



Welcome to Uganda

Uganda, popularly known as the ‘The Pearl of Africa’ is located in East Africa and lies astride the equator. It is a land-locked country bordered by Kenya in the East, Tanzania in the South, Rwanda in the Southwest, Democratic Republic of Congo in the West and South Sudan in the North. The southern part of the country includes a substantial portion of Lake Victoria, shared with Kenya and Tanzania, situating the country in the African Great Lakes region. Uganda also lies within the Nile basin, and has a varied but generally equatorial climate. Uganda takes its name from the Buganda kingdom, which encompasses a large portion of the central and south of the country including the capital Kampala.

Uganda’s diverse landscape encompasses the snow-capped Rwenzori Mountains also known as Mountains of the Moon. Its abundant wildlife includes chimpanzees as well as rare birds. Remote Bwindi Impenetrable National Park is a renowned mountain gorilla sanctuary. Murchison Falls National Park in the northwest is known for its 43m-tall waterfall and wildlife such as Rothschild Giraffe. Queen Elizabeth National Park in the west for its popular tree climbing lions.

“Uganda is a fairy-tale. You climb up a railway instead of a beanstalk, and at the end there is a wonderful new world,” wrote Sir Winston Churchill, who visited the country during its years under British rule and who called it “The Pearl of Africa.” Indeed, Uganda embraces many ecosystems, from the tall volcanic mountains of the eastern and western frontiers to the densely forested swamps of the Albert Nile River and the rainforests of the country’s central plateau. The land is richly fertile, and Ugandan coffee has become both a mainstay of the agricultural economy and a favourite of connoisseurs around the world.

Nature

The ten National Parks include: Lake Mburo, Mgahinga Gorilla, Bwindi Impenetrable, Queen Elizabeth, Rwenzori Mountains, Kibale, Semuliki, Murchison Falls, Kidepo Valley, and Mount Elgon, National Parks. These parks display the best in East Africa.

Lake Mburo National Park is a compact gem, located conveniently close to the highway that connects Kampala to the parks of western Uganda. It is the smallest of Uganda's savannah national parks and underlain by ancient Precambrian metamorphic rocks which date back more than 500 million years. It's a home to over 350 bird species as well as Zebras, Impalas, Elands, Buffalos, Oribis, Defassa waterbuck, Leopard, Hippo, Hyena, Topi, Reedbuck, and Rothschild Giraffe among others. Together with 13 other lakes in the area, Lake Mburo forms part of a 50km-long wetland system linked by a swamp. Five of these lakes lie within the park's borders. Once covered by open savanna, this supports the healthy population of Buffalos, Warthog, Bush pig and hippopotamus. Lake Mburo National Park now contains much woodland as there are no elephants to tame the vegetation. In the western part of the park, the savanna is interspersed with rocky ridges and forested gorges while patches of papyrus swamp and narrow bands of lush riparian woodland line many lakes.

20% of the park's entrance fee is used to fund local community projects such as building clinics and schools.

Mgahinga Gorilla National Park protects the Ugandan slopes of the majestic Virungas, a range of freestanding volcanoes that rises to a maximum altitude of 4,507m/14,787ft on the border with Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). It is an alternative destination to Bwindi Impenetrable National Park for Mountain Gorilla Trekking. Other attractions include hikes to the summit of three of the park's volcanic peaks and golden monkey trekking.

Size: 33.7km² , making it Uganda's smallest National Park.

The park takes its name from "Gahinga" – the local word for the pile of volcanic stones cleared from farmland at the foot of the volcanoes.

The British administration declared the area a game sanctuary in 1930; it was gazetted as a National Park in 1991. Mgahinga has one habituated transboundary gorilla group.

The Batwa were self-sufficient – and visitors can see how, during a fascinating tour with a Batwa guide to learn the secrets of the forest. Mgahinga Gorilla National Park sits high in the clouds, at an altitude of between 2,227m and 4,127m. As its name suggests, it was created to protect the rare Mountain Gorillas that inhabit its dense forests, and it is also an important habitat for the endangered golden monkey. As well as being important for wildlife, the park also has a huge cultural significance, in particular for the indigenous people, the Batwa. This tribe of hunter-gatherers was the forest's "first people", and their ancient knowledge of its secrets remains unrivalled. Mgahinga's most striking features are its three conical, volcanic mountains, part of the spectacular Virunga Range that lies along the border region of Uganda, Congo, and Rwanda. Mgahinga forms part of the much larger Virunga Conservation Area (Virunga Massif) which includes adjacent parks in these countries. The volcanoes' slopes contain various ecosystems and are biologically diverse, and their peaks provide a striking backdrop to this gorgeous scenery. Mgahinga boasts of over 76 mammals which include Elephants, Giant forest Hog, Bush Pigs,

Bushbuck, Buffalos, Leopards, A bird checklist of over 180 species including the 14 Albertine Rift Endemics notably, Kivu ground Thrush, Rwenzori Turaco and Shelly's Crimsonwing.

