



The Gorilla Stop

MAKE TRACKS FOR AFRICA

This information pack has been put together so that you can prepare for your overland tour. It has been developed over many years of experience overlanding. Please read it carefully.

Departure dates for the Gorilla Stop

Departs Kigali	Finish Kigali	Price
10 Jul 2024	15 Jul 2024	£1410
27 Jul 2024	01 Aug 2024	£1410
12 Aug 2024	17 Aug 2024	£1410
26 Aug 2024	31 Aug 2024	£1410
11 Sep 2024	16 Sep 2024	£1410
25 Sep 2024	30 Sep 2024	£1410
07 Oct 2024	12 Oct 2024	£1410
28 Oct 2024	02 Nov 2024	£1410
31 Oct 2024	05 Nov 2024	£1410
05 Dec 2024	10 Dec 2024	£1410
21 Dec 2024	26 Dec 2024	£1410
20 Jan 2025	25 Jan 2025	£1410
25 Jan 2025	30 Jan 2025	£1410
05 Feb 2025	10 Feb 2025	£1410
19 Feb 2025	24 Feb 2025	£1410
13 Mar 2025	18 Mar 2025	£1410
07 May 2025	12 May 2025	£1410
07 Jun 2025	12 Jun 2025	£1410
21 Jun 2025	26 Jun 2025	£1410
07 Jul 2025	12 Jul 2025	£1410
27 Jul 2025	01 Aug 2025	£1410
10 Aug 2025	15 Aug 2025	£1410
12 Aug 2025	17 Aug 2025	£1410
26 Aug 2025	31 Aug 2025	£1410
11 Sep 2025	16 Sep 2025	£1410

25 Sep 2025	30 Sep 2025	£1410
07 Oct 2025	12 Oct 2025	£1410
25 Oct 2025	30 Oct 2025	£1410
31 Oct 2025	05 Nov 2025	£1410
30 Nov 2025	05 Dec 2025	£1410
21 Dec 2025	26 Dec 2025	£1410
25 Jan 2026	30 Jan 2026	£1410
06 Feb 2026	11 Feb 2026	£1410
20 Feb 2026	25 Feb 2026	£1410

Please note the price includes your Gorilla Permit. This trip has no local payment.

Countries visited: Rwanda • Uganda

Highlights: The Genocide Memorial and Museum • Mountain gorilla trek • Golden monkey trek • Hike to Dian Fossey's grave • Orphanage visit •

Safari structure: The Gorilla Stop is a short tour commencing and finishing in Kigali, the capital of Rwanda. It is a component of our main program of overland tours and will allow you the opportunity to see one of the most loved highlights of East Africa – the endangered mountain gorilla. On this trip you will meet travellers who may be doing longer components of the program through to Zanzibar and Southern Africa.

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Flights

When arranging your flights we suggest you arrive in Kigali, Rwanda. There is an international airport in Kigali.

Depending on the departure date, we may depart early on day 1, or we may meet in the afternoon of day 1. This tour then finishes in Kigali and we either finish in the morning, or by midday of the last day for some departures.

Please speak to the office to confirm arrangements for your departure so that you can arrange your flights accordingly.

At certain times of the year, flight availability can become very limited and if you delay your booking, you might have to pay a higher price. Please organise your flights as soon as you can once you decide to travel.

For this tour most clients arrange Kigali return flights. There are several airlines that fly in and out of Kigali including Kenya Airways, KLM, Air Brussels, Swiss Airlines and Ethiopian Airways. Otherwise add-on flights with Kenya Airways, Rwandair Express and Air Uganda can also be arranged, flying on from Nairobi or Entebbe.

We can help you with a flight quote. Please feel free to call the office if you would like assistance.

A friendly reminder – When purchasing your flights, check whether your flight ticket already includes departure tax (if applicable) for the country you are flying out of at the end of your trip. If it does not, remember to keep the necessary funds aside in USD to make this payment

Insurance

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Your safety and enjoyment when traveling with Absolute Africa are of the utmost importance to us, which is why it is essential that you have arranged adequate travel insurance to cover your whole trip.

We are happy to introduce you to specialist insurance brokers Campbell Irvine, underwritten by AWP P&C SA. The cover includes a 24-Hour Worldwide Emergency Medical Service who are expert in providing friendly and professional emergency help.

Click on the following link to the page on our website to find out more:
www.absoluteafrica.com/Insurance

Do note that it is a condition of booking that you have contacted your insurers to confirm that the cover you have arranged is appropriate for ALL your requirements, taking into account the remote nature of overland travel, and that any hazardous activities you may intend to undertake are fully covered, including whitewater rafting on grade 5 rapids, scuba diving, trekking Kilimanjaro, volunteer work, tandem sky diving and bungee jumping.

When selecting insurance carefully consider the cancellation policy, as well as cover for any valuables you might take. If you buy insurance in the UK you should check that your policy is valid if you are a non-UK resident and the provision for one-way travel if this is required.

Remember when traveling it is important to take all sensible precautions in regards to your security, safety and health, including taking precautions to avoid illness such as malaria. We advise you to make an appointment with a travel clinic as soon as possible after deciding to travel. Your travel insurance might also be affected by the relevant government's Travel Advice for the countries on your route. Do stay up to date with the latest official government Travel Advice.

Visa requirements for for the Gorilla Stop

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Your passport needs to be valid for at least 6 months after your trip finishes.

Ensure as well you have adequate pages in your passport for each country we visit. As a guide then, for the Gorilla Stop, we recommend you have a minimum of 4 blank pages for this tour for visas for Rwanda and Uganda.

Please note visas bought on the ground can only be paid for in US Dollars cash.

Please note for those nationalities that need to pay for a visa to Rwanda, the East Africa Tourist visa will offer the best value for time and money. It is being charged at 100 USD. This can be purchased on arrival in Rwanda, at Kigali airport, and will give entry to Rwanda, Uganda and re-entry to Rwanda.

For passport holders who don't require a visa for Rwanda, you will need to apply for your Ugandan visa online prior to departure.

For Irish citizens who don't need a visa for Uganda, a single entry visa to Rwanda can purchased on arrival in Kigali and again at the border when we re-enter from Uganda. This is 30 USD for each entry.

Please check <https://www.absoluteafrica.com/Visa> for more information.

