

# UGANDA WILDLIFE, CULTURE AND ADVENTURE HOLIDAY

## ITINERARY DETAILS

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### **Day 1 Arrival**

Upon arrival, you will be picked from the airport by your driver guide. Have a short briefing, refresh and have dinner.

### **Overnight: Serena Hotel Kampala for 2nights**

### **Day 2 Kampala City tour**

Have a whole day on a relaxed tour of the City. Today you can do shopping, exchange your currency, and take a short tour of Kampala city. We may decide to visit some sites and places like Kasubi Tombs, Uganda Museum, Nakasero Green Market and Uganda Martyrs Shrine Namugongo, depending on our interests and the time we shall have on this day.

Optional activities today are white water rafting, quad biking, horseback riding and/or bungee jumping in Jinja along the source of the Nile.

Today evening, we shall spend our time at the Multi-award winning Ndere Troupe Centre for a cultural performance and dance.

Ndere Troupe performs a repertoire of all authentic Ugandan and the entire African traditional dances and songs accompanied by various indigenous percussive, stringed and wind instruments. The troupe fuses traditional dance, music, and drama with modern arts by blending traditional instruments with modern ones to produce exhilarating sounds. We shall be ushered this evening to the only true African amphi- theatre or the joy Arena, built on the African philosophy of storytelling around a bon fire in a circular kraal setting, and gaze at these talented Africans wiggle their waists for the rest of our evening. We have dinner here.

### **Day 3 Travel to Murchison Falls National Park**

Today we start early after breakfast, pack a day's break snack, check out the hotel and drive to Murchison Falls National Park. We shall do a short walk to the top of the falls upon arrival before crossing the Nile to our lodge for lunch and check in. At the top of the falls, we experience the magic power of the Nile River at a point where the river drops downstream 40m below through a narrow gap of about 7metres!

After lunch, we shall have a short siesta and thereafter go for a game drive on the northern part of the park.

Murchison falls NP is Uganda's largest National Conservation area and it is famous for its big game, spectacular scenery and the falls for which the park was named. Abundant Hippos, Crocodiles, Elephant, Buffalo, Uganda Kob and Waterbuck can be seen along with occasional Lions, Leopard and Patas Monkeys.

### **Overnight: Para Safari Lodge for 2nights**

### **Day 4 Murchison Falls National Park**

Today we spend the whole morning on a game drive once again in the Northern bank of the park. We shall focus our efforts along the delta track looking for cats and other wildlife. Lunch will at the lodge. The game drive takes you through the beautiful sceneries of open savanna dotted with tall borassus palms and acacia woodland inhabiting

herds of buffalo, elephant, giraffes, Uganda Kob, Oribi, Jackson's hartebeest, waterbuck, bushbuck, occasional lion, and the elusive Leopard which is normally observed in the evenings; etc.

In the afternoon, we jump on a boat for a cruise Nile River up to the bottom of the falls. The boat ride along the Nile River is a very rewarding experience. There are several congregations of buffalo, elephant, hippo and the gigantic Nile crocodiles that throng the banks. Several waterfowls both migratory and resident are abundant here. You will stop at a point where the Nile waters drop to the main pool through a 7 meters gap!

### **Overnight: Para Safari Lodge**

### **Day 5 Travel to Fort Portal Area**

Today we shall spend most of our day travelling to Fort-portal. We shall check out Para lodge, have breakfast and carry picnic lunch. We drive through the Rift Valley Escarpment. This is a very scenic drive taking you through the picturesque landscapes characterized by valleys and cliffs; towards Fort Portal, we travel past green tea plantations, rolling hills and valleys and crater lakes. We shall be having numerous stops for stretching legs, nature photography and sightseeing the countryside.

### **Overnight: Ndali Lodge for 3nights**

### **Day 6 Explore Fort-Portal Area**

Here we spend our whole morning touring the stalactites and stalagmites of the Nyakasura Hills and craters; here, we shall do a little bit of hiking along Lake Kigere, pay a short visit to the Early Man Footmarks on the Kigere Rock, and then the royal palace of the King of Toro Kingdom, the youngest ever crowned king in the whole world. We hope to have time to visit the Karambi tombs - the traditional burial grounds for the ancient fallen kings of the Toro Kingdom, before returning to our lodge for an evening relaxation.

