

Face of Africa

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 Face of Africa

Depart Kigali	Finish Nairobi	Price	Local Payment (US\$)
25 Oct 2025	16 Nov 2025	£2160	US\$460
30 Nov 2025	22 Dec 2025	£2160	US\$460
25 Jan 2026	16 Feb 2026	£2160	US\$460

Countries visited: Rwanda • Uganda • Kenya

Highlights: Batwa (pygmy) village • Orphanage visit • Dian Fossey's Grave • Golden monkey trek • Mountain gorilla trek • Genocide Memorial and Museum Park • Queen Elizabeth National Park • Chimpanzee trek • Ziwa Rhino Sanctuary • Volunteer in a village school • Kayaking • Whitewater Rafting on the White Nile • Nakuru National Park • Lake Naivasha • Hells Gate National Park • Crater Lake Sanctuary • Maasai village visit incl. bush walk • Masai Mara for two nights.

Safari structure: This trip gives you the opportunity to see some of East Africa's best highlights - the Masai Mara for 2 days, a trek to the endangered mountain gorilla, to visit the source of the Nile and head out white water rafting, stay at a Masai camp, visit Nakuru National Park and Hells Gate. The safaris are made up of components and on this group trip you might also meet travellers with more or less time who will travel with you for longer or for shorter sections of the route. Please feel free to contact us for further details.

Index

Please click on any of these section names to go straight there.

Safari departure dates and details

Flights

Page 1

Page 2

Insurance	Page 2
Visa requirements	Page 3
Pre and post safari information	Page 4
Health and immunisation	Page 7
Detailed itinerary	Page 9
Gorilla permits	Page 10
Money and budgeting	Page 11
Packing - what to bring, packing advice incl. electrical equipment	Page 17
Life on your big yellow truck (Includes safety and security, trading and donating, general code of conduct, keeping in touch)	Page 19
The migration	Page 23
Wildlife chart	Page 24
Reading list	Page 25

Flights

When arranging your flights we suggest that you arrive in Kigali, Rwanda, by mid-morning on the day this overland safari begins. There is an international airport in Kigali.

Return flights should be arranged to depart no earlier than the day after your safari is scheduled to end.

For this tour in all likelihood you should look at open jaw or multicity tickets flying into Kigali and out of Nairobi. Alternatively you might consider Nairobi return flights with an add on flight to Kigali for the start.

Several airlines fly into Kigali and out of Nairobi including Kenya Airways, KLM/Air France, and Ethiopian. There are many airlines that fly Nairobi return including Turkish, Ethiopian and Kenyan Airways.

Kenya Airways, Air Uganda and Air Rwanda fly between Nairobi and Kigali.

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.

We can assist you with a flight quote if you would like. 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

[Back to Index](#)

Your safety and enjoyment when travelling 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.absolutesafrica.com/Insurance

Do note that 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 white water 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 travelling 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 the Face of Africa

[Back to Index](#)

Your passport needs to be valid for at least 6 months after your trip finishes. Ensure also that you have adequate pages in your passport for each country that you visit. As a guide then, for the Face of Africa you will want to have a minimum of 4 blank pages (sides).

If you have dual nationality you can only use one passport for the entire trip, but bringing both passports is a wise back-up strategy. You can find more information in the different country listings on the FCO's website (www.fco.gov.uk) under 'entry requirements'. Do be aware it can be illegal to travel in Africa on two passports.

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 Kenya.

If you do not need to pay for a visa to Rwanda, you should then apply for the East Africa Tourist visa to Uganda ahead of time and this can be done online. This is 100 USD. This is the easiest option as it means you only need to apply online to one country ahead of time. The alternative is to buy a single entry Ugandan visa for 50 USD and then apply online ahead of time for the Kenyan ETA which is 30 USD and this will save you 20 USD.

Irish citizens do not require a visa for Uganda and so it is most cost effective to buy a single entry visa for Rwanda at the border for 30 USD and then apply online ahead of time for a Kenyan ETA (electronic travel authorisation) for 30 USD. For ease though, as above, you may prefer to purchase the East Africa Tourist visa on arrival in Rwanda.

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

To follow is an estimation of current visa requirements and their cost:

Passport	Rwanda	Uganda	Kenya	No. of Visas	Total Value US\$
Australian	-	\$100	-	1	\$100
New Zealand	-	\$100	-	1	\$100
South African	-	\$100	-	1	\$100
Canadian	-	\$100	-	1	\$100
American	\$100	-	-	1	\$100
British	-	\$100	-	1	\$100
German	\$100	-	-	1	\$100
Dutch	\$100	-	-	1	\$100
Irish	\$100	-	-	1	\$100
French	-	\$100	-	1	\$100

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 for ensuring your visa arrangements are adequate for your trip. For more information on visas check out www.projectvisa.com

Pre and post safari information

[Back to Index](#)

Joining us in Kigali

We meet on the afternoon of day 1 of the tour in central Kigali. We will confirm the meeting point closer to the time. If you arrive in the day prior to departure we recommend booking accommodation at Yambi Guesthouse or Pili Pili Boutique Hotel.