Below is an estimation of current visa requirements and their cost:

Passport	Rwanda	Uganda	No of Visas	Total Value USD
Australian	-	\$50	1	\$50
New Zealand	-	\$50	1	\$50
South African	-	\$50	1	\$50
Canada	-	\$50	1	\$50
American	\$100	-	1	\$100
British	-	\$50	1	\$50
German	\$100	-	1	\$100
Dutch	\$100	-	1	\$100
Irish	\$60	-	2	\$60
French	-	\$50	1	\$50

The above information covers current visa requirements for British, Australian, New Zealand, Irish, South African, German, French, Dutch, Canadian and American passport holders only. If your passport is not detailed above please do not hesitate to contact the office if you would like further details of your visa requirements.

Be aware that visa requirements can change without prior notice. This information is given as a guide only. We do ask that you also check your personal current visa requirements with the relevant embassies well in advance before you travel. Ultimately you are responsible to ensure you have the appropriate visas for your trip. For more information on visas check out www.projectvisa.com

Pre and post safari information

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Joining us in Kigali

We will either arrange collection on the morning of day 1 of the tour or, on other departures, we meet in the afternoon of day 1 in central Kigali.

If arriving the day prior to departure we recommend booking the Yambi Guest House or Pili Pili Boutique hotel, both of which can be booked online.

Departing Kigali

On Day One we usually collect you at 7.30am, on other departures we will let you know the meet point in central Kigali prior to departure

The crew will aim to organise a meeting to go through all the basics you need to know about your safari, including health, hygiene, security and safety procedures on the first day of the trip. Please also ensure you read the relevant sections in this dossier carefully prior to departure.

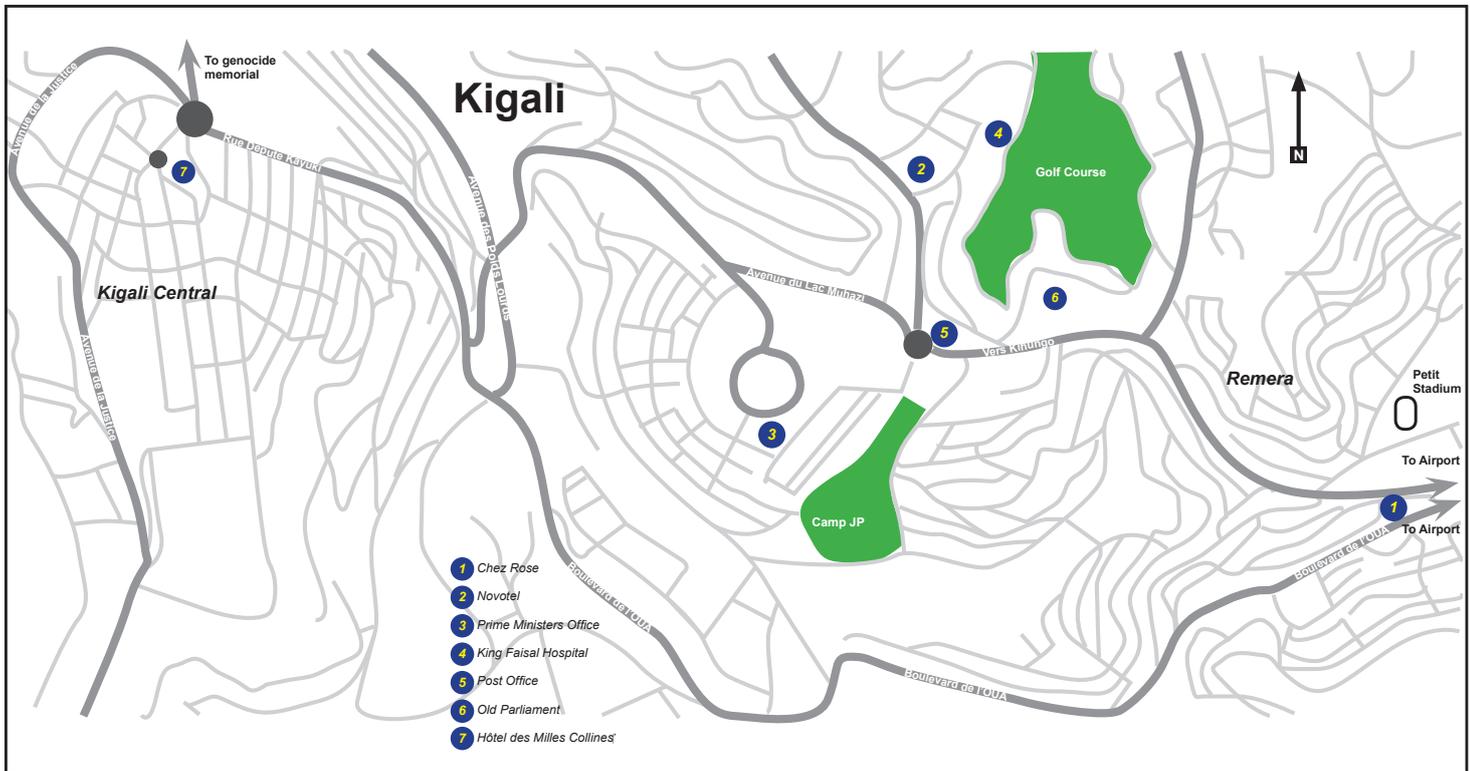
On day one your crew will organise rosters and of course answer any questions you may have. There will probably be many aspects of going on an overland camping safari in Africa that will be very new for you, so do listen carefully.

Your crew are there to do all they can to help. Feel free to discuss any matter with them. Remember you are on a group trip and it is as valuable to listen to other people's ideas as it is to contribute your own.

Your crew has been trained and do know your route. They will facilitate group discussions and will advise to the best of their abilities.

Important pre-safari details

Upon booking this trip we provide you with a form on which you can advise us before departure of all your booking requirements in Kigali. You can also update us on this form of any change in your details and confirm your insurance details, if you don't know these when booking, answer any questions you may have.



Flight departure

Check in as early as possible prior to your departure time: your flight ticket will indicate how early you should check in. When checking in you may need to show your Booking Voucher to demonstrate that you will be leaving Rwanda on safari. Please remember to carry this with your personal documents. The booking voucher is issued upon receipt of final payment. Your booking voucher will also have emergency contact details in the event you need assistance in transit.

Arriving in Kigali International Airport, Rwanda

At the airport you will find signs are in English and there is also an exchange open for international arrivals.