Bwindi Impenetrable National Park is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and it is the best place in Uganda to track Mountain Gorillas. The park protects around 48% of the world's mountain gorilla population and has several habituated groups. The forest is also a bird-watcher's paradise with over 350 species recorded, including many Albertine Rift endemics.

The Mubare Gorilla group was the first to become available for tourism in Uganda in April 1993. Twenty-one groups are now habituated for tourism, and one group for research. These can be accessed in 4 trekking sectors i.e.; Buhoma, Ruhija, Rushaga and Nkuringo.

Spread over a series of steep ridges and valleys, **Bwindi is the source of five major rivers**, which flow into Lake Edward.

Bwindi Impenetrable National Park lies in southwestern Uganda on the edge of the Rift Valley. Its mist-covered hillsides are blanketed by one of Uganda's oldest and most biologically diverse rain forests, which dates back over 25,000 years and contains almost 400 plant species. More famously, this "impenetrable forest" also protects an estimated 500 mountain gorillas – roughly half of the world's population, including several habituated groups, which can be tracked.

This biologically diverse region also provides shelter to a further 120+ mammals, including several primate species such as baboons and chimpanzees, as well as elephants and antelopes. There are around 350+ bird species hosted in this forest, including 23 Albertine Rift endemics.

Bwindi is a home to at least 200 butterfly species including the eight Albertine rift endemics. Also a home to many reptiles.

The neighbouring villages of Buhoma, Ruhija, Rushaga and Nkuringo all have an impressive array of luxury lodges, rustic bandas, and budget campsites, as well as restaurants, craft stalls, and guiding services. Opportunities abound to discover the local Bakiga and Batwa cultures through performances, workshops, and village walks.

Queen Elizabeth National Park is understandably Uganda's most popular tourist destination. The park's diverse ecosystems, which include sprawling savanna, shady, humid forests, sparkling lakes, and fertile wetlands, make it the ideal habitat for a classic big game, making it a home to over 95 mammal species including ten primate species Chimpanzees among them, and over 600 species of birds. Queen Elizabeth National Park spans the equator line; monuments on either side of the road marking the exact spot where it crosses latitude 00.

The park was founded in 1952 as Kazinga National Park and renamed two years later to commemorate a visit by Queen Elizabeth II of England who opened it officially in 1954. The Katwe explosion craters mark the park's highest point at 1,350m above sea level, while the lowest point is at 910m, at Lake Edward.

Set against the backdrop of the jagged Rwenzori Mountains, the park's magnificent vistas include dozens of enormous craters carved dramatically into rolling green hills, panoramic views of the Kazinga Channel with its banks lined with Hippos, Buffalo, and Elephants, and the endless Ishasha plains, whose fig trees help Lions with shade, a hide away from Tse Tse flies and a vantage point for hunting.

As well as its outstanding wildlife attractions, Queen Elizabeth National Park has a fascinating cultural history. There are many opportunities for visitors to meet the local communities and enjoy storytelling, dance, music, and more. The gazettement of the park has ensured the conservation of its ecosystems, which in turn benefits the surrounding communities.

Most of Queen Elizabeth comprises open grassland and savannah which tends to be moist and woody in the west than the eastern part, Thorny Acacia dominates this savannah habitat with the high concentration of candelabra shrub a cactus that grows along the Kazinga Channel and on the Kasenyi plains.

Queen Elizabeth supports at least 95 species of mammals, it boasts of 20 carnivores like the Lion, Leopards, side striped jackal, Serval Cat and spotted hyena among others.

Uganda's Queen Elizabeth National Park is truly a Medley of Wonders!

Rwenzori Mountains National Park.

The explorer **Henry Stanley** placed the Rwenzori on the map on 24th May 1888. He labelled it 'Ruwenzori', a local name which he recorded as meaning "Rain-Maker" or "Cloud-King."

