SCHEDULE BY DAY

B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner

THURSDAY, JUNE 2
DEPART U.S.

Depart the U.S. for Entebbe, Uganda.

FRIDAY, JUNE 3
ARRIVE ENTEBBE, UGANDA

Entebbe is a quiet town located on the shores of Lake Victoria and is easy to explore on foot or by taxi. Visit local markets to buy clothes and crafts, curio shops for souvenirs, and the Botanical Gardens on Lake Victoria where you can walk among the trees, watch monkeys moving through the canopy above, and spot many indigenous bird species. Entebbe has a wide variety of restaurants serving many cuisines as well as several bars and clubs where you can sample the local beer and chat with the Ugandans, known for their friendly nature.

Harvard has arranged for an excursion to the Ngamba Island Chimpanzee Sanctuary. Situated on Lake Victoria miles offshore from Entebbe, the sanctuary allows orphaned chimpanzees to cohabitate in a near natural environment. Unfortunately, chimps are still being illegally taken out of the wild and sanctuaries like this one are needed throughout Africa because in most cases the animals cannot be returned to their original habitat. The 48 resident chimpanzees were all confiscated by authorities and brought to the sanctuary for care and rehabilitation. The tropical island is almost 100 acres in size and boasts over 50 different types of vegetation that the chimps utilize. The chimpanzees are free to roam this forest, exploring their environment and foraging for food at their leisure.

Overnight: Hotel No. 5 (D)

SATURDAY, JUNE 4
ENTEBBE

This morning travel by boat to the Mabamba Swamp to search for the elusive Shoebill, one

of Africa's most unusual and vulnerable birds. View other bird species (up to 260) in the lagoons and small channels of this fertile papyrus swamp.

This evening enjoy a sunset cruise on Lake Victoria. The cruise departs Entebbe Pier at 4:00pm and returns at 6:30pm.

Overnight: Hotel No. 5 (B, L, D)

SUNDAY, JUNE 5
KIDEPO VALLEY NATIONAL PARK

Drive to Kajjansi airstrip for your scheduled flight to Kidepo Valley National Park. Check in to the spectacular Apoka Lodge, the only lodge found inside the park. Each cottage is situated on a dramatic rocky kopje (small hill) with remarkable views across the plains to the distant mountains. All rooms have en suite balconies, traditional lamu beds, and outdoor bathtubs. The lodge's large rock swimming pool overlooks the savannah. Enjoy a relaxing evening with dinner at your lodge.

Overnight: Apoka Lodge (B, L, D)

MONDAY & TUESDAY JUNE 6 & 7
KIDEPO NATIONAL PARK

As the sun rises over the valley, set off in your open-topped vehicle(s) to explore the savannah wilderness. Kidepo is a prime spot for game viewing with the greatest diversity of mammal species in Uganda's national park residing in this rugged landscape. You will spend the hottest period of the day relaxing at the lodge and observing the wildlife drinking from the nearby watering hole. After a multi-course lunch and a dip in the pool, depart in the afternoon to explore the grasslands. Kidepo Valley is one of the 2 National Parks in Uganda where you are able to experience a bush walk, accompanied by an experienced guide and ranger. The bush walk provides an exhilarating and surreal experience as you step in the footprints of elephants, lions, and other magnificent wildlife of the African savannah.

Overnight: Apoka Lodge (B, L, D)

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 8
MURCHISON FALLS NATIONAL PARK

This morning fly from Kidepo Valley National Park to Murchison Falls National Park. It is then a short transfer to Bakers Lodge.

Murchison Falls National Park is Uganda's largest national park, named for the dramatic Murchison Falls. It is home to elephant, buffalo, lion and leopard, as well as a healthy population of hippo and huge crocodiles on the River Nile. The park is well known for its bird life—the Shoebill being a sought-after rarity. The mighty Nile, the longest river in the world, flows through the heart of the park for a distance of nearly 75 miles, on its 4,000-mile journey from Lake Victoria to Egypt and the Mediterranean Sea. The park's centerpiece is the explosive, 130-foot high Murchison Falls.

In the afternoon embark on a three-hour cruise from park headquarters to the head of Fajao Gorge at the base of Murchison Falls. The park's most popular attraction since the 1950s, here is where the force of the mighty Nile River narrows to flow through a 23-foot gap, cascading down a forty-meter cliff to the gorge below. The power of the falls and the scenic views from their base are breath taking. Large resident populations of hippos float in the water along the way, groups of crocodiles bask on the shore, and herds of elephant, buffalos and other antelope can be seen moving along the riverbanks searching for food. The river offers a spectacular opportunity for bird watchers, with a wide range of water birds and vibrant bee eaters nesting in the cliffs along the river's banks.

Alternatively, you will have the option to drive to the top of the falls and walk down to meet the boat at the bottom.

Overnight: Bakers Lodge (B, L, D)

THURSDAY, JUNE 9
MURCHISON FALLS NATIONAL PARK

Embark on a half day boat trip into the Victoria Nile Delta, a 12-mile cruise downstream from the park's headquarters. Home to a wide variety of wetland and papyrus endemic bird species, including the elusive shoebill, this three to five-hour cruise offers a unique opportunity to spot rarely found birds and

animals such as hippo, elephants and large crocodiles. Traveling through the center of Murchison Falls National Park, experience the constantly changing scenery of the Nile River as it winds its way to Lake Albert.

In the afternoon depart with your guide to the northern sector of Murchison Falls National Park, an area rich in wildlife including lions, elephants, buffalo, giraffes, oribi, hartebeest, and countless reptiles and birds, including one of the park's more difficult species to spot, the rare shoebill. Crocodiles are also plentiful in this park.