Travelling into Kigali: The airport is 7 miles east of the centre of Kigali. The easiest way to get into town and to your pretour accommodation is to use a taxi. If you would like the London Office to order a taxi for you so that there is someone waiting for you at the airport, do let us know using the previously mentioned form.

You should change up enough money for what you need until you meet the truck or can next get to a bank. We recommend that you change up about 50 USD into Rwandan francs at the airport. Do remember that you need to cover any meals you have prior to the trip start, including breakfast for the morning of the departure, as well as any accommodation and transfers.

NB: For rough budgeting/banking purposes in Rwanda the current mid rate is approximately USD 1 = 1304 Rwandan francs. (July 2024).

The end of your safari

This tour finishes in Kigali on the last day either in the morning of by lunchtime/early afternoon. A transfer to the airport can be arranged.

Please return the form previously mentioned including your post-safari accommodation and transfer needs to the office 10 weeks before departure. You should also reconfirm your post safari requirements with your crew on the road.

Health and immunisation

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Prior to departure it is essential that you contact a specialist travel medical clinic. Clinics in the UK such as one of Nomad's Clinics will provide you with the latest recommendations for travel in Africa.

You will need to have the required immunisations and start a course of anti-malarials prior to departure for this trip. Traveling to Africa will expose you to diseases and health hazards that you may not have come across before, such as malaria and waterborne parasites including bilharzia. You must consult a medical professional that specialises in travel medicine before you depart to discuss where you will be traveling in regard to the above, your immunisation schedule and any other requirements. Remember to start your vaccination program in good time, so that it is completed before you go. About six weeks is usually adequate, depending on how up to date you currently are.

Ensure you are well informed about any health concerns en route so you can stay fit and healthy to relax and enjoy your trip. The Lonely Planet publishes a medical travel guide for the region that may be of interest called 'Healthy Travel Africa'.

You may also like to check out the following websites:

www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk

www.dh.gov.uk

Suggested travel clinics in the United Kingdom

Nomad Travel Stores and Clinics

Tel: 01341 555 061

- 11 S Molton St, Mayfair, London W1K 5QP, UK
- 65 London Wall, London, EC2M 5TU

There are also Nomad clinics in Bristol, Cardiff and Manchester.

Visit www.nomadtravel.co.uk for further information.

If travelling from Australia, Fiji, New Zealand, South Africa or destinations in Asia we recommend you contact Travel Doctor/TMVC. Their websites are at:

www.traveldoctor.com.au/

www.traveldoctor.co.nz

www.traveldoctor.co.za/

There are travel clinics in many of the big centres in Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, as well as in Thailand, Singapore, Hanoi, Bali and Nadi.

Suggested immunisation requirements (This is a guide only)

The immunisations usually suggested for the countries visited on this safari are:

- Yellow fever – Vaccination must not be left any later than 10 days prior to departure and you must be able to show proof i.e. carry your certificate of vaccination with you.
- Typhoid
- Polio
- Tetanus
- Hepatitis A (three months)
- Meningitis
- Diphtheria
- Tuberculosis
- Other Suggested Immunisations – Hepatitis B, rabies.

It is essential to take a course of anti-malarials. It is best to discuss the type of anti-malarial medication you should take with a travel clinic such as Nomad. They will have the latest information on which medication is most effective in the countries through which you will be traveling. They can also advise on possible side effects and which drug might best suit you. Do follow all medical advice given with your prescribed medication. Do be aware that some anti-malarials can have negative side effects and also that your choice of drug needs to be appropriate to protect against strains of malaria specific to the regions in Africa through which you are traveling.

The choices usually suggested are:

- Larium, taken x1 a week
- Doxycycline, taken x1 a day
- Malarone, taken x1 a day

Do think about how to set up a reminder system for yourself so you remember to take your medication. If you are taking a daily medication as an anti-malarial, do remember also to carry it with you on the plane in your hand luggage.

As well as your anti-malarials, you will need to bring a number of other medical items in a simple Personal Medical Kit. Medical kits can usually be bought at travel clinics. Alternatively lists as to the types of items you are advised to carry can be found in the 'What do I need to bring on safari?' section on page 12.

General information on avoiding malaria

The best way to avoid malaria is to guard against being bitten by mosquitoes and stick strictly to your chosen medication regime. To protect yourself from being bitten:

- Cover exposed skin thoroughly in insect repellent, such as DEET, from dusk to dawn, and reapply it regularly. When applying with sun block, put it on top of the sun block.
- Ensure you carry enough DEET with you to Africa. It is not easy to get hold of mosquito repellent once on the road.
- Always sleep under a mosquito net or in a secure tent with all zips zipped up.
- Cover up at the beginning and end of the day including wearing long-sleeves and long-legged lightweight clothing as well as socks.
- Wear impregnated wrist and ankle bands.
- You may wish to treat clothing with permethrin.

Do be aware also your insurance cover may well assume you are on a recognised course of anti-malarials. If you don't take a recognised anti-malarial, it may affect your cover.

Other medical issues

You are reminded that the incidence of HIV AIDS is very high in the countries through which we travel. Sexual contact and dirty needles are the main ways that the disease is spread. Do take all necessary precautions. Use condoms. If you have to have any kind of injection, do ensure that the needle is unwrapped in front of you.

Please ensure you contact a travel health clinic prior to departure for the most recent professional medical advice. The above is given as a broad guide only.

Remember it is a condition of booking that you let us know upon booking or at the earliest opportunity if you have any medical conditions, and particularly if you are on regular medication.

It is wise to know your blood group particularly when travelling in the Third World. As this is the case, as a precaution on day 1 your crew will ask for your blood type can you please have this information available for them.

The Gorilla Stop itinerary

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Day 1: Kigali, Rwanda, to Kisoro, Uganda

Meeting up at 7.30 am on our first day, we head from Kigali, the capital of Rwanda, to the Ugandan border. We arrive in Kisoro to check into a simple guesthouse, our base for the next two nights.

After meeting the rest of the group, you can head out on a coffee tour or visit a Batwa (Pygmy) village to start to soak up the local world around you and get to know others in your group. Some enjoy visiting Lake Mutande later in the day.

Alternatively enjoy having a look around this rural Ugandan town, enjoy a coffee in the coffee shop, or a beer in a local pub. Late in the afternoon we hold a group departure meeting and also go through arrangements for those trekking the gorillas the following day.