The oldest recorded person to reach Margherita Peak was **Ms. Beryl Park** aged 78 in 2010.

The Rwenzoris – the fabled Mountains of the Moon – lie in western Uganda along the UgandaCongo border. The equatorial snow peaks include the third highest point in Africa, while the lower slopes are blanketed in moorland, bamboo, and rich, moist montane forest. Huge tree heathers and colourful mosses are draped across the mountainside with giant lobelias and "everlasting flowers", creating an enchanting, fairy-tale scene.

Rwenzori Mountains National Park protects the highest parts of the 120km-long and 65km-wide Rwenzori mountain range. The national park hosts 70 mammals and over 217 bird species including 19 Albertine Rift endemics, as well as some of the world's rarest vegetation.

The Rwenzoris are a world-class hiking and mountaineering destination. A nine- to twelve-day trek will get skilled climbers to the summit of Margherita – the highest peak – though shorter, non-technical treks are possible to scale the surrounding peaks.

For those who prefer something a little less strenuous, neighbouring Bakonzo villages offer nature walks, homestead visits home cultural performances and accommodation, including home-cooked local cuisine.

Kibale National Park (formerly Kibale Forest NP) is the best place for Chimpanzee trekking in Uganda. Thirteen species of primates have been recorded, which is the highest number for any park in the World, and several monkey species can usually be seen on forest walks. Birds and butterflies are abundant.

Kibale's most popular activity is the Kanyanchu Primate Walk. Thirteen species can be sought, and a good variety of diurnal monkeys invariably encountered, but the stars of this trail are the Chimpanzees. Kanyanchu's chimps have been tracked since 1993 and the chances of locating them are excellent. Guided walks start at 8am and 2pm and last an average of three hours, depending on various factors.

The perennially popular primate walk provides the chance to observe chimpanzees in their natural habitat. Kanyanchu's groups are accustomed to human presence – some have been observed for over 25 years – and the chance of locating them is over 90%. Early arrival to allow for registration and briefing is recommended. Contact time with chimpanzees is limited to one hour; group size is limited to six visitors; participants must be aged 16 and above. Advance booking is essential.

This biologically diverse region also provides shelter to a further 120+ mammals, including several primate species such as baboons and chimpanzees, as well as elephants and antelopes. There are over 370 species of birds hosted in this forest. The Nahan's francolin, Green-breasted Pitta, White-naped Pigeon, Cassin's Spinetail, and Low-land Masked Apalis.

Green-breasted Pitta search has of recent become another popular activity. There is no bird watcher that visits Kibale and misses this activity.

Most prominent among Kibale's primates is the chimpanzee population surge of about 1,500 individuals, divided into at least a dozen different communities, four of which are habituated to humans. The Kanyantale community has been subject to daily tourist tracking since 1993. The Buraiga community is being tested as well and should be ready for trekking soon.

Semuliki Forest Reserve was created in 1932 and upgraded to **National Park** status in 1993.

It is the only tract of true lowland tropical forest in East Africa, hosting over 441 bird species and 53 mammals.

Large areas of this low-lying park may flood during the wet season, a brief reminder of the time when the entire valley lay at the bottom of a lake for seven million years.

Four distinct ethnic groups live near the park – Bwamba farmers live along the base of the Rwenzori while the Bakonzo cultivate the mountain slopes. Batuku cattle keepers inhabit the open plains and Batwa, traditionally hunter gathers, lived on the edge of the forest.

Semuliki National Park sprawls across the floor of the Semuliki Valley on the remote, western side of the Rwenzori. The Park is dominated by the easternmost extension of the great Ituri Forest of the Congo Basin. This is one of Africa's most ancient and bio-diverse forests; one of the few to survive the last ice age, 12-18,000 years ago.

The Semuliki Valley contains numerous features associated with central rather than eastern Africa. Grass Thatched huts are shaded by West African oil palms; the Semuliki River (which forms the international boundary) is a miniature version of the Congo River, the forest is home to numerous Central African wildlife species, and the local population includes a Batwa community that originated from the Ituri. As a result, this park provides a taste of Central Africa without having to leave Uganda.

While Semuliki's species have been accumulating for over 25,000 years, the park contains evidence of even older processes. Hot springs bubble up from the depths to demonstrate the powerful subterranean forces that have been shaping the rift valley during the last 14 million years.

This biologically diverse region also provides shelter to a further 120 mammals, including several primate species such as baboons and chimpanzees, as well as Elephants, Buffalos and Antelopes.

Hