



9 Day Gorilla Express

This trip begins in Nairobi, Kenya and travels to Lake Bunyoni, Uganda before heading ending in Kampala.

This trip departs from Nairobi early on Sunday morning. Should you wish to explore Nairobi, ATC or your travel agent can assist you, in booking your activities as well as accommodation. However, costs due to earlier arrival, will be for your own account.

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| Trip code: | NK9 |
| Accommodation style: | Camping |
| Length of trip: | 9 Days |
| Starts in: | Nairobi, Kenya |
| Finishes in: | Kampala, Uganda |
| Pre-departure Meeting: | Held at the Departure Point at 17h00, the day before your departure. |
| Departure point: | Kenya Comfort Hotel - Muindi Mbingu Street & Monrovia Street |
| Check-In Time: | 08h45 |
| Departure Time: | 09h30 |
| Countries visited: | Kenya, Uganda |
| Local Payment: | US\$ 490 |

PLEASE NOTE:

This itinerary should be used as a guide only and may vary from day to day depending on road & weather conditions, political situations and group decisions.

All prices & Local Payments are subject to change.

Your arrival transfer and pre-trip accommodation is included in your trip price. Should you choose not to make use of these, or in the event that ATC were not updated with your arrival details, no refund will be paid for services not used.

Please ensure you've received a copy of our pre-departure information document with information on what to expect on this overland safari.

For booking purposes please notify our office as soon as possible should you choose not to trek the Mountain Gorillas.

Mountain gorillas inhabit the rain forests of Uganda, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda on the high slopes of the Virunga Volcanoes and to track them and find them among the tangled vines and giant trees is a spine-tingling experience. Other highlights of this trip are the memorable countryside of Uganda, known as the "Pearl of Africa", and searching for the "big five" in the Masai Mara.

INCLUDED HIGHLIGHTS

Masai Mara National Reserve, Kampala & Lake Bunyoni.



KENYA

Upon entering this beautiful east African country, you may be greeted with the words of “jambo” (hello) or “hakuna matata” (no problem) by the friendly locals. With a population of nearly 42 million and land area of more than 580 000 sq km Kenya is home to an abundance of animals and colourful tribes people, making it the perfect getaway for a once in a lifetime safari.

DAY 1: Nairobi to Masai Mara (Lunch/ Dinner)

Leaving the hustle and bustle of Nairobi we climb the escarpment to our first stop, a viewpoint overlooking a section of the spectacular Great Rift Valley. Descending into the Rift Valley, we enter Masai land where these habitual pastoralists are often seen tending their cattle from the side of the road. We pass through the town of Narok, and continue our drive possibly getting a glimpse of some wildlife along the way. We arrive at Acacia Camp in the late afternoon. Acacia Camp looks on to the Meguarra hills and the stream that meanders by on the bottom end forms a natural border to the Masai Mara National Reserve.

Included: Masai Mara Nature Reserve excursion

DAY 2: Masai Mara (Breakfast / Lunch/ Dinner)

We depart shortly after sunrise on our game drive into the Masai Mara Reserve. The Masai Mara is well known as one of East Africa’s best National Reserves and is home to a wide variety of wildlife species. Most famous for the Annual Migration, that consists of the impressive herds of over 1 million wildebeest, zebra and Thomson’s gazelle that cross over from the Serengeti National Park in Tanzania; the Masai Mara is most popular between July and October when these vast herds feast on the fresh grazing here. Following these herbivores are Africa’s predators that are often seen at a kill during this period. We game drive through a section of the park in search of the ‘Big 5’- elephant, rhino, buffalo, lion & leopard; along with the many other species of animals, reptiles and birds who make call this wilderness home.

After our game drive, we have the option to visit one of the nearby Masai Manyatta’s – this is a traditional hamlet where the Masai still live in their traditional way. This evening we sit around the camp fire, and watch the sun set over this “Garden of Eden”.

DAY 3: Masai Mara to Eldoret (Breakfast / Lunch/ Dinner)

Leaving the Masai Mara early, we head out of Masai Land pass through the scenic tea plantations of Kericho before descending the Rift Valley Plateau, on our way to Eldoret.

UGANDA

The “Pearl of Africa’ as it is referred to by its people, is home to some of Africa’s major attractions. This country contains four of Africa’s seven great lakes, including Lake Victoria which is the second largest body of fresh water in the world. Lake Bunyonyi is one of these spectacular lakes with its mythical landscapes and hidden bays. The source of the Nile at Jinja allows you the opportunity to tame the mighty waters with some of the world’s best white water rafting. And to top it all, this breathtaking country has the largest population of primates anywhere in Africa.

DAY 4: Eldoret to Kampala (Uganda) (Breakfast / Lunch/ Dinner)

This morning, we cross the border into Uganda where we overnight it the capital city, Kampala. Uganda is a small country of striking physical beauty. Its landscapes vary from the fertile green areas around the northern shores of Lake Victoria to the snow-capped Ruwenzori Mountains in the west



and the semi-desert region in the north. The political instability that has haunted Uganda in the past has

actually, had the positive effect of leaving the country free of the over commercialism so common in other parts of Africa. The current administration under President Museveni has devoted considerable effort and funds to return Uganda to its former status as one of Africa's most prosperous and, from a tourist's point of view, one of the most appealing and interesting countries to visit.

DAYS 5 - 8: Kampala to Lake Bunyoni (Breakfast / Lunch/ Dinner)

After an early morning departure from Kampala we drive west into the depths of Uganda to our base at the tranquil Lake Bunyoni.

Lake Bunyoni, the deepest Crater Lake in Africa and home to a large and varied number of beautiful birds, is the base from which the optional Gorilla trek takes place. Dependant on where trekking permits are available, we trek in the Magahinga or Bwindi National Parks in Uganda, the Virunga National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo, or the Ruhengeri National Park in Rwanda. The prices of trekking permits fluctuate and may change without prior notice – currently they are priced from US\$600. (this covers the return public transfer and the Wildlife Authority's booking fee). For trekking in the DRC or Rwanda (the trip leader will advise at the pre-departure meeting as to where the permits have been secured, and will assist with the online visa application for Rwanda en-route if needed), we will also have to purchase an additional visa to enter either country, as well as renewing our Ugandan visa upon re-entry. We also advise budgeting a little extra for tips for the local guides and rangers. Please budget accordingly as payment for the permit must be made in US\$ cash at the pre-departure meeting.

Trekking Procedures: The mountain gorilla (Gorilla Berengei), of which there are still only about 700 remaining, are one of our closest living relatives. A visit to these gentle giants in their natural environment is a unique and wonderful experience - one you'll never forget. The park rangers monitor the gorillas on a daily basis and have a fairly good idea of where they are. However, they are free roaming animals, and their sighting cannot be guaranteed. As the gorillas share much of our DNA, anyone with even the slightest cold or transferable illness will not be permitted to trek. Trekking is also only open to people over 16 years old.

Due to the restrictions on the daily numbers of visitors to these incredible animals, we depart from our base in Bunyoni in small groups over 3-4 days, depending on the group size. We wind our way through arguably some of the most picturesque scenery in Africa en-route to the National Park. Dependant on where permits are available, we may spend a night in either Kisoro or in Rwanda. The following morning, after packing our picnic lunch, we are transferred to a ranger's station where the trek commences. Your rangers will lead you through the cultivated lands and then into the dense rain forest and on to a gorilla family. Trekking can take anywhere from 45 minutes to 8 hours (not including transfer time) and it can be quite strenuous, so a reasonable level of fitness is required. To ensure the gorillas do not get too used to the presence of humans and because they share many of our genes (and therefore able to catch our diseases), the maximum time permitted to spend with them is 1 hour. You will have plenty of time to watch their activity and to take photographs. The rangers will be able to provide you with a background to the family you are visiting. Once your hour is up, you trek back out of the rain forest to your meeting point where you will be transferred back to the Lake Bunyoni resort.