Distance: 136 kms

Est. Drive Time: 5 hours (depending on the border)

Meal: X1 Dinner

Optional excursions: Coffee tour or Batwa (Pygmy) village visit or Lake Mutande

Days 2 - 3: Kisoro to Musanze, Rwanda

The critically endangered mountain gorilla population currently numbers around 1,000 individuals. The gorillas are found in two forested areas – Bwindi Impenetrable Forest in Uganda and the Virungas, which stretch from Rwanda and Uganda into the Congo.

Over these days we gorilla trek. The gorilla trek is our first big highlight.

Our trek starts early morning, and can take anything from an hour to many hours depending on where the guides locate the gorillas. When found, they are usually on the ground munching away. They keep in family groups of up to 35 individuals led by one dominant, older adult male, a silverback, named after the swath of silver hair that adorns his otherwise dark fur. The family structure of a gorilla group often also includes several other young males, known as black backs, as well as females and their offspring. The young ones particularly might be seen swinging from vines and trees and can be very curious as to their daily visitors.

There is a morning also for trekking the golden monkeys in Mgahinga National Park or some enjoy visiting a local orphanage.

By afternoon of day 3 we usually return into Rwanda, a country with a turbulent history now moving rapidly forward in an attempt to put their past behind them. This afternoon there is the option to learn how to make banana beer and do basket weaving, as well as head out on a bike tour.

Distance, Day 2: 0 kms

Est. Drive Time, Day 2: 0 hours

Distance, Day 3: 51 kms

Est. Drive Time, Day 3: 3 hours (depending on the border)

Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X2 Dinners

Optional excursions: Mountain gorilla trek Bwindi Impenetrable Forest, Uganda. Or golden monkeys trek or orphanage visit. Batwa (Pygmy) village visit or a coffee tour. Lake Mutande. Basket weaving, banana beer making, bike tour.

Notes: If you wished to trek the gorillas in Rwanda please let us know at the earliest prior to booking.

Days 4 - 5: Musanze to Kigali

For those who fancy it, a visit can be arranged early this morning to the grave of Dian Fossey in the Rwandan forest. Dian dedicated her life to protecting the mountain gorillas. Her life and work is remembered in the film 'Gorillas in the Mist'.

If you are not trekking, we head off early, making our way to the capital Kigali, a very European style city. For those trekking, a transfer is arranged for later in the day.

We spend the next two nights in Kigali, the modern capital of Rwanda and now a vibrant cosmopolitan city. Here, we visit The Genocide Memorial and Museum. Opened in 2004, ten years after the Genocide, the memorial is a sobering reminder of the horrors that occurred over a 100 day period from April to June 1994 during which up to 1 million Tutsis and moderate Hutu were brutally slaughtered.

Some also take time to visit the Nyamata Church Memorial, a Women's Centre, Hotel des Mille Collines (well known from the movie Hotel Rwanda) or wander in the local markets.

Distance, Day 4: 115 kms

Est. Drive Time, Day 4: 3 hours

Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X2 Dinners

Optional excursions: Trek to Dian Fossey's grave, Visit to the Genocide museum and memorial, Nyamata Church Memorial

Day 6: Kigali

We say our goodbyes early this morning. A transfer to Kigali airport can be arranged, or if you need assistance with extra accommodation, please let us know.

Meals: X1 Breakfast

Please note: On some departures this itinerary is arranged in reverse.

On the reverse program on day one we meet up in Kigali late on day one. The Genocide Memorial and Museum visit is organized for the following morning when we have a full day in Kigali

From there we then travel to Musanze to overnight near the border on day 3. Our stay in Kisoro is then on days 4 and 5, from where we gorilla trek and enjoy other local activities. Day 6 we then transfer back to Kigali, Rwanda finishing by lunchtime.

Safari itineraries are given as a guide only. A safari is a journey and true journeys in Africa unfold and are of an adventurous nature. The unexpected can arise, so do allow for this. Feel free to give us a call if you would like further information about this itinerary or any other aspect of your travel arrangements.

Gorilla trekking

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On your trip we travel to one of the gorilla parks to trek the mountain gorillas. We book the gorilla permits for your safari ahead of time to visit Bwindi National Park, depending on availability, or alternatively Mgahinga National Park.

A few things to note about your gorilla trek

Trekking the gorillas is undoubtedly the highlight of most passengers' safari and on average 30 to 40 people trek successfully with us each month in the gorilla parks. In order to protect the gorillas, only eight people trek to see them at a time so, to help you and avoid difficulties at the parks, gorilla permits are booked and paid for in advance. Our aim is always to obtain booking slots back to back to avoid delays and so that the group has the best possible itinerary. Do be aware that permit availability can become very difficult and permits are in high demand.

Trekking the mountain gorillas is one way of channelling essential and much-needed funds towards protecting this endangered species. Gorilla numbers remain dangerously low and trekking allows you to view these extraordinary creatures whilst also helping them survive. Tourism is making a difference to the gorilla's survival and it is vital that trekking continues to be supportive of this.

The gorilla parks are small and your actions in them have a real impact. Please take note of the following to ensure that trekking continues to impact positively on the gorillas and their environment:

- We will only take part in official walks with a guide. No more than 8 people trek at a time. You will have an hour with the gorillas. Please do not walk alone in the park.
- Coughs, colds and other viruses including diarrhoea are easily transmitted to the gorillas. If you are sick with a cold, flu or contagious illness please do not visit the gorillas. We do ask for your cooperation here.
- When you are with the gorillas do stay together in a tight group and don't surround them. You are asked to keep your distance, a minimum of 7 metres (22 feet). If approached by a gorilla, back away slowly to keep the 7 metre separation.
- Go quietly in the parks. Keep your voice down. Do not wave your arms or point as this can be seen as a threat. Move slowly.
- Please do not use flash. Make sure your flash is switched off. It can frighten the gorillas.
- Please do not smoke, eat or drink with the gorillas or within 200 metres of the gorillas. If you do need to cough or sneeze cover your face and turn away from the gorillas.
- If you need to go to the toilet, dig a 30 centimetre hole and bury it. Take all litter home and please do not pick or remove any plants or wildlife.

Do be aware there can be delays at the gorilla parks and that the gorillas are wild animals roaming in densely forested terrain. To find the gorillas you will trek in their forest home, up steep inclines and in dense jungle. The park guides are experts at finding them and at helping the gorillas feel comfortable and at ease with their visitors. Your guide and the trackers do everything possible to locate the gorillas quickly on your trek but it can be sometimes a long (but very beautiful!) hike. Bear in mind at other times they can be found within an hour.

Whilst your trekkers work very hard to enable you to see the mountain gorillas and 99.9% of clients do see

the gorillas, a sighting is never guaranteed.

Do be aware the gorillas are located in an area that is subject to some ongoing political unrest. The Rwandan and Ugandan Armies work very hard to maintain security in the region. Gorilla tourism is an important contributor to the Ugandan and Rwandan economy. There is a significant army presence on all borders and much visible security at all Parks and the campsites. Plain-clothes and uniformed security personnel patrol local roads and in the local communities. Do be aware also that armed guards trek with visitors to the gorillas. We are confident that everything possible is being done to ensure security in the area. Our top priority must be the safety and security of our passengers and crew. Security in this region will be of ongoing concern for a while and can never be completely guaranteed as the park is on the border with Democratic Republic of Congo. Do be aware also that if we do perceive any increased security risk in the region we will immediately re-route your safari.

Money and budgeting

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When costing an overland safari the areas you need to consider are:

Before you go...

1. Your price
2. Your airfare
3. Immunisation and antimalarials
4. Insurance
5. Equipment
6. Visas required ahead of time

Step off the plane in Africa with...

7. Spending money – This is very individual and often depends on how much you drink, shop and wish to upgrade. A suggested budget would be 100 - 150 USD.
8. Optional excursions – Up to 200 USD.
9. Visas: Up to 100 USD depending on nationality
10. Pre and post safari costs

Please note: You need to carry money with you out to Africa to cover Items 7 to 10 (i.e. for your spending money, optionals, visas and pre and post safari costs). The figures above are conservative estimates for average spending per person on safari. There is a lot of variation in how much spending money individuals need as it is dictated by personal choice, as is your budget for optional activities.

We have no control over local operators' charges and new or other options that become available after our date of printing. Nor can we control exchange rate fluctuations, which can impact on budgets as some items are only payable in USD or are cheaper when purchased in USD. USD often tends to be the preferred currency. Figures quoted are based on regular information we receive from operators, passengers and crew in the past 12 months. You are advised that prices do go up and down very regularly. Our aim is to keep you informed of the most recent prices. In general you will often find that whilst some prices are underestimated at other times they are overestimated.

How do I take this money to Africa?

Organise to take the money you are wanting to take to Africa before you leave for your trip in USD cash. Your USD notes should ideally be dated post 2009 and in good condition. When arranging your USD cash a range of is probably the most convenient including a few 5 USD and 10 USD notes as well as 20s, 50s and 100s.

Remember that, for some passport holders, you will need USD for your visa when you land at Kigali, though it is better and easier to arrange your visa in advance if you need one.

When you arrive in Kigali, you should change up enough money into Rwandan francs to cover all your personal needs such as accommodation, transfers and meals including breakfast for the first day before you meet the truck. Please note breakfast is not provided on the first day of the safari. We would strongly recommend you change up 50 USD at Kigali airport when you arrive.

Cash is carried at your own discretion and should be organised before you leave for Rwanda.

What we cover from the price and local payment?

- Gorilla Trekking (permit included)
- Kigali - Genocide Memorial

WE ALSO INCLUDE

- A fully equipped and diesel expedition truck/vehicle including all camping and cooking gear, a fridge, gas cooker, tents, sleeping mats etc.
- Services of a driver and safari leader
- The ongoing advice and back up from The Absolute Team
- All road tolls and taxes are paid
- Breakfast (5x) & dinner (5x)
- 2x nights dorm accommodation in a local lodge or similar, X3 nights camping

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- Flights including taxes
- Travel insurance
- Optional excursions as listed and pre and post tour Add Ons
- Lunch and drinks throughout
- Visas
- Pre and post tour airport transfers and accommodation
- Extra equipment not listed such as sleeping bag, torch and medical kit
- Other incidentals including for tips, internet use, upgrades from dorm accommodation provided, and the occasional cheap excursion such as local walks

Personal spending money

Do remember to bring personal spending money for this tour. This amount is individual and variations in budgets depend largely on how much you spend on souvenirs and drink, as well as on lunch and snacks. You may also need to spend on personal costs such as email, sim cards etc. Allow an extra 30 USD approximately if you think you might want to upgrade your accommodation in Musanze to have a room to yourself.

Tipping: You may like to consider tips for good service, particularly for the guides for the gorilla trek. You may find that you may like to organise this as a group or individually.

If eating out in restaurants, a 10% tip is a good guide to follow.

Remember also to budget for whatever pre and post safari arrangements you might also have in mind.

Optional activities

These excursions are paid for in Africa. This allows you to decide what you wish to do as you travel. Please note also that prices constantly fluctuate in Africa, partly due to exchange rate fluctuation. The below figures are the very latest currently available to us at the time of writing. They can be taken as a reasonable guide only. Any optionals under 20 USD will be covered by the personal spending money budget.

Please contact us if you would like further information about any of these activities or excursions. Do note the below excursions are run by local African operators on the ground. They are not run by Absolute Africa. Most optionals are payable in USD (cash).

(Prices are given as a guide only as at July 2024)

UGANDA

At the gorillas

Please note as you pay for your permit in advance you only need to pay for your transport costs. These are dependent on road conditions. Remember to also budget for a tip if you wish.

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| • Transport to the gorilla trek start point p/p | From 40 USD |
| • Suggested tip for your gorilla guide | 10 USD |
| • Golden monkeys entrance | 90 USD |
| • Transport to Golden Monkeys | 50 USD/vehicle |
| • Orphanage visit | 10 USD |

- Batwa village visit - visiting a tribe in their relocated village, inc. transport, minimum number 3 people
Currently unavailable
- Sunset canoe trekking – Lake Mutanda
10 USD
- Coffee tour
35 USD

RWANDA

- Dian Fossey's grave
100 USD
- Transport to Dian Fossey's grave
100 USD/vehicle
- Audio Guide at Genocide Memorial and Museum
25 USD
- Banana beer making (price dependent on numbers)
13 - 35 USD
- Basket weaving (price dependent on numbers)
14 - 30 USD

Further information about optional excursions and spending money

Updates on the price for all optional excursions are usually available in the update information we send out about two months before departure. Do check online for the latest copy of this document as well.