### **Day 7 Chimp Tracking in Kibale forest National Park**

We start very early, after an early morning breakfast, carry our lunch boxes and head to the Kanyanchu Tourism centre for briefing as we prepare for today's activity.

This park is also famous for hosting the highest number primates in Uganda (13 primate species) including Chimps, the Beautiful I' Hoest Monkey, black and white colobus monkeys, blue monkey etc.

The movement of the chimps depends upon the availability of food and hopefully they won't be too far away! As we tour one of the chimps groups, we shall witness the behavioral characteristics of these living closest cousins to human beings demonstrating a distrustful fleeting look at our sudden interruptive visit into their private world, which is comforted by the chuckling made by the knowledgeable tracker guides. The noisy giant male uses loud vocalizations and drumming on large tree buttresses as a means of communicating with the other members of their group.

If we are successful early enough today, we shall take an afternoon walk to the Bigodi Wetland. Bigodi Wetland Sanctuary is a community owned and managed nature reserve. A 4km trail has been created in the wetland adjacent to the forest. The habitat here consists of a swamp surrounded by low, scrubby secondary forest and cultivation. The walk is most interesting for bird enthusiasts; Occasional encounters are chimps; black and white colobus and red-tailed monkeys are also residents here.

We return to our lodge later in the evening for refreshment dinner and overnight stay.

### **Day 8 Travel to Queen Elizabeth National Park**

We have a very early start, check out the lodge and travel to Queen Elizabeth national park. We spend the whole morning along the Kasenyi trail famous for the Lions.

This park is Africa's most diverse national conservation due to the rich habitats and the associated wildlife. We are likely to meet herds of elephant, buffalo, warthog, Uganda kob, bushbuck, waterbuck and many more.

We shall check in Mweya safari lodge this afternoon, have lunch and thereafter go for a Launch Cruise along the famous Kazinga Channel.

The Kazinga Channel is a natural narrow neck of water connecting lakes George and Edward. "Plying these waters with comfort, elegance and attentive service, affording superb wildlife viewing from your observation deck, is reassuring!" It is one of the migratory stopovers in the region attracting both resident and Palearctic visitors like spoonbills, waders, gulls and terns and sometimes flamingos. Along the banks of the channel, we shall find giant crocodiles basking in the sun alongside other big herds of elephant, buffalo, giant forest hog, and hippos. This activity takes about two hours.

### **Overnight: Mweya Safari Lodge**

### **Day 9 Queen Elizabeth National Park**

Today, we shall begin with a tour to one of the salt mining lakes and later do the "crater lake drive" up to the Queen's Pavilion. We shall visit the Lake Katwe Salt Mining and fishing village and learn how the local people here survive entirely on mining activities as well as fishing by using rudimentary methods of extracting salt.

The Queen's Pavilion stands nearby at the northern entrance to the Crater Lake drive of Queen Elizabeth National Park. Both the Crater Lake drive and the Queen's Pavilion guarantee an excellent panoramic view of some of the parks explosion craters, some filled with lovely lakes, and the snow-capped Rwenzori Mountain Ranges across the rift valley flow. The Queen's Pavilion, historically, hosted H.M. Queen Elizabeth II in 1954 as a temporary shelter and later the Duke of Edinburgh in 2007

### **Day 10 Transfer to Bunyaruguru Crater Lake zone**

We shall check out Mweya Safari Lodge and drive slowly through the park as we look at wildlife around us; branch off to the captivating Kyambura Gorge on our way. This is on the rift valley escarpment portraying one of the wonders of the volcanic activities in the ancient ages. Our ultimate destination today will be the Bunyaruguru area, characterised by quaint green farms and villages, whose charming residents are descendants of Buganda immigrants. The area is carved out of dense, tropical rainforests and hilly landscapes of the fertile volcanic soils dotted with numerous cup-shaped, serpentine-shaped and crater lakes, glazed in different colours including blue, green, black and transparent. These dazzling Bunyaruguru craters embrace tracts of massive volcanic upheavals with inferred Holocene eruptions that occurred about 5000 years ago. Today we shall do crater lakes exploration. We try all our efforts to drive and reach some of the numerous craters in this area.