Overnight: Bakers Lodge (B, L, D)

FRIDAY, JUNE 10
KIBALE NATIONAL PARK

This morning take an amazing flight along the escarpment of the western rift valley to the town of Kasese. It is then about a two-hour drive to Ndali Lodge, your home for the next three nights. This delightful lodge is situated in an area of crater lakes with views of the Ruwenzori Mountains—the mythical Mountains of the Moon.

This afternoon visit the Kibale Forest Schools Program, a local NGO and learn about their efforts to protect Kibale National Park through education and health initiatives in local primary schools. You will have an opportunity to spend time with the children and to make a contribution to protecting the forest by joining students in building beehives, which will be used both to deter elephants and provide much needed income to local farmers.

These evening have a discussion with project managers about their work.

Overnight: Ndali Lodge (B, L, D)

SATURDAY, JUNE 11
KIBALE NATIONAL PARK

Today, set out to see wild chimpanzees. You will be driven to Kibale forest to meet your guides for your morning's chimp tracking experience. The forest is alive with noise and you should be lucky enough to see the habituated chimps during your trek. Sometimes they move quickly through the

forest, other days you might catch them resting, interacting, or eating near the forest floor.

In the afternoon, visit elephant-detering beehive fences run by local village cooperatives and learn about work to conserve the elephants of Kibale National Park.

Overnight: Ndali Lodge (B, L, D)

SUNDAY, JUNE 12

QUEEN ELIZABETH NATIONAL PARK

This morning, drive 3 hours to Queen Elizabeth National Park. On a clear day you might get views of the Rwenzori Mountains in the distance.

Queen Elizabeth National Park spreads over 1,978 square kilometers in the western arm of the Great Rift Valley. With both a riverine and savannah habitat, the park includes the southern Ishasha area with the massive Maramagambo, one of the largest surviving natural forests in Uganda. The northern Mweya area, traversed by the equator and dominated by the scenery of crater lakes, is often occupied by large flocks of flamingos.

At 11:00 am, depart on a private boat cruise on the Kazinga channel. During the leisurely boat cruise you may encounter herds of elephant, buffalos, and antelopes, groups of warthogs, hippos, and crocodiles basking on the shore. Kazinga's shores are a haven for numerous birds, including many migratory species as they make their way south. The cruise also provides a spectacular view of the Mweya Peninsula and life in local fishing villages set along the banks.

After enjoying a packed lunch, explore the park in custom built safari vehicles on a game drive.

By late afternoon, check into your rooms at Ishasha Wilderness Tended Camp.

Overnight: Ishasha Wilderness Tended Camp (B, L, D)

MONDAY, JUNE 13

QUEEN ELIZABETH NATIONAL PARK

Today you will have further opportunity to explore this expansive area as you search for the various large mammals and interesting birds. If you are lucky, then the lazy lions resting in the boughs of the fig trees will be part of this experience.

Enjoy game drives and sundowners tonight.

Overnight: Ishasha Wilderness Lodge (B, L, D)

TUESDAY, JUNE 14

BWINDI NATIONAL PARK

After an early morning game drive, depart Ishasha, Queen Elizabeth National Park and drive to Bwindi Impenetrable Forest National Park, roughly 2 hours travel time. On the way, visit a community project on the border of the Park. Spend time in the homesteads of the local people, see some of the crops and curios they produce, and visit the local elephant trench project—which stops elephants coming into the village and raiding crops.

Bwindi National Park, located in south western Uganda on the edge of the Great Rift Valley, is considered the most diverse forest in Uganda. Home to over 120 mammals, 345 species of birds, 200 species of butterflies, and 160 species of trees, Bwindi is one of the richest ecosystems in East Africa. The park contains almost half of the world's population of the endangered Mountain Gorilla, making it an extremely valuable conservation site. Bwindi is also home to several endangered bird species with very limited ranges and acts as an important catchment area for many rivers, supplying water for agriculture in the surrounding region.

Overnight: Buhoma Lodge (B, L, D)

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15

BWINDI NATIONAL PARK

After an early morning breakfast walk down to the park Headquarters to begin your gorilla trekking experience. Experienced guides and

trekkers will accompany you into the rain forest on the mountain slopes.

This journey through dense foliage and up steep climbs is abundantly rewarded with the experience of viewing mountain gorillas in their natural habitat. You will have an opportunity to be within meters of these magnificent apes, sharing in their daily lives and observing their day-to-day activities. Mountain gorillas are extremely rare with only an estimated 850 remaining in the wild.

Please note: trekking may be fairly strenuous with treks up to six hours or longer, at high altitudes, not uncommon. Additionally, mountain gorillas are wild animals and, as such, sightings cannot be guaranteed. However, viewing success rates are over 95%.

Later today, if time permits, participate in optional activities or simply relax at the lodge. Included optional activities are the Batwa Cultural Experience, a Buhoma community walk, or a nature walk.

Overnight: Buhoma Lodge (B, L, D)

THURSDAY, JUNE 16
ENTEBBE / DEPART FOR HOME

Drive to Kihikihi airstrip for your scheduled flight to Entebbe. Upon reaching Entebbe you are transferred to Hotel No. 5 where you have a day room.

Later, go behind the scenes at the Uganda Wildlife Education Center (UWEC).

In the evening gather for a celebratory farewell dinner before being transferred to the airport to check in for your international departure flights.

Day Room: Hotel No. 5 (B, L, D)