

Your guide to

East Africa

Kenya - Tanzania - Zanzibar - Uganda - Rwanda





01

Important Documents

Passports | Visas | Inoculation Certificates | COVID-19

Passports

- + A valid, **machine-readable passport** issued by the country of which you are a citizen is mandatory for all international travel. This includes travelers under the age of 18.
- + Passports must be **valid for at least six months after your return date**; i.e. you can not enter Eastern Africa if your passport expires in less than six months.
- + Your passport must contain at least **two consecutive blank pages** for the visas and entry stamps for each country you are visiting; i.e. if you are visiting three countries on your trip, your passport must have six consecutive blank pages. Please note that airlines may refuse to board you or immigration officials to process you should your passport have insufficient blank pages.



- + Make a **physical copy** of your passport and keep it in a safe place, and make a digital copy that you can access from your email address in case of emergency.

Visas

- + Foreign visitors may be required to **obtain a visa before entering any of the East African countries**. Please contact your local embassy in Tanzania, Kenya, Rwanda or Uganda for the most up-to-date visa information. Travelers should check for visa requirements pertaining to their citizenship, as entry requirements vary between countries.
- + It is advisable to **obtain your tourist visas before departure** whenever possible. Please note the tourist visas obtained at the port of entry are often payable only in cash.
- + Most travelers can **obtain an e-Visa in advance**.
- + Travelers requiring a visa to allow for multiple entries in Tanzania can apply online for a cost of \$100 (USD)*. Single entry visa cost is \$50 and is valid for 30 days.
- + Travelers requiring a visa to allow for multiple entries in Kenya can apply online for the T12 East Africa Tourist Visa for a cost of \$100 (USD)*. The **East Africa Tourist Visa** is valid for 90-days and covers Rwanda, Kenya and Uganda.
- + Rwanda has 3 visa options consisting of visa-free countries, visas issued on arrival and e-Visas obtained before entering the country. If you carry a passport from **Canada, USA, Germany, Hong Kong, United Kingdom, Sweden and several Africa countries, you can enter Rwanda visa free** for a period of up to 90 days. Travelers from other destinations can apply for a single entry visa for a cost of \$50 or a multiple entry visa for a cost of \$70. Learn more about the [online visa](#) here.



Inoculation Certificates

- + All visitors to any one of the East African countries (excluding Rwanda), even if in transit, **require a yellow fever inoculation certificate** if you have visited a yellow fever endemic country. If you are visiting Kenya, Tanzania or Uganda prior, this will be required.
- + Certificates must be produced for all travelers over the age of one year and are valid for 10 years. Failure to produce a valid yellow fever vaccination certificate at a port of entry could lead to refusal of entry, or quarantine until the traveler's certificate becomes valid. Quarantine will not be longer than six days.

Travel restrictions due to COVID-19

- + **Fully vaccinated** passengers are exempt from providing a negative PCR test. They will need to submit full **proof of vaccination with a valid QR code**, minimum vaccination at least 14 days before arrival. Excluding children under 5. A Rapid Antigen test might be required if travelling from a high risk area to Tanzania. This excludes Rwanda where a PCR test is still required if you will be Gorilla trekking or visiting primates.
- + All **unvaccinated** passengers, except children below the age of 5, must be in possession of a valid COVID-19 **negative RT-PCR test** certificate obtained no later than 72 hours prior to arrival in Tanzania, Zanzibar, Uganda and Rwanda.

See [updated Africa Travel Restrictions due to Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#).

Please note: We have made an effort to ensure that the information listed was correct at the time of publication. However, we do not assume any liability caused by errors such as price changes. Please make sure to ask your consultant or embassy about your visa requirements in advance.



02

Health Tips

Malaria | Yellow Fever | COVID-19 | General Health

Malaria

- + East Africa is considered a malarial zone. We strongly encourage that you **consult your travel doctor** for detailed information and options to prevent malaria on your trip. You may be required to take prescription medicine before, during, and after your trip as a preventative measure.

Please note that scuba diving after your trip might affect the type of antimalarial you may be prescribed.

Some general tips to reduce the risk of malaria while traveling:

- + Sleep under the **mosquito net** provided in your room.
- + Make use of the **insect repellent** provided in your room and lightly spray your body and room before going out on safari.
- + Wear lightweight **long trousers and closed shoes** while on safari.



Yellow Fever

- + Unvaccinated individuals run some risk of contracting yellow fever in East Africa. According to the Center for Disease Control, it is recommended to **receive the yellow fever inoculation** if you travel to some areas of Kenya. The yellow fever vaccination is only recommended for travelers staying in Tanzania for long periods of time in high mosquito zones.
- + It is important to note that other countries might require you to have **proof of yellow fever vaccination** if you have traveled there directly from East African countries. Consult your travel doctor to see if you will require the yellow fever vaccination for further travel.