Departing Kigali

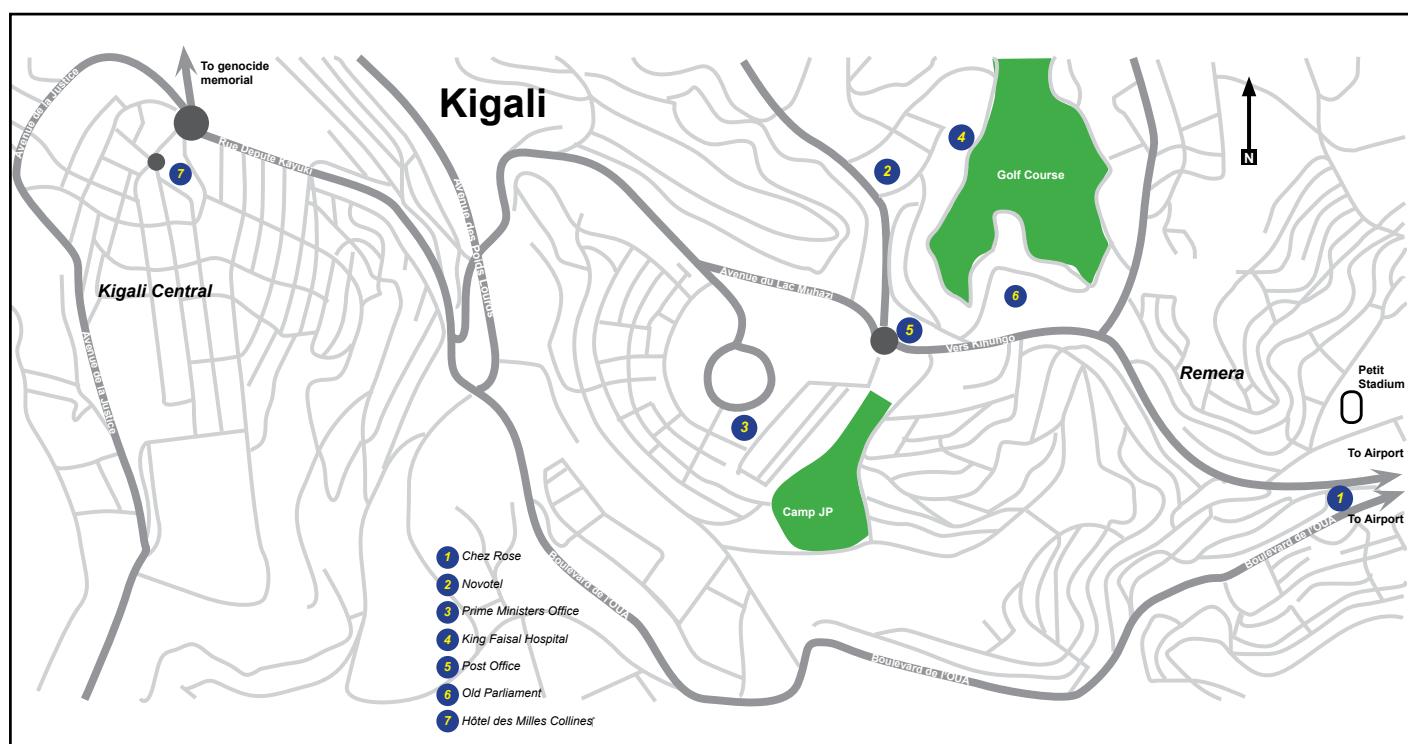
On Day One we usually meet by late afternoon at a campsite in central Kigali. The crew will aim to organise a meeting to go through all the basics you need to know about your safari, including health, hygiene, security and safety procedures. Please ensure you read the relevant sections in this dossier carefully. The crew will also collect the local payment, organise rosters and tent partners, show you how to put up your tent, 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, as well as any transfers you need. 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.



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. A booking voucher is issued upon receipt of final payment. It also has emergency contact details in the event you

need assistance in transit. Remember also if you require a visa to carry your entry facility if you haven't prepaid your visa.

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 from the centre of Kigali. The easiest way to get into town and to your pretour accommodation is to use a taxi.

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 = 1,450 Rwandan francs. (October 2025).

At the end of your safari

The Face of Africa safari finishes in Nairobi, Kenya. We have the last two days in the city and go out for dinner together and camp together the final night. Talk with your crew if you need a taxi booked for the your onward journey. We can book extra nights accommodation if required.

THE HERON HOTEL

Rooms have en suite and room service is available. There is an e-mail cafe as well as a swimming pool and a restaurant. The restaurant is open from 7.00 am for breakfast. There are also individual electronic safety deposit boxes in every room and this is inclusive in the price.

11,000 KES for a single en-suite room including breakfast

14,000 KES for a double en suite room or twin share en suite room including breakfast.

The Heron is payable on arrival in Kenyan Shillings or by credit card (Visa and MasterCard)

Cancellation penalties apply for 'no show' unless 24 hours notice is given. *Alternatively Wildebeest Eco Camp offers slightly cheaper accommodation.*

WILDEBEEST ECO CAMP

Wildebeest is a permanent-tented camp with dorms, budget rooms and safari tents with en suite, based in peaceful gardens. Prices include a simple breakfast.

Wildebeest is payable in KES, Euros or USD, or by credit card. Card payments attract a 5% charge.

The camp has a restaurant, bar, internet and lockers in the dorms. Breakfast is served from 7.00am. Showers are usually hot.

Prices for the Wildebeest Camp are:

Dorm	40 USD
Single Garden Tent	56 USD
Double Garden Tent	88 USD
Single Cottage Room	88 USD
Double Cottage Room	120 USD
Single En-suite Garden Tent	104 USD
Double En-suite Garden Tent	136 USD

All prices are inclusive of breakfast.

Wildebeest Eco Camp require 30 days notice to cancel a booking. All bookings cancelled within one month of arrival will be subject to a 100% cancellation fee.

Please note that all prices quoted in £'s are an approximation. Prices can vary depending on the exchange rate on the day.

Other options to consider with your overland safari

Climb Kilimanjaro

We offer a variety of Kilimanjaro Treks to trek to the 'roof of Africa', Kilimanjaro, along the most popular and the more obscure routes using experienced local guides. For further details please contact us. Kilimanjaro is a day's journey from Nairobi.

Beach Stays on the Kenyan Coast

Arrive a few days early to unwind on the white beaches of the Kenyan coast. Prices from U\$22pppn for stays in simple beach tree huts. Please contact us for further details.

Extend your tour

This tour links with five other tours heading south from 5 days to 53 days to Cape Town:

5 day safari with game drives in the Serengeti and Ngorongoro Crater

11 day Maasai and Migration safari to Zanzibar > Gorillas to Zanzibar

31 day African Adventurer to Victoria Falls

37 day Southern Cross safari to Johannesburg

54 day Southern Safari to Cape Town > Gorillas to Cape Town

We also offer some fantastic combo prices, so do talk to us.

DAY TRIPS AVAILABLE IN NAIROBI

If you wish we can arrange a day trip to take in some of the sights of Nairobi.