If you choose not to do an optional activity, do bear in mind that this is your chance to catch up on washing and communications, read, relax and take time for yourself. Your crew will also, when possible, help you with alternative activities – e.g. safe places to take local walks that might be available, swim, cycle, hire a canoe, kick a soccer ball around with the local kids, go fishing, camel ride, visit the local markets or post office, a cinema, a museum, golf course, church, club or coffee shop.

If you would like further details of any of the different optionals for the safari do not hesitate to contact the office. Please note also every safari is individual and it is not possible to detail all the possible optionals you will have a choice to do nor to predict new options that can arise. We will endeavor to provide another accurate price update for you just prior to departure. Please note also though we have no control over local operators' prices or government taxes. Nor do we just select operators on price; many factors have to be weighed up when selecting operators. We are always keen to get information on new operators and the best prices but do be aware that deals come and go constantly in Africa. Consistent service delivery and safe and respectful ethical practices are also worth searching for and rewarding. Your crew will work very hard to ensure you get the best value for money day to day on the road. If you would like any assistance in regard to your budget please do not hesitate to get in touch with us.

What do I need to bring?

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We ask that you carry your possessions in one large backpack, travel bag or soft suitcase (65 to 85 litre maximum). Day to day necessities can also be kept in an additional day bag, which should be large enough to carry your needs for a day trekking the gorillas. Please note we reserve the right to refuse any extra baggage and sending it home or storing it will be at your own cost.

You should carry your valuables in a flat money belt, which you wear against your skin.

Do remember traveling light is always wise and particularly when going overland. Passengers also often buy a lot of African souvenirs on the way.

The vehicles have good storage capacity to carry souvenirs and lockups in the vehicle for your valuables, pack and day bag. There is a locker under your seat for easy access for day-to-day essentials.

The following list details essentials as well as non-essentials. It is a guide only. If you are unsure about specific items please feel free to ring us.

You need to bring:

- Travel documents including passport (including relevant visas) and air tickets
- Booking Voucher with Final Receipt - essential for immigration purposes
- Vaccination documentation, particularly for yellow fever shot
- Insurance policy
- US\$ cash
- Credit card - preferably Visa

Other items to consider

- Photocopies of main documents (keep separately)

Essential camping equipment. We provide tents, stools and sleeping mats.

- Sleeping bag and inner sheet
- Eating utensils, including cutlery, cup, plate/bowl
- Torch and batteries, a head torch being the most useful.
- Mosquito repellent (DEET) 50% strength – 1 bottle
- Insect repellent spray
- High-factor sunblock cream
- Sun block cream
- Padlock
- Small personal medical kit including: anti-malarials, vitamin tablets, paracetamol, antibiotic powder, Band-Aids, cotton wool, sterile gloves, flu medication for coughs, colds and sinuses, rehydration salts, sports injury cream for sprains, an antihistamine, immodium, treatment for tummy bugs, stings/bites and sunburn and eye drops. If you wear contact lenses you are advised to carry disposables.

Other items

- Pocket knife
- 1 litre water container. Make sure it screws tight.
- Towel
- Tissues
- A means of securing your hair back is useful such as a bandana, a scarf, beanies, hair ties and clips as it can be windy day to day driving on the truck.

Electrical items

- Mobile phone Mobile coverage is not the best on this route and text messaging can be difficult. Remember if you are on international roaming the charges will be very high to make and receive phone calls. If communication is very important to you, sim cards can be purchased very cheaply on the road. Some clients have their phone unlocked before arriving in Africa whilst coverage is not always good on this tour.
- Smartphone/Music player including headphones if you want to listen to your own music
- Camera in a protective case and spare memory card(s)
- For SLR cameras we recommend a telephoto of 120 mm (or similar) or an 80-200 mm zoom
- Camera batteries
- Polarising filter/lens hood for SLRs
- USB cable – to connect to internet cafes or for downloading
- Camcorder

Charging your equipment

If bringing a camcorder, digital camera, iPod or mobile, your equipment can be charged from the truck. The trucks have 600 watt Intelligent Power Inverters converting 24v DC to AC mains electricity (220-240v). This will be sufficient for charging any photographic equipment required. Remember to bring all necessary cables.

You will also want to bring a mains international adapter to charge at campsites as an alternative. A spare battery pack, where possible, is also advised.

Clothes

Please double check the weather conditions for your particular safari when packing. Cotton and loose fitting items are preferable. Do also realise that any white clothing won't stay that way!

- Lightweight cotton clothing, shorts and T-shirts as well as shirts with long sleeves and long pants including casual wear for nights out.
- Lightweight waterproof jacket and a fleece
- Sun hat, sunglasses, sandals.
- Lightweight closed-in comfortable walking boots, shoes or trainers with a non-slip tread which give enough ankle support and good traction. Please avoid shoes that get too heavy and hot, 'platforms', high heels or 'strappy' sandals.

We would encourage you to bring clothes that will wear well, as traveling in Africa is very hard on clothes.

Conditions are rough and belongings do get dusty and can get damaged.

Being able to layer clothing that can be removed easily as the day heats up is an advantage. This also helps to keep valuables inconspicuous. Clothes with zip and velcro pockets are sensible.

Life on your big yellow truck

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Day to day it is essential that everyone helps out with routine chores. The trips are participatory in nature - the more you put in to the group and the trip the more you will get out of it. Overland safaris are very much about everyone willingly getting involved and working as a team. A roster is established for duties. Tasks you will need to be involved in are: cooking, assistant to the cook, washing up, cleaning the truck, filling the jerry cans, lighting the fires and truck guard duty.

Please follow all instructions given by your safari leader carefully as to how to use equipment, move around on, and enter and exit the truck as well as how to maintain all supplies. Please also follow all washing and cleaning procedures carefully to avoid infections being spread. Seat belts are fitted on the truck. For your safety please use these.

It is essential in order to keep to schedules that you listen at group meetings to know what is happening and when, on the following day. Your truck will also usually have a small notice board with information as to what is happening each day. For the group to function well you do need to keep informed as to what is happening.

Group meetings are held to help the group work together. On a daily basis you are encouraged to look out for each other and be considerate of everyone else's needs and wishes. This is a group adventure camping safari, not a 5 star holiday! A sense of humour and patience are essentials to pack!

Please note we cannot guarantee the provision of regular clean drinking water from the truck throughout the safari and you do need to organise your water day to day. It is advisable to buy your own bottled water, which is readily available and most campsites now sell sealed bottled mineral water. When purchasing your water do check that the bottles are sealed.