COVID-19

- + Travelers are expected to adhere to **protective safety measures** such as hand hygiene, wearing masks and keeping physical distancing as deemed appropriate.

General Health Tips

- + **Avoid wearing dark colours**, such as blue and black, in Tanzania. These colours attract the Tsetse fly, which can be a threat to your health if you get a sting.
- + Always apply **high SPF sunscreen** regularly and wear a sun hat.
- + **Drink plenty of water**, avoid excessive alcohol and seek medical assistance if you feel shaky, nauseous or clammy after a day in the sun, as you may be suffering from sunstroke.
- + It is advisable **not to drink tap water**.
- + Ensure that your regular vaccinations – such as rabies, tetanus, influenza, MMR and hepatitis – are up to date.



03

Tipping Guide

Tipping | Charity

Tipping

- + We would like to stress that tipping is **not compulsory** and at your own discretion. These are guidelines only and you can tip based on your experience at the camp.
- + It is helpful to have a **small supply of low-denomination notes** in the local currency handy, but staff are generally also very happy to receive US Dollars, Euros or Pounds Sterling.
- + You can either hand over the tip directly to the person or through a staff tip box - whichever you feel most comfortable with.

Please note: the Maasai in Kenya expect a donation when you take a photograph of or with them.



How much to tip

- + The following are guidelines only — please feel free to increase or decrease your tip according to the level of service that was provided to you. Should you wish to express your gratitude, please see the guidelines below.

Tanzania, Kenya, Zanzibar, Uganda, Rwanda:

Ranger/Guide/Tracker	Transfers	Lodge Staff	Porter
\$20 per couple per day	\$5 per person per transfer	\$15 per couple per day	\$1 per bag

Kilimanjaro

Guide	Transfers	Lodge Staff	Porter
\$15 - \$20 per group per day Assistant guide: \$10 - \$15 per group per day	\$8 - \$10 per group per day	\$8 - \$12 per group per day	\$6 - \$7 per bag

Please note: At the end of the hike, hand all the tips to the head guide in front of all the staff for him to divide in private later.



Charity in Africa

- + When it comes to Charity, many visitors to Africa feel a strong urge to help the less fortunate whom they encounter on safari, or when visiting a local village or school. People often ask what they can take, especially for the children. Travelers should be encouraged to **connect with the people, culture and spirit of the destination and give back.**
- + To contribute in a way that helps a person (or community) help themselves will enhance their way of life, find a project or **organisation that you are passionate about** and make a donation towards that specific project rather than encouraging dependency on 'hand-outs' and generosity.
- + Please **refrain from giving money to beggars.** Most camps and lodges have their own charity organisation they work with in the local communities.

Leave your Legacy

- + Our [Legacy Program](#) has evolved into collaborations with many local initiatives. If you would like to donate, and leave your legacy in Africa, please [get in touch here.](#)



04

Photography + Gadgets

Lenses + gear | Binoculars | Other

Photography

- + Bring **sufficient memory cards** and batteries as these are not always readily available.
- + The **use of drones is not allowed** in any of the conservation areas, as they have an impact on wildlife and anti-poaching initiatives. This rule applies throughout Africa.
- + Always **ask before taking photographs of people** and respect their wishes if they decline. They may be happy to pose in return for cash – it is up to you whether to go ahead.
- + Do not photograph or fly a drone at airports, borders, government buildings, security personnel, immigration officials, army or navy installations.



Cameras and lenses

- + We strongly recommend that you bring a **high-resolution camera** with you. Cameras with 8 megapixels of resolution and higher are capable of capturing high-quality A4 size images. If you would like to go a few steps beyond this, you could invest in a telephoto lens. This will allow you to capture wildlife encounters in more depth.
- + **Don't forget a tripod**, or alternatively a beanbag to stabilize your shots, especially when you are using a zoom lens. Although a tripod will be of no use during safari game drives, you will see animals at the waterholes around the camps.
- + It is recommended to **bring extra batteries, a battery charger and a lens cleaner** to avoid disappointment on a day filled with great wildlife sightings. Nothing is more disheartening than a camera with flat batteries.

Binoculars

- + An **eye relief feature** on the binoculars is very important as you will be spending a lot of time on your safari looking through your binoculars. We recommend something that is comfortable especially if you wear spectacles or sunglasses.
- + For spotting wildlife in the early morning and at dusk, we recommend a pair of binoculars with a **large outer diameter and a decent exit pupil size** to collect a lot of light in low light conditions.
- + Apart from durability, **weight is another important aspect** which is often overlooked when shopping for binoculars. Apart from personal comfort, this aspect may also affect your luggage restrictions.