Health and immunisation

[Back to Index](#)

Prior to departure it is essential that you contact a specialist travel medical clinic such as Nomads Traveller Store and Medical Centre in London or a similar professional travel medical company to get 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. Travelling 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 who specialises in travel medicine before you depart to discuss where you will be travelling 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 which 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

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 only a guide!)

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?” section on page 15.

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.
- Ensure you carry enough DEET with you to Africa. It is not easy to get hold of mosquito repellent once on the road.
- Wear long sleeved and long legged lightweight clothing in light colours as well as socks.
- Always sleep under a mosquito net or in a secure tent with all zips zipped up.
- 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.

You are advised also that the waterborne bilharzia parasite is present in many bodies of fresh water in

Africa including sections of Lake Victoria. Bilharzia can be serious. Once diagnosed it is treatable but of course it is best to avoid getting infected. We recommend that, on your return home, you have a medical check-up, including a blood test particularly to check for bilharzia.

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.

Face of Africa itinerary

[Back to Index](#)

Days 1 - 2: Kigali to Musanze

We meet up in Kigali in the afternoon of day one where we will camp the night. Your crew will also arrange a Pre-departure Meeting.

Kigali, with its lush hillsides, flowering trees, winding boulevards and bustling streets, is arguably one of the most attractive capital cities in Africa. On day 2 there is time to visit some of the museums and reflect upon the genocide of 1994.

In a span of 100 days, an estimated one million Tutsis and moderate Hutus were systematically butchered by the Interahamwe army. The Kigali Genocide Memorial honours the estimated 250,000 people buried here in mass graves and also has an excellent exhibition that tries to explain how the 1994 genocide unfolded.

We can perhaps visit some other memorial sites before we get on the road, your first experience of travelling on the overland truck, making our way through mountainous terrain dotted with tea plantations. It is clear why Rwanda is known as the “Land of a Thousand Hills.” This evening we spend the night in Musanze, a small town near the Uganda border.

Distance, day 2: 115 kms

Est. Drive Time, day 2: 3 hours

Meals: X1 Breakfast, X2 Dinners (contribution to a restaurant meal in Kigali)

Optional excursions: Visit to the Genocide museum and other memorial sites

Days 3 - 4: Musanze to Kisoro, Uganda

Here at our campsite, you can try your hand at banana beer making and basket weaving. There is also the chance to do a cycling or walking tour as well as time to visit Musanze town and the Dian Fossey museum.

For those that have a deeper interest, there is the option to head off on the steep trek to visit Dian Fossey's grave, the American primatologist and conservationist who undertook an intensive study of the species and spent her life working for their survival. Her murder remains shrouded in mystery.

We move on to Kisoro, Uganda, to stay at a simple local hotel where we spend the next two nights, our base while we trek the endangered mountain gorilla.

Distance, Day 4: 51 kms

Est. Drive Time, Day 4: 3 hours (depending on the border)

Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X2 Dinners

Optional excursions: Banana beer making, basket weaving, hike or cycling tour, visit to Dian Fossey's grave. Coffee tour or a Batwa (Pygmy) village visit or Lake Mutande.

Notes: If you wish to trek the gorillas in Rwanda please let us know at the earliest prior to booking. For those wishing to visit Dian Fossey's grave please let us know with good notice before the tour.

Day 5 - Kisoro

At altitudes of up to 3,500 feet, gorilla trekking through dense vegetation on the volcanic slopes of the Virungas is one of the trip's high points. The gorillas are magic to visit. Herbivores, who munch the day away, when they are not playing or sleeping, they live in family groups under the charge of an older dominant male. Known as the silverback, this adult male can weigh up to 350 lbs. Despite their size, the gorillas are shy, gentle and sensitive creatures, in great danger of extinction. There are several other excursions on offer here as well apart from the trek. For another view of the forest head out to trek a troupe of golden monkeys in the lower reaches of the forest. The golden monkey is a sub species of the blue monkey and is named for its vibrant colouring. A Pygmy dance troupe may be invited to entertain with some traditional drumming.

Distance: 0 kms

Est. Drive Time: 0 hours

Meals: X1 Breakfast, X1 Dinner

Optional excursions: Mountain gorilla trek, Bwindi Impenetrable Forest (Uganda). Golden monkeys trek or orphanage visit. Coffee tour. Lake Mutande.

Day 6: Kisoro to Kalinzu

We have an early start to drive through to stay by the hillside tropical forest of Kalinzu on the edge of the Rift Valley and Queen Elizabeth National Park. Here we have the option to trek in lush forest to search for habituated chimpanzees. The park also has black and white colobus monkey and other monkey species.

Distance: 226 kms

Est. Drive Time: 9 hours including lunch stop

Meals: X1 Breakfasts, X1 Dinner

Optional excursion: Chimpanzee trek in Kalinzu Forest.

Days 7 - 8: Kalinzu Forest to Lake Mburo National Park

Heading on our journey, we camp beside Lake Mburo National Park, a picturesque small gem of a park, with forest fringed lakes hemmed in by rolling green hills. A morning game drive in the park as well as a boat cruise are included hoping for sightings of giraffe, impala, Burchell's zebra, topi, eland, waterbuck and reedbuck. Our safari takes us across savanna and wetland habitats, the park also boasting much birdlife. Crocodile and hippo inhabit the lakes. Evening game drives are also of offer

Distance, Day 7: 140 kms

Est. Drive Time, Day 7: 4 hours

Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X2 Dinners

Included wildlife activities: Morning game drive and boat trip, Lake Mburo National Park

Vehicle for game drives: 4x4 open safari vehicle

Optional excursion: Evening game drive

Days 9 - 10: Lake Mburo National Park to Ziwa Rhino Sanctuary

We continue through the lush Ugandan countryside heading towards the capital, Kampala. On the way we stop at a local drum and craft market, and at the Equator there is time for a photo shoot. Reaching the capital we get to banks, e-mail and can do some shopping.

The next day we travel to the Ziwa Rhino sanctuary, the only place in Uganda to see rhinos.

Here there is the option in the afternoon to go for a rhino trek on foot or do a boat trip in the park.