Drive times in Africa can be difficult to predict so do be prepared for the occasional situation when the plot changes!! On the road there is always a lot to see but also too, you may like to bring some good books and an iPod to listen to your own music. The occasional long drives are deemed essential by crew to get you where you want to be in the time given.

Schedules and itineraries

Our aim at all times is to enable you to have an experience of a lifetime at an affordable price. Due to the nature of Africa - weather, politics, road conditions, lack of infrastructure, border restrictions, breakdown, sickness, etc. - it is not always possible to exactly follow departure/arrival dates and routes. The best plans can unravel and in a lot of ways that is all part of the adventure that makes your safari. Itineraries and truck schedules can be changed at any stage prior or during your safari particularly in consideration of crew needs, weather and road conditions as well as security concerns, truck servicing requirements and booking patterns. Whilst we do all we can to avoid making changes please note we reserve the right for safety and other essential reasons to change itinerary, vehicles and or crew on a safari at any time.

The trips are made up of components and you will probably meet clients doing shorter and longer sections of your trip depending on the booking patterns for the months you are traveling.

Camping

We supply large, durable three-person tents complete with ground sheet and separate waterproof flysheet, ideal for Africa's varied conditions. They also have mossy netting in-built at the doors and openings. These are used for two people only. We also supply high-density foam roll mats.

All cooking equipment is supplied including pots and pans, gas cookers, a cool box, lighting, fire-grate, cooking bench, chairs and shelter. The truck also has a large fridge.

It is a participation trip and part of your every day routine will be to be involved in all the daily chores on a daily basis including cooking and cleaning. For reasons of personal hygiene, we ask you to supply your

own cup, plate and cutlery.

There is also limited availability on single and twin/double rooms. This usually costs about 20 USD a night. Availability though is very limited. Do let us know at the earliest if you would like this. Do budget accordingly though if you might wish to upgrade.

The facilities we visit vary a lot. In general you will find conditions are clean, may give a little hot water, and can have working flush toilets. Be aware though that water pressure is often very weak. Please do not come on your African adventure safari expecting pristine bathroom facilities.

Please remember when leaving we do expect you to be diligent to leave places as you find them if not better. We are just visitors in a continent with extraordinary challenges and dilemmas to face. Do be responsible as you travel.

Sickness

All our trucks have a medical kit, which has been put together by tropical expedition specialists for emergency use only. The foreign embassies throughout Africa provide English-speaking doctors for emergency situations. If you do become ill we will transport you as soon as possible to the nearest health clinic and your crew will do all they can to assist. You will always have a friendly escort.

Meals and cooking on the truck

Day to day meals are prepared from the truck using both the non perishable supplies we buy in bulk prior to the safari and fresh supplies we buy as we travel. Staying fit and healthy on safari is a priority as we keep busy and we want you to enjoy all you do. Everyone takes turns on a roster basis cooking for the group, being 'assistants' to the cooks and with the clean up. The safari leader assists with menus, recipes and loads of ideas as well as being directly involved with cooking as needed. She/he is available to provide support and encouragement at any time during meal preparation. Cooking together is lots of fun and all part of the group experience! The sort of meals provided day to day are spaghetti and pasta dishes, stir fries, cottage pies, kebabs, curries, stews and casseroles, hamburgers or jacket potatoes, which are then complemented with rice and/or salads. Breakfast is usually fruits, muesli and/or other cereals, toast, as well as some regular cooked breakfasts like eggs, bacon, baked beans or pancakes.

Specialist diets

For vegetarians we do all possible to ensure a good supply of veggies, salads, fruits, beans, pastas and rice. The diet leans towards vegetarian day to day, as fresh quality meat is not easily accessed every day. The staples are beans, pastas, pulses, and rice, as well as fresh fruit and vegetables when available and in season. In restaurants, when meals are ordered ahead of time, vegetarian options are available with usually good supplies of fresh fruits, veggies and salads. Do be aware though how spoiled we are in the Western world with our constant supplies of fruit and veggies regardless of the season. In reality, and more naturally, fruit and vegetable supplies are seasonal, may not be as chemically assisted and can also be difficult to access en route. We will do all we can to ensure supplies where possible.

We can also cater for gluten-free, vegans, wheat-free and dairy-free diets, supplying soymilk, rice noodles, gluten-free cereals etc.

When booking, do remember to let us know if you have any specific dietary requests.

Safety and security whilst on safari

Perhaps the two most important factors to always bear in mind when traveling in Africa are to be constantly vigilant as to your own as well as your group's health and security.

Personal safety

Do be very aware of protecting your cash and valuables at all times and do not walk around flaunting valuables e.g. cameras, jewellery and money. Remember even cheap jewellery can look expensive! Day to day, layer your clothing to keep valuables inconspicuous and take clothes preferably with zip and velcro pockets.

Money Belts - The most efficient money belts are ones that go under your clothing, against your skin. If you use a bum bag please only carry small amounts of local currency in it that you are prepared to lose.

Do not leave anything unattended anywhere - including in your tent - and avoid being crushed in large crowds. Be very careful when you walk after dark; never walk alone or become separated from the group. Take taxis in cities at night and around unfamiliar areas. When taking taxis always agree on a price before

setting off.

Once you join the truck, valuables can be locked safely away in a safety deposit box, which is kept hidden within the vehicle.

ATMs are becoming more accessible on the route, you must also be wary of security of crimes around ATMs. Be discreet when withdrawing cash and as always be very careful with your card and cash.

Truck security

Your truck will have a lockable safe in which to keep your passport and valuables. You will also have a lockable place on the truck to keep your day bag. Your backpack is stored underneath the truck. The truck is never left unattended. Do be aware on safari you will be required in certain locations to assist with watching that all is safe and secure with other passengers. Please note whilst all precautions will be taken in regards to valuables left on the vehicle we cannot be held responsible for any damage or loss from the vehicle.

Do listen carefully to all instructions regarding security issues given by your crew and local operators as we travel. Before traveling you are also advised to keep yourself informed and up to date as to the current political situation in the countries through which we travel and to check out the Foreign Office Travel Advice. If you are a British, Australian or New Zealand citizen you may like to look at: www.fco.gov.uk, www.dfat.gov.au or www.mfat.govt.nz.

Remember this is a group experience you are booking. It is a condition of booking that you follow the group leader's instructions and take responsibility for your rostered tasks. It is important that every member of the group is attentive and looks out for each member of the group's health and security. All in your group will appreciate your co-operation with this.