Recommended specs:

Magnification	8 x 42
Field of view	At least 330 ft. at 1000 yards
Exit pupil size	5.25mm or more
Prism and coating	BAK-4 prism and fully-multi-coated surfaces
Weight	Not more than 30.1 oz. lbs
Eye relief	18 or more



05

Light Aircraft Guidelines

Passenger weight | Luggage guidelines

Passenger Guidelines

- + Airlines are strict with their weight allowances and might charge extra per person.

Auric Air	Coastal Air	Safarilink	Air Kenya
Men must be under 92 kg / 203 lbs. Women must be under 74 kg / 164 lbs.	Both men and women should be under 100 kg / 220 lbs. If you weigh more than 100 kg / 220 lbs, you will be required to purchase an extra seat (at child fare).	Seats on Safarilink aircrafts are of a restricted 'utility' size. Passengers weighing 90 kgs / 198 lbs and above should book an extra seat (at child fare).	Men must be under 85 kg / 187 lbs. Women must be under 75 kg / 165 lbs.



Helicopter transfers in Rwanda:

Robinson 44	Augusta
180kg / 396 lbs for maximum 3 passengers	360kg / 793 lbs for maximum 6 passengers

Luggage Guidelines

- + Many East African safari destinations are reachable only via shared light aircrafts. Small aircrafts have **luggage restrictions that are strictly enforced** for the safety of passengers:
 - + Each traveler is allowed no more than 15kgs / 33lbs of luggage.
 - + All luggage must be **soft sided and manoeuvrable**.
 - + Wheels are only permissible if they are not part of a rigid structure or frame.

Light Aircraft Guidelines

- + Maximum luggage dimensions:
- + W: 25cm (10 inches) wide x H: 30cm (12 inches) high x L: 62cm (24 inches) long

Please note that hard cases and overweight suitcases will not be accommodated on shared light aircrafts under any circumstances.



06

Responsible Travel

General tips | On safari

General Tips

- + Tanzania, Zanzibar, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda have **banned all plastic bags**. If you are traveling to these destinations, please make use of non-plastic bags for any storage of items. The governments have implemented a heavy fine for anyone caught with plastic in an effort to protect the environment and wildlife.
- + Many areas of East Africa are arid and experience freshwater scarcity. **Be mindful of local water constraints** by taking short showers, not filling the bathtub all the way, turning off the tap while brushing your teeth or shaving, and never allowing water to run unnecessarily.
- + **Smoking, eating, drinking or singing on game drives is not permitted**. Feel free to ask your guide questions or tell him or her if you would like to stop for a while longer. Remember that your guide cannot guarantee what wildlife you will see on safari.



- + **Leave natural items** in national parks or game reserves, including plants, fungi, rocks or animal products. It is illegal to procure ivory or rhino horn.
- + **Be fair to local sellers** and artisans in markets and remember that a few cents or dollars extra to you might be a substantial portion of a seller's daily income that covers their transportation, stock, food, and provides for their families.
- + Always **respect local customs** and try to learn a few key phrases in the local language.
- + Never buy crafts or products made from protected or endangered animals, such as ivory, fur or feathers.
- + Be **mindful of not wearing clothes that are too revealing** as they may cause offence. If you are at the beach, it is ok to wear your swimsuit around the hotel and private beach, however, you should cover up if you visit the towns or villages.

Please note: In Kenya, the Maasai do not allow being photographed with or without you unless you are willing to give a monetary contribution.

On safari

- + **Disable the GPS function on your social media** and other apps when uploading images of wildlife. Poaching syndicates use online and digital information to track highly endangered rhinos. Think twice before you make these images publicly available and consider who you are tagging.
- + Always **obey your guide's instructions**. No matter how 'tame' animals may seem, they are still wild and unpredictable. Do not attempt to entice them with food, imitate animal sounds, clap your hands or pound the vehicle to get their attention, or tease them to provoke a reaction. If an attack does occur, you may be far away from significant medical attention so always be wary of animals and act cautiously.



- + Do not ask your guide to drive closer, especially to babies or kills, in order to get a better view. Mothers and their young are skittish and you could frighten off hungry predators from a much-needed meal.
- + Guides are well trained in safari best practices and should not be pressured by travelers to act unethically.