You needn't feel like you're exploiting these animals. The ever-growing number of tourists trekking them each day play a vital role in their survival. For years they have been ruthlessly hunted for their hands and heads, which have been sold as ashtrays and lampshades! In addition, large numbers have been killed whilst trying to stop poachers stealing the babies for sale to zoos, where they have never lived long. 100% of the gorilla permit cost is used to by the parks authorities to finance patrols that are instrumental in protecting the gorillas from poachers and their lethal snares and on promoting these wonderful animals.



Depending on where the trek takes place you may also pass through some of the local villages that have settled in this region due to the high number of refugees fleeing from the Rwandan Genocide, or from the continued unrest in the DRC. The villagers in this area are mostly subsistence farmers, and families that farm against the slopes of the volcanoes. It is impressive to see how they have ploughed, planted and harvest their crops in such an unlikely landscape.

Gorilla Trekking is OPTIONAL

Transfer fee to National Park for trekking is not included in trekking permit price.

DAY 9: Lake Bunyoni to Kampala (Breakfast / Lunch)

After marvelling at the experience of our gorilla encounters and enjoying the peaceful Lake Bunyoni, we begin our drive back to Kampala. We cross the Equator for the second time and stop for the classic "one foot in each hemisphere" photo opportunity. We finish in Kampala and have the opportunity to sample its night life if you are staying overnight before saying our goodbyes to the group.

WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED?

Flights, Airport departure taxes departure transfer, visas, meals unless otherwise stated, travel insurance, laundry, Gorilla Permit, transfer to gorilla trek, personal items, sleeping bag, pillow, tips & bottled water.

Meals on tour

Meals and menus vary as food is purchased en-route, and is subject to produce that is available seasonally in the areas we travel through. As we support the local communities along the way, fresh produce is mostly purchased direct from the producer or local grower and therefore has an organic appearance. Our safari cooks are able to offer a wide variety of menus with the ingredients available, even if the produce on offer is not of the same selection as what you may be used to back home.

The breakfast spread consists of bread (toast when time allows), spreads and cereals with a hot breakfast every few days. Lunches are mostly prepared en-route with a supply of 'build your own' sandwich ingredients available. Dinners are cooked in the evenings on arrival at the campsite. A wide array of dinner menus is on offer during your safari, consisting of curries, stews, pastas, BBQ's and even roasts!

Transport on tour

Our overland vehicles are custom built converted trucks that have seating space for our passengers and a storage area for luggage and all trip equipment. The trucks seat between 27-30 passengers on our camping trips. Most seats are forward facing, though some models have a combination of forward, backward and some inward facing seats with tables. Vehicles have sliding glass windows, and the seating area is raised providing a great advantage for game viewing and photography. Seats are cushioned and there is storage space for personal items like cameras, snacks and day packs in the seating area.

Participation on tour

All of the tours operated by ATC are participation trips meaning that all passengers are expected to help out around camp. The crew members running the trip will set up a rota system that will be followed. One day you may be on cleaning duty, the next day you may be on cooking duty and so forth. This is not only to make the trip easier for all involved but also for you as the passengers to get to know one another while on trip.



Social Media on tour



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<https://twitter.com/AfricaTravelCo>

<http://instagram.com/africatavelco>

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OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Below is a selection of Optional Excursions available on this trip.

PLEASE NOTE: These prices are approximate and are subject to change
Where activities occur away from your base, there may be an additional transfer cost

| KENYA: | |
|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Masai Mara Balloon Safari (when available) | 550 US\$ |
| Masai Village Visit | 15 US\$ |
| Masai Warrior Dancing | 10 US\$ |
| UGANDA: | |
| Gorilla Trek (excl. transfer & booking fee of US\$120) | From 600US\$ |
| White Water Rafting on the Nile | 160 US\$ |

PLEASE NOTE: That this is not a full list of available activities. There are many more to choose from. Prices are approximate and can change at any given time. Only to be used as a guideline.

The staff and management look forward to welcoming you aboard and trust that you will enjoy your trip with us!

Please feel free to email us at sales@africatavelco.com with your trip comments, or post a review on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram. | #africatavelco |

“Safari Njema”