Photography

African authorities often require that tourists do not take pictures of bridges, airports, railway stations or military installations. We are often in areas where locals are not used to being photographed and we ask you to show them every courtesy. If in doubt it is always best to ask first.

Trading, donating and supporting

You may wish to consider if you want to bring items such as old T-shirts, sunglasses, cheap watches, old walkmans/discmans and mobiles to trade.

Please be aware we strongly discourage giving away 'something for nothing' from the truck, whilst we are very happy on the other hand to donate pens, books etc. to schools. Do note it is also very unwise to donate cash en route. If you wish to donate something whilst in Africa remember pens, crayons, balls, books, soap and stickers are always welcome in schools and orphanages. For more ideas feel free to contact us. For projects we support check out the website or contact us.

Problems or issues you may have while on the tour

Where you have any issue at all during the tour, talk to the tour leader at the very earliest as this could affect the rest of your trip. The tour leader is there to help and they can't if you don't let them know the issue. Your driver is always happy to chat as well if the tour leader isn't available.

Remember as well these are group participation trips. Group meetings are there so everyone can talk about what's happening day to day so do raise any niggles or queries at the meetings.

If you do experience a problem while you are on the tour such as feeling unwell, not getting along with a fellow traveller or if there is something that you are unhappy with in regard to the running of the tour or anything else that is bothering you or stopping you from having an enjoyable trip, please do inform your tour leader directly of the problem as a priority. They will want to know. Once they know they can take the appropriate actions to resolve the issue as quickly as possible. All and any issues will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

Everyone at Absolute Africa works very hard to ensure our travellers have the very best of trips. Should you have a continuing problem that you feel is not being addressed effectively it is your responsibility to email or contact the office at the very earliest. Detailing your concern in writing in an email is usually the best way to explain. We will then look into this immediately to see how the problem can be resolved so you can continue to have an enjoyable tour. Further details can be seen in our Terms and Conditions (14).

General code of conduct

Please remember we are all ambassadors for our respective countries. How we act on safari should reflect this. An open mind and a desire to have a positive impact, are vital attitudes to bring along with you. A sense of humour is also an essential to pack for any safari in Africa.

We ask that each member of the group looks out for each and every member in your group. The trips are about group participation and each member of the group needs to do all he or she can to enable the group to work well together.

Day to day be sensitive and aware of how you and your group are being perceived by those around you. Be alert to where you are, sensitive when taking photos, aware of how much noise we are making, careful of how you are dressed. Everyone wants to have the best time possible in Africa and there are plenty of chances to have a trip of a lifetime. Excessive noise, obscenities and inappropriate behaviour cannot be tolerated on tour. We need to show respect to the places we visit and the people we meet en route. Poor behaviour embarrasses other members of the group and can seriously upset those around us, particularly in campsites and restaurants. Be responsive, discrete and sensitive to the world around you and you will get more out of your trip.

A reminder as well to be particularly alert to the impact of excessive drinking as you travel. Alcohol abuse will put your health at risk, particularly in malarial zones. For safety reasons we insist alcohol is not to be drunk on the trucks.

There is also a strict no smoking rule onboard the trucks, and no-smoking areas will be set up for during meal times.

There are serious penalties in Africa with regard to illegal substances.

Game parks are a spectacular sight. Please be considerate and keep noise to a minimum. Everybody's game viewing on an ongoing basis is better served if our impact on a park is kept to a minimum. Do be attentive to all signs and instructions as to how to behave in game parks.

Please follow all request from your tour leader.

In a serious situation where behaviour is disruptive and/or dangerous your Safari Leader can step in and will remove you from the trip. Don't spoil your or someone else's trip.

We won't leave a campsite until it is entirely clean. Your enthusiasm with packing up camp to ensure all is left clean is appreciated.

Keeping in touch

It can be quite difficult and also expensive staying in touch whilst you are traveling in Africa. Please let your family and friends know that this will be the case, particularly if you are usually in touch on a regular basis. In an emergency if your family needs to get in touch they should contact the London office and we will do all we can to assist.

E-mail – There is very limited access to email on this route where it is available be aware internet speed is quite often very slow.

Post - Letters from the U.K. to Africa take approximately 10 - 14 days and from Australia or New Zealand to Africa approximately 2-3 weeks. Please be aware that articles regularly going missing in the post.

If you did need to have something sent to you while traveling please contact the office as to the best destination and address to use.

Please do not have anything of value posted to Africa en route, including credit cards or prescription drugs. We would also advise against having birthday and Christmas parcels posted. In an emergency if something needs to be got out to you, the London office should be contacted for further advice.

Reading List

For those of you who want to read before you go, here are a few suggested titles:

The Africans	David Lamb
Malaria Dreams	Stuart Stevens
Out of Africa	Karen Blixen
Letters from Africa	Karen Blixen
Venture Into The Interior	Laurens Van der Post
Gorillas in the Mist	Dian Fossey
A Good Man in Africa	William Boyd
The Grass is Singing	Doris Lessing
African Laughter	Doris Lessing
The Tree Where Man Was Born	Peter Matthiessen
African Silences	Peter Matthiessen
The Weather in Africa	Martha Gellhorn
The Last King of Scotland	Giles Foden
Zanzibar	Giles Foden
I Dreamed of Africa	Kuki Gallman
The Scramble for Africa	Thomas Pakenham
Disgrace	J. M. Coetzee
Blood River	Tim Butcher
The Zanzibar Chest	Aiden Hartlet
Sowing the Mustard	Yoweri Museveni
River God and The Seven Scrolls	In the Footsteps of Mr Kurtz Michela Wrong
A Sunday at the Pool in Kigale	Wilbur Smith
Healthy Travel Africa	Gil Courtemanche
	Isabelle Young, Lonely Planet Publications 2000

Lonely Planets, Bradts and Rough Guides are always a mine of information.

A 746 Michelin map will give you a good insight into where you are travelling.

A friendly note that conditions, prices and details change constantly in Africa and what may be appropriate and/or correct one day is not necessarily the case the next. Much time and effort goes into keeping this information as up to date as possible. At the same time do not treat this document as 'the bible' for your safari. It is a guide only to assist in steering you in the right direction.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to get in touch. We are more than happy to assist.

Queries about your safari booking should be directed to Absolute Africa. We are available on Skype and Live Chat, or feel free to email us at our bookings office at bookings@absoluteafrica.com

9th July 2024