### **Overnight: Twin lakes Safari Lodge**

### **Day 11 Bunyaruguru Area**

Today we shall spend most of our day at the Nyanz'Ibiri Cultural Village.

We shall take a village walk through the local gardens, homesteads; visit the local museum, the vegetable garden, the cave and the traditional fishpond.

Optional activity: Take part in preparing our dinner! We shall harvest food in the garden, collect fuel wood, process the locally stored grain, do the cooking and any other activities that come along with the process. Dinner will be a local meal.

### **Day 12 Travel to Kisoro - Mgahinga**

We start early for the journey that will likely take us the whole day. The drive from Ntungamo to Kabale takes us through a perch work of scenic Ugandan banana farmlands, papyrus wetlands, isolated pockets of eucalyptus woodland and the rocky grazing lands of Ankole. As we drive from Kabale to Kisoro, we travel on a winding smooth road through undulating beautiful valleys and hills, rural settlements and terraced gardens on the hills providing one of the best scenic drives in Africa before soaring inland on a muddy murrum road to the park – just 30minutes drive from Kisoro town. When the skies are clear, we shall have magnificent views of the volcanic peaks of the great virungas on the border of Uganda, Rwanda, and the D.R Congo. Upon arrival, we shall check in our lodge and have a relaxed evening on a camp fire.

### **Overnight: Volcanoes Mount Gahinga Lodge**

### **Day 13 Whole day on Batwa trail in Mgahinga**

Today we start very early and head for a hike through the forest to the Garama Cave. Here we shall spend the whole day on the Batwa trail that runs across the lower slopes of the Muhavura and Gahinga volcanoes in Mgahinga Gorilla National Park contemplating on the life of the local Pygmy - Batwa culture.

Batwa Trail is far from being a conventional nature walk; with the help of Batwa guides, you will see the forest as a larder, pharmacy, builder's yard, tool kit and above all, a home. Along the trail, one can harvest plants for medicine and food, check hives for wild honey or listen to the legends and learn about Batwa traditions!

The Batwa (Pygmies), comprising of 0.5% of the population around the forest, are fairly a romance between the traditional human and the modern one. Originally hunter gatherers and forest inhabitants, most of them have been resettled and are famed for their melodious music and rhythmic dance and their historic tales.

Interacting with the marginalised tribal group, Batwa – pygmies, as they tell stories of their past, is a memorable experience!

### **Day 14 Travel to Lake Mburo National Park**

Today we check out our camp after breakfast and travel to Lake Mburo National park via Lake Bunyonyi route.

Located 1962m above sea level and surrounded by steep sided heavily cultivated hills of Kabale, Lake Bunyonyi (literary meaning 'the place of many little birds') is a beautiful place with 29 islands dotting the centre of the lake and believed to be the 2nd deepest lake in Africa after Tanzania's Lake Tanganyika. The spectacular scenery makes the place ideal for relaxation and refreshing oneself.

We shall have lunch in Mabara town and continue to Lake Mburo National park for an evening game drive. If time allows, we shall visit the Igongo Cultural Centre for thorough contemplation of the Banyankole culture.

### **Overnight: Mihingo Lodge**

### **Day 15 Lake Mburo National Park**

We shall spend this whole day in the park.

Lake Mburo National Park is a combination of open water with an extensive marsh and wooded grassland comprising of flooded plains bordered with pockets of tropical lowland forests giving the park an oasis setting that greatly draws wildlife in big numbers. The fresh water body attracts big congregations of hippos, crocodiles and shoreline birds. The wooded grassland section of the park is endowed with large herds of elephants, buffalo and a large numbers of antelopes like zebra, eland, impala, waterbuck, bushbuck, and many others. The entire Lake Mburo Park is a place of breathtaking and magical beauty; "a place where the vision of a deep red sunset silhouetting the thorny acacia scrub along the extensive marshy area, brings the perfect end to a day on safari"

### **Day 16 Travel back to Kampala**

**Overnight: Serena Hotel Kampala**

**Day 17 Departure**

**~ End of tour ~**

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