06

Gorilla Trekking

Your health | Trekking rules | Best practices

Your health

- + Mountain gorillas are highly susceptible to human illness. Even brief proximity to an ill person can seriously infect and potentially kill an entire gorilla family. It is **imperative that you are in perfect health when you arrive in Rwanda or Uganda**, as you will be denied participation in the gorilla trek if you are even slightly sick.
- + Slots on gorilla treks are limited and **non-refundable due to illness**.
- + To maintain your health and to ensure you have the best trekking experience, we recommend that you:
 - + Ensure that you are **at least moderately fit**, if not fitter. Gorilla trekking can be strenuous. Depending on where the gorillas are, you can expect to hike long distances through the humid forest to find them.



- + Ensure you are **up to date on all routine vaccinations** and have immunizations for influenza, hepatitis, tetanus, and diphtheria. Consider cutting down or quitting smoking, if you are a smoker, as smoking is not allowed near the gorillas and the scent of smoke will alarm them of a foreign presence.

Gorilla trekking rules

- + Strict regulations have been enacted to protect the world's last remaining mountain gorillas and their habitat. It is essential that you **obey any direction given to you by your guide and tracker** when trekking with gorillas to ensure both your safety and the safety of gorillas.
- + It is important to note that while incidents are extremely rare thanks to the careful approach taken by highly experienced guides, if you are injured by a gorilla, you may be far from medical assistance.

Best practices

- + Prior to your trek, you will receive a **full safety briefing** and your temperature will be screened. It is also required that you wear a mask and sanitize your hands.
- + A **maximum of 8 people per day** may visit a single group of habituated mountain gorillas. For this reason, it is important to book your trek well in advance to secure your space.
- + Only **1-hour is allowed with the gorillas**. Do not pressure your guide into staying with the gorillas for longer.
- + Strictly restricted to **15 years and above**.
- + Maintain a distance of 10 meters (32 feet) from the gorillas at all times and listen carefully to directions provided by your guide and trackers.



- + Wash your hands before trekking as gorillas are highly susceptible to human disease.
- + Keep your **voice low and do not make sudden, or erratic movements**. Only when you are 200 meters (656 feet) away from the gorillas can a normal level of voice be used.
- + Social distancing observed during breaks and during trekking of at least 2 meters (6.5 feet).
- + Do not litter.
- + Always **stay close to your trekking group** and never wander off alone as the forest can quickly become disorientating.
- + Lights, if required, will be carried by all visitors.
- + No eating, smoking, or drinking is permitted near the gorillas.
- + No flash photography is permitted.



08

Packing Guide

General Checklist | Gorilla Trekking

Travel Documents

- Passport + correct visas
- Any vaccination certificates required
- Emergency phone numbers
- Phone card + international access numbers
- African travel insurance policy with emergency evacuation
- Extra passport photos
- Copy of ID document
- Copy of bank cards and international access numbers
- A copy of your itinerary
- Negative PCR test certificate



- Copy of prescribed medicines
- Copy of passport + visas + air ticket

Gadgets

- Binoculars
- Camera equipment
- Camera lenses
- Extra batteries for camera
- Battery charger
- Tripod/beanbag
- Small flashlight/headlamp
- Portable charging station

Accoutrements

- Personal toiletries
- Malaria tablets
- Sunscreen + lip balm with SPF 30+
- Moisturizer
- Antihistamine cream
- Insect repellent
- Tissues/ pre-moistened wipes
- Basic first aid kit: aspirin, bandages, antidiarrhoeal, antiseptic cream



Extras

- Credit cards + cash in small denominations for tipping
- Notepad + pen
- A laundry bag
- Durable and sealable waterproof bags to keep important documents and electronics protected from water and dust

Gorilla trekking packing list

- + Travelers planning to go on a gorilla trekking expedition should pack lightly, but appropriately for the trekking conditions. We recommend wearing and/or bringing the following items in a small day pack on your trek:
 - Long sleeve and lightweight t-shirt and trousers to protect from thorny vegetation and insects
 - Long socks and appropriate hiking boots that are suitable for muddy slopes. Suggest to be wrapped in waterproof material.
 - Gloves
 - Lightweight trekking poles that you can easily collapse small enough to fit into a backpack
 - Sunglasses
 - At least 1-litre of potable water in a reusable hard plastic container
 - Sunscreen
 - Lip balm
 - Aspirin, or your mild pain reliever of choice



Gorilla trekking packing list (continued)

- Band-aids
- A small hand towel or bandana
- Tissues or wet wipes
- Your camera along with an extra battery and storage card
- A portable charger to charge your camera or cell phone (with sound and notifications turned off at all times)
- Binoculars
- Insect repellent
- Gaiters
- 2 facemasks and hand sanitizer
- Rain gear / waterproof jacket with a hood
- Energy snacks if so desired
- Light backpack which can carry the above

Any questions?

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