Distance over two days: 412 kms

Est. Drive Time, day 9: 6.5 hours incl.stops for lunch and photos at The Equator

Est. Drive Time, day 10: 6 hours

Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X2 Dinners

Included wildlife activity: Entry to Ziwa Rhino Sanctuary, Rhino trek

Optional excursions: Boat ride, bird or nature walk

Days 11 - 13: Ziwa to Jinja

We arrive at Jinja! The adventure capital of East Africa is at the source of the White Nile, and we camp on the banks of the river. Here we have a free day and can take advantage of the wide range of activities on offer: white water rafting, quad biking, horse riding, bungee jumping, plus a variety of boat and kayak trips on the Nile. On prior arrangements, help out in a local school or explore on a village walk.

Distance, Day 11: 225 kms

Est. Drive Time, Day 11: 9 hours

Meals: X1 Breakfast

Optional excursions: Whitewater rafting, bungee jump, kayaking, boat trips and cruises, incl. fishing trips, sups, quad biking, horse riding, mountain biking.

Day 14: Jinja to Eldoret, Kenya

We say goodbye to Uganda as we enter our third country, Kenya, and get ready for the wonderful wildlife activities on offer in this country. In Eldoret, look out for runners along the road as we drive through, as this is the training ground of many of Kenya's famous athletes.

Distance: 268 kms

Est. Drive Time: +/- 7.5 hours (depending on the border) incl. stops for lunch and shopping

Meals: X1 Breakfast, X1 Dinner

Days 15 - 16: Eldoret to Nakuru

From Eldoret we drive on to Nakuru, in the beautiful Kenyan Rift Valley, where we are based for two nights. At Lake Nakuru National Park we head out for a full day of game drives in small vehicles with a local guide.

Lake Nakuru, in the middle of the Park, is home to greater and lesser flamingo, which colour the lake pink, a stunning view from the look out point on the dramatic cliffs on one side of the lake. Nakuru is also home to lion, leopard, giraffe, hippo, rhino, warthog, hyena and so much more so keep your eyes peeled and cameras at the ready.

Distance: 169 kms

Est. Drive Time: 5 hours incl. stops for lunch and shopping

Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X2 Dinners

Included wildlife activity: Full day of game drives in Nakuru National Park.

Vehicle for game drives: 4x4 minivan with pop up roof

Days 17 - 18: Nakuru to Naivasha

Our next camp in Kenya is on the shores of Lake Naivasha. We have a day to relax, go on a cruise to spot the hippo that live in and around Lake Naivasha and visit Elsamere for high tea. Hiring a bike to explore Hell's Gate National Park is also popular.

We are in Maasai lands now and the traditional herdsmen can be seen throughout the region. Hell's Gate has a Maasai Centre based within the park, and as well dramatic gorges and ravines, remnants of past volcanic activity, that are well worth a look. Alternatively take a walk around the Green Crater Lake Sanctuary - both are great ways to stretch your legs!

Distance, Day 17: 70 kms

Est. Drive Time, Day 13: 3 hours incl. stop for shopping

Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X2 Dinners

Included wildlife activity: Hippo cruise Lake Naivasha

Optional excursions: Elsamere for high tea, cycling in Hells Gate National Park, guided walk to Green

Crater Lake.

Day 19: Naivasha to the Loita Hills

Today we are on the road heading for the Masai Mara reserve. We stop overnight at Loita Hills for a stay with the Masai.

This afternoon we will visit a women's village and local hot springs, see traditional dancing and go for a walk with the warriors to learn about their time in the bush and life style.

This evening we spend time with some of the warriors around the fire to find out more about their culture.

Distance: 154 kms

Est. Drive Time: 5 hours incl. stop for shopping

Meals: X1 Breakfast, X1 Dinner

Days 20 - 21: Loita Hills to Masai Mara

Up early, we head on to our last game park for the tour, the Masai Mara, where we have two days of game drives. The Mara is one of the natural wonders of the world and is perhaps best known for being part of the setting for the famous wildebeest migration, a mass movement of over 2 million wildebeest, zebra and Thomson's gazelle. The migration moves between the plains of the Serengeti in Tanzania and the Masai Mara in Kenya.

Regardless of the season there is always plenty to see in this world famous park with resident elephant, rhino, hippo, buffalo, eland, giraffe, warthog and crocodile, as well as much birdlife. On the months when the migration arrives any time from late June, the vast herds of wildebeest, zebra and Thomson's gazelle can be regularly found on the grassy plains as well.

Distance, Day 20: 60 kms

Est. Drive Time, Day 20: 2 hours

Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X2 Dinners

Included wildlife activity: X2 morning and X2 afternoon game drives

Vehicle for game drives: 4x4 Land cruiser with pop up roof

Optional excursion: Balloon safari

Days 22 - 23: The Masai Mara to Nairobi

Leaving the park, we travel to Nairobi, the capital of Kenya, stopping off at the Rift Valley lookout on the way.

The last day we visit the giraffe centre and elephant orphanage in the morning and the afternoon is free to explore the city.

That evening we have a final group dinner to say farewell.

Distance, Day 22: 300 kms

Est. Drive Time, Day 22: 6.5 hours to Nairobi incl. lunch stop and photo stops

Meals: X2 Breakfasts, X2 Dinners (incl. contribution to night out)

Included wildlife activities: The Giraffe Centre, Sheldrick's Elephant Orphanage

Optional excursions: Meal out at a restaurant

Please note 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.

Gorilla trekking

[Back to Index](#)

On your trip we travel to Kigali and from there to one of the gorilla parks for those who wish to trek the mountain gorillas. We book the gorilla permits for your safari ahead of time to visit either Rwanda's Parc

National des Volcans, where Dian Fossey worked with the gorillas, or alternatively Bwindi National Park, depending on availability.

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. Delays in procuring permits can have an impact on the itinerary so we need to buy permits for your safari well in advance.

If you wish to trek, do return payment as early as possible on receipt of your invoice. Details as to timing of payment will be sent to you upon booking.

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.

When working out the costs for your overland safari remember to budget for the following:

Before you go...

1. Your price
2. Your airfare
3. Immunisation and anti-malarials
4. Gorilla permit
5. Insurance
6. Equipment
7. Visas required prior to departure

Step off the plane in Africa with...

8. Spending money – This is very individual and often depends on how much you drink, shop and wish to upgrade. A suggested budget would be 330 - 430 USD
9. Local Payment - Current total 460 USD
10. Optional excursions - A traveller who wishes to do most optionals on the trip will spend an average of between 150 - 450 USD
11. Visas on the ground: Up to 100 USD
12. Pre and Post safari costs

Please note: You need to carry money with you out to Africa to cover Items 8 to 12 (i.e. for your spending money, local payment, optionals, visas on the ground 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?

We strongly recommend that you organise the money you want to take to Africa before you leave for your trip. Clients are currently organising their cash for their safari as follows:

USD cash

We are finding clients find it most convenient to take between USD 600 - 800 cash on this trip. Notes need to be dated 2013 onwards and be in good condition. This includes money for your local payment, your visa on the ground if needed, some optionals and occasionally to buy local currency when you can't get to a bank or forex bureau, and/or if you don't have a credit/debit card.

Pounds Sterling or Euro cash

You may also like to carry up to 250 GBP or EUR cash as well if your money is currently in sterling or euro. This can be useful to buy local currency when you can get to a bank or regular forex bureau. If you are not in sterling or euro consider carrying more USD cash.

When arranging your cash remember small denominations can be useful but the larger denominations will give a better exchange rate. You should also request that your notes are not torn, written on or damaged in any way.

Sterling is best carried as 20s and 50s to be used to buy local currency when you can get to a bank or forex bureau. Please note also that Scottish pound notes are not accepted.

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 70 GBP/EUR at Kigali airport when you arrive if your money is currently in sterling or euro. Otherwise change the equivalent in USD.

When you land in Kigali there is a bank open for international arrivals.

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

ATM access and Paying by Card

You can access ATMs and use a credit card on this trip.

Do be aware where ATM access is available you can usually only draw local currency which cannot be used for all your costs. Many of your costs such as the local payment, visas and some of the optionals can only be paid in USD cash. Please note as well that Visa is the preferred card to use for payments.

Travel cards and cash passports are not well known and not widely accepted so not recommended to bring.

Do note that ATMs are not always reliable as they can be out of money, broken or the power could be out so do not solely rely on ATMs.

In places like Jinja a lot of the optionals can also be paid for by card. Note there might be charges for this.

Other things to note in regards to organising your money for Africa

It is not often possible to obtain many of the relevant African currencies prior to going, and where it is possible the rate is usually poor.

Your crew will let you know where is best to change up into local currency as you enter each country. It is best not to organise any local currencies prior to arriving.

For your information the currencies you will meet are:

Rwanda - Rwandan francs

Uganda – Ugandan shillings

Kenya – Kenyan shillings

Your crew can advise you as to what you will need, where exchanges/banks are available etc. as you travel. You will need to consider as you travel what optionals you will wish to do as well as how much you'll require for your personal needs.

This trip is structured so that most of your costs are 'pay as you go' via the local payment, some optionals and your spending money. This allows you to control your budget and only pay for those things you wish to do. Overland trips have been costed this way for many years and for the following reasons: prices for some optionals can vary a lot month to month; some optionals are quite seasonal, such as specific game parks; different clients like to do different options; banking in Africa is quite difficult. By doing it in this way, you also know that your money is regularly going directly to local operators in Africa. Do remember also to carry what you need for before and after the safari on top of the above budget.

What we cover from the price and local payment

GAME DRIVES IN THREE OF AFRICA'S BIG GAME PARKS AS WELL AS OTHER WILDLIFE RESERVES AND HIGHLIGHTS Incl.

- Masai Mara, 2 nights
- Nakuru National Park
- Lake Mburo National Park
- Lake Naivasha
- Bujagali
- Ziwa Rhino Sanctuary
- Maasai village visit incl. bush walk
- Genocide Memorial
- Sheldrick's elephant orphanage
- Giraffe Centre
- Hippo Cruise

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 (x20) & dinner (x20) whilst travelling on the truck including some pre-prepared bbqs and local meals.
- Camping whilst travelling with the truck plus some simple hostels/hotels (x21 nights camping, with 2 nights in dorm accommodation in a lodge or similar).

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- Flights including taxes
- Optional excursions as listed
- Pre and post tour Add Ons as well as airport transfers and accommodation
- Lunch and drinks throughout, as well as breakfast and dinner when the truck parks up at Jinja.
- Other incidentals including for tips, internet use, upgrades from camping and the occasional cheap excursion such as local walks
- Visas
- Extra equipment including sleeping bag, torch and medical kit
- Personal travel insurance
- Vaccinations and anti malarials as required

Personal Spending Money

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.

The spending money is also need to spend on personal costs such as email, toiletries etc. It is a regularly updated weekly average that has been provided by the crew and recent clients. Some weeks you will spend more and other weeks less. The current recommendation to carry as personal spending money for this safari is 330 - 430 USD. Allow an extra 30 USD per week approximately if you think you might want to occasionally upgrade your accommodation to stay in chalets, which are available at some campsites.

For those who enjoy shopping or even browsing there are many different items to tempt you – wooden giraffes and batiks, kargas and kikois, beads and jewellery, to name just a few.

Regularly 'smallish' optional activities costing under 20 USD also arise, such as entry village walks. These also will be covered by this spending money.

Tipping: You may like to consider tips for good service, particularly at some of the main highlights such as after your gorilla trek. You may find that you want to organise these tips as a group or individually.

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

Crew tips are certainly not expected although the Absolute crew do work incredibly hard and often much of this work is done 'behind the scenes', before or after the group is up and about. A tip or small gift is always appreciated and is also a way to show your appreciation of their efforts if you have had an enjoyable trip.

Do budget carefully to ensure you have adequate spending money to cover all eventualities and enjoy all you wish to do once out in Africa, bearing in mind that it is very difficult to access money from overseas once you are on the trip. 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 with the exception of the gorilla permit, which are booked and paid for in advance in London if you wish to do these options.

Please contact us if you would like further information about any of these activities or excursions. Many of the optionals are payable in Africa in USD (cash). A few may be payable in local currencies. (Prices are given as a guide only as at October 2025).

RWANDA

Genocide Memorial audio guide (entry is free)	\$25 USD
Dian Fossey's Grave	\$75 USD

Transport to Dian Fossey's Grave (max 6 people)	\$100 USD/vehicle
Banana Beer Making (price dependent on numbers)	\$18 - \$43 USD
Basket Weaving (price dependent on numbers)	\$19 - \$48 USD
UGANDA	
<i>At the Gorillas</i>	
Transport to the gorilla trek start point, from	\$40 USD
Suggested tip for your gorilla guide	\$10 - \$15 USD
Orphanage visit transport	\$10 USD
Golden Monkeys entrance	\$100 USD
Transport to golden monkeys (shared cost)	\$100 USD
Batwa village visit	Currently unavailable
Sunset canoe trekking – Lake Mutande	\$25 USD
Coffee Tour	\$35 USD
Kalinzu Forest Chimpanzee trek	\$130 USD
<i>At Ziwa rhino sanctuary</i>	
Shoebill Canoe Trek	\$25 USD
Birding Tour	\$25 USD
Nature Walk	\$20 USD
<i>Jinja and the White Nile</i>	
Full Day Grade 5 or Grade 3 Rafting– min 3 people	\$140 USD
Flat Water Tubing (incl. access to 25m water slide) – min 4 people	\$25 USD
White Water Tubing – min 4 people	\$45 USD
Nile Lunch Cruise including food & cash bar	\$30 USD
Nile Sunset Cruise including snacks & drinks	\$45 USD
Combos	
Raft/Bungee	\$240 USD
Sunset Cruise/Bungee	\$145 USD
Kayak The Nile	
Tandem kayaking	\$160 USD
Introduction to white water half day, from (\$120 – 1 person)	\$95 USD
Introduction to white water full day, from (\$150 – 1 person)	\$125 USD
Kayak Cruises	\$20 USD/hour
Kayak Freedom Rentals (2 people)	
2 hr Bujagali Tour	\$40 USD
Source of the Nile Tour, from (\$100 – 1 person)	\$75 USD
Nile SUP	
SUP Freedom Rentals, from	\$15 USD/hour
2 hr Bujagali Tour	\$40 USD
Half day white water guided trip, from (\$120 – 1 person)	\$95 USD
Full day white water guided trip, from (\$150 USD – 1 person)	\$125 USD
Quad Biking	
Kyabirwa Safari (1 hr)	\$55 USD
Explorer safari (2 hrs)	\$85 USD
River Nile Safari (3 hrs)	\$105 USD
Twilight Safari (3.5hrs including local meal)	\$95 USD
Bungee Uganda	\$115 USD

Mountain Biking (including bike & helmet)	
Freedom Rental, from	\$15 USD
Guided Tour of Bujagali Area (1-2 hours)	\$30 USD
Guided Tour to Bugembe Viewpoint (2-4 hrs)	\$45 USD

Horseback safaris:	
1 Hour	\$45 USD
1.5 Hours	\$55 USD
1.5 Hours Sunset	\$60 USD

KENYA

Hell's Gate National Park Half Day Cycle Trip	\$55 USD
Crater Lake Sanctuary Walk	\$50 USD
Elsamere for afternoon tea, depending on season	\$10 - \$12 USD
Hippo Boat Cruise -n add on guided walk	\$30 USD
Night out in Nairobi	\$30 USD

Further information in regards to optional excursions and spending money

Paying for excursions in Africa allows you to decide what you wish to do as you travel. Bear in mind that some activities such as whitewater rafting and game park visits can be seasonal. Please note also that prices constantly fluctuate in Africa, partly due to exchange rate fluctuation. The above figures are the very latest currently available to us at the time of writing. They can be taken as a reasonable guide only.

Lunch, drinks and souvenirs are also covered by your personal 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. Do be aware though that you are covering an enormous amount of territory on this trip and visiting many destinations, and consequently you may well spend a lot. Africa is not 'cheap', particularly when you add in game park entry fees and the cost of adventure sports such as whitewater rafting. Much of what you see, though, will afford you priceless memories and allow you to be actively involved to the limit. And remember that the money you spend also enables much-needed cash to go to local people and wildlife conservation.

If you choose not to do an optional activity, do bear in mind that this is your chance to catch up on washing, communications, read, relax and take time for yourself. During these periods the truck is usually parked up at a campsite where there are adequate facilities for you to be quite comfortable while you wait. 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.

There is a range of availability of things to do from destination to destination on the itinerary. At some places there is a lot of choice and either/or options. At other destinations, which are quieter, there are fewer choices if you do not opt for the listed optional excursion/s.

If you would like further details of any of the different optionals for the safari please do not hesitate to contact the office. It is a group participation safari so it is worthwhile thinking and planning ahead as to what you personally might like to do and to work out a realistic budget accordingly.

Please note also every safari is individual and it is not possible to detail all the potential optionals you will have a choice to do nor to predict new options that can arise. We will endeavour to provide another accurate price update for you just prior to departure. Please also note though that we have no control over local operators' prices or government taxes. Nor do we select operators only 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?

[Back to Index](#)

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. 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 that you wear against your skin.

Do remember that travelling light is always wise, 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 there are lockups in the vehicle for your valuables, pack and day bag. There is a locker under your seat for easy access to 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 (plus relevant visas) and air tickets
- Booking Voucher with Final Receipt - essential for immigration purposes
- Vaccination documentation, particularly for yellow fever injection
- Insurance policy
- USD cash for your optionals, local payment and spending money
- Credit card - preferably Visa

Other items to consider

- Student/YHA card
- PADI licence/diving ticket
- International driver's license
- Photocopies of main documents (keep separately)

Essential camping equipment

- Sleeping bag and sheet.
- Eating utensils, including cutlery, cup, plate/bowl
- Torch and batteries, a head torch being the most useful
- Mosquito repellent (DEET) 50% strength – 1x bottle
- Insect repellent spray
- High-factor sunblock cream
- Lip salve/Chap Stick
- 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, imodium, treatment for tummy bugs, stings/bites and sunburn and eyedrops. If you wear contact lenses you are advised to carry disposables.

Other items

- Pocketknife
- 1 litre water container (make sure it screws tight)
- Non plastic bags for wet items, rubbish and to keep items dust-free
- Towel and anti-bacterial soap
- Condoms
- 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 driving on the truck
- Cigarette lighter
- Concentrated travel washing liquid or washing powder, clothes line
- Emergency sewing kit
- Tweezers, nail scissors, nail brush.

In regards to toiletries, these are available to buy in Africa including shampoo, soap, toilet paper and

tampons. Please note though that they can be quite expensive and it can be time-consuming sourcing particular items so carry what you need if possible.

Ensure you bring any medications you might require with you with the script.

The two most common gynaecological problems that may occur whilst travelling in Africa are thrush and urinary tract infections. If you know you are prone to either of these it may pay to seek advice from your doctor and bring the necessary treatments. Loose fitting, cotton underwear and clothes are always wise.

Consider bringing

- Binoculars
- Pillows
- Wet Ones can be useful
- Books
- Writing paper, pens
- Mossie net impregnated with permethrin or similar if you want to sleep out of your tent at any time on safari, particularly in the warmer months (tents have in-built mossie nets at door and openings).

Electrical items

- 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
- 2 camera batteries, including a new one
- Polarising filter/lens hood for SLRs
- USB cable - to connect to internet cafes or for downloading
- Camcorder
- Mobile phone
 - Please remember if you set up international roaming the charges will be very high, even to receive calls
 - Sim cards can be purchased cheaply on the road
 - Remember you will need to have your phone unlocked prior to arriving in Africa so that other sim cards can be used with it

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. Long pants, sarongs and sandals are fine for these times
- Lightweight waterproof jacket and a fleece
- Swimming costume, sun hat, sunglasses, sandals
- Lightweight closed-in comfortable walking boots, shoes or trainers with a non-slip tread which give enough support and good traction. Please avoid shoes that get too heavy and hot, 'platforms', high heels or 'strappy' sandals
- Spare shoelaces.

We would encourage you to bring clothes that will wear well, as travelling in Africa is very hard on clothes. Conditions are rough and belongings do get dusty and can get damaged. Soft bush colours are most suitable. 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. Due to the bumpy road conditions women are advised to bring at least one sports bra. Women should dress 'modestly', respecting the sensibilities and attitudes of the people and countries they are visiting. Note as

well that G-String bikini bottoms can cause embarrassment and concern in some regions of southern Africa.

Be aware that camouflage clothing should be avoided.

Life on your big yellow truck

[Back to Index](#)

Day to day it is essential that everyone helps out with every routine chore. 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.

On safari do follow all instructions given by your safari leader as to how to use equipment, move around on, 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. Do also ensure you follow all instructions and signs provided by the local site and activity operators from destination to destination in regard to health, safety and security issues as we travel.

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. Please follow all instructions carefully in regard to border crossings. Most trucks will carry an information folder with information as to what is happening for the next few days. For the group to function well you do need to keep yourself informed about upcoming arrangements. Group meetings are essential to help the group work together.

On a day to day basis you are encouraged to look out for each other and be considerate of everyone else's needs and wishes. Your group will be made up of individuals all wanting to get the most out of their trip and each of you will have your own specific likes and dislikes, needs and wishes. These are group adventure camping safaris, not a 5-star holiday! A sense of humour and patience are essentials to pack! The group experience of seeing your safari through together on the truck is one of the really exciting and fun aspects of the trip. For some, the group experience and day to day life on the truck becomes a main highlight.

Often on the road you will be up early for breakfast. Wherever possible, you buy lunch in local markets, and you will then have opportunities to mix in with the local community and organise anything you need to including ensuring you have enough drinking water. Remember how important it is to keep up your fluid levels during the trip. 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 own water day to day. At most campsites the truck can easily access clean drinking water and you will find the water carried on the truck is often drinkable. Where this is not the case it is advisable to buy your own bottled water, which is readily available and most campsites now sell sealed bottled mineral water. When buying 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! Getting bogged is an essential optional extra... be prepared. And in general, be ready for some occasional long and dusty drives. These are based on ongoing and careful scheduling decisions to ensure you get to the current 'must see' places.

On the road there is always a lot to see but you may also 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

When you go on safari do remember 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 to 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 do reserve the right to change vehicles and/or crew on a safari at any time

without notifying passengers.

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

Camping

We supply large, durable three-person tents complete with ground sheet and separate waterproof fly sheet, ideal for Africa's varied conditions. They also have mossie 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 everyday routine will be to put up your own tent and be involved in all the daily chores including cooking and cleaning. For reasons of personal hygiene, we ask you to supply your own cup, plate and cutlery. You may wish to bring your own mossie net as well if you think you may wish to sleep out of your tent, particularly in the hotter months. It can become warm in the tents. Please note your net needs to be large enough to tuck in under your roll mat.

There is also the occasional opportunity to upgrade to a dorm-style chalet or simple hut accommodation with a bed if you think you might need a break from camping. This usually costs about 20 USD a night. Availability is very limited though, and you need to be considerate of everyone else on the truck. Do budget accordingly if you might wish to upgrade once or twice on route.

The facilities in the campsites we use vary a lot. In general you will find campsites that are clean, may give a little hot water, and can have working flush toilets. Be aware though that water pressure is often very weak and toilets are, in the main, long drop style through Tanzania. Please do not come on your African adventure camping safari expecting pristine bathroom facilities...

You will find that we may also camp in the bush a couple of times during this trip under the African night sky. Your truck is well equipped for these opportunities but be prepared to rough it a little on these nights and enjoy the chance to camp out in the wild.

Please remember when leaving a campsite that we do expect you to be diligent to leave places as you find them, if not better. In particular we insist that cigarette butts and toilet paper are not left behind when free camping... we are just visitors here in a continent with extraordinary challenges 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 bought 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 do 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 providing 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 are spaghetti and pasta dishes, stir fries, cottage pies, kebabs, curries, stews and casseroles, hamburgers or jacket potatoes, complemented with rice and/or salads. Breakfast is usually fruit, muesli and/or other cereals, toast, as well as some regular cooked breakfasts like eggs, bacon, baked beans or pancakes.

There are also a few pre-arranged meals booked ahead of time so the whole group can relax in the evenings in the knowledge that someone else is doing the cooking. This frees up the itinerary so you can enjoy a little more of Africa. We use these opportunities to enjoy a couple of traditional local meals on

safari. We also can contribute towards the final restaurant meal together in Nairobi.

Specialist diets

For vegetarians we do everything possible to ensure a good supply of veggies, salads, fruit, beans, pasta and rice. The daily diet leans towards vegetarian as fresh quality meat is not easily accessed every day. The staples are beans, pasta, 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 fruit, veggies and salads. Do be aware though how spoilt 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 and can 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 soy milk, 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

Traveling as a group does provide you with an added level of security, but remember you need to be constantly vigilant in regards to your own health and security as well as that of your group. Always look out for all members in your group.

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! 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.

Confidence tricksters are particularly common. Be wary of anyone with a hard luck story, asking for assistance, soliciting sponsorship (particularly educational) or people offering a deal to change money at favorable rates.

ATMs are becoming more accessible on the route, so you must also be wary of security in regards to crimes around ATMs. Be discreet when withdrawing cash and 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 that 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 travelling 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 group member'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 that 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, childrens clothing and stickers are always welcome in schools and orphanages. For more ideas feel free to 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

We are all ambassadors for our respective countries and your behaviour should reflect this. An open mind and a desire to have a positive impact are vital attitudes to carry with you. A sense of humour is also an essential to pack for any safari in Africa.

We ask that you look out for each other in your group. Your safari is a group participation trip. Ensure you do all you can so that your group works 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. Do please note that excessive noise, obscenities and inappropriate behaviour cannot be tolerated. It can embarrass other members of the group and seriously upset those around us particularly in campsites and restaurants. Be responsive, discreet and sensitive to the world around you.

Be particularly alert to the impact of excessive drinking as you travel. Alcohol abuse will put your health at risk, particularly in malarial zones. Please note: alcohol is not to be drunk on the trucks.

There is also a strict no-smoking rule on board the trucks, and no-smoking areas will be set up for 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 requests 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 trip or someone else's trip.

We won't leave a campsite until it is entirely clean. Your enthusiastic participation in 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 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 Absolute office and we will do all we can to assist.

E-mail - you should be able to access email in Kigali, Kampala and Nairobi. Please note internet speed is quite often very slow so be warned!

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 go 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 Absolute office should be contacted for further advice.

Language

English is understood in most East African Countries. Learning some Swahili will ensure a warm response from the locals.

The Great Migration

[Back to Index](#)

The Great Migration

The migration covers over 3,000 kilometers on the combined stage of the Serengeti and Masai Mara plains. It is a constant movement of 2.5 million animals and may well be the highlight of your Safari (depending on the season). Follow the link for our chart which will show you where you are most likely to see the migratory herds each month of the year: www.absoluteafrica.com/migration.lasso

For information on where you should be able to see which animal, as well as other useful facts, check out the chart on the following page.

Wildlife Chart

[Back to Index](#)

With such a huge variety of wildlife to see in Africa - we have put together a quick reference guide to help you plan your safari so you know what animals might be found in game parks in each country.



Group Name	Average Gestation (months)	Average Life Span (years)	Status	Diet	Distribution as at June 2010									
					Kenya	Uganda	Rwanda	Tanzania	Malawi	Zambia	Botswana	Namibia	South Africa	
Lion	3.7	15	VU	C	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
African Elephant	22	70	WU	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Cape Buffalo	11	17	LC	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Leopard	3	20	NT	C	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Rhinoceros	Black	6	35	CR	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rhinoceros	White	6	35	NT	H	Introduced	Reintroduced	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cheetah	3	11	WU	C	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Spotted Hyena	4	25	LC	O	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
African Wild/Painted Dog	2.5	11	EN	C	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Blue Wildebeest (Gnu)	8.5	20	LC	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Giraffe	15	28	LC	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Plains/Burchell's Zebra	12	28	LC	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Oryx/Gemsbok	8.5	20	LC	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sitatunga	7.5	19	LC	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Greater Kudu	9	7.5	LC	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Common Eland	9.2	17.5	LC	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Impala	6.5	12	LC	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Thomson's Gazelle	6	10.5	NT	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Gerenuk	7	20	NT	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Dik-dik	6	3.5	LC	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Warthog	5.7	15	LC	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mountain Gorilla	8.5	45	EN	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Chimpanzee	8	50	EN	O	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Baboon	6	25	LC	O	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Golden Monkey	5	19	EN	O	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Zanzibar Red Colobus Monkey	6	20	EN	O	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rock Hyrax/Dassie	7	12	LC	C	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Banded Mongoose	1.7	8	LC	O	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Common Genet	2.5	8	LC	O	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Meerkat	2.5	13	LC	O	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hippopotamus	7.9	50	WU	H	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Nile Crocodile	3*	45	LC	C	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Common Bottlenose Dolphin	12	20	LC	C	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Status: LC = Least Critical, NT = Near Threatened, VU = Vulnerable, CR = Critically Endangered, EN = Endangered, O = Omnivore

* Incubation not gestation

Reading List

[Back to Index](#)

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
Cry the Beloved Country	Alan Paton
The Weather in Africa	Martha Gellhorn
The Last King of Scotland	Giles Foden
Mukiwa: A White Boy in Africa	Peter Godwin
I Dreamed of Africa	Kuki Gallman
Songs to an African Sunset	Sekai Nzenza-Shand
The Scramble for Africa	Thomas Pakenham
The State of Africa	Martin Meredith
Blood River	Tim Butcher
Sowing the Mustard	Yoweri Museveni
In the Footsteps of Mr Kurtz	Michela Wrong
River God and The Seven Scrolls, and other titles	Wilbur Smith
A Sunday at the Pool in Kigali	Gill Courtemanche
Africa on a Shoestring	Geoff Crowther
Healthy Travel Africa	Isabelle Young, Lonely Planet 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

2nd October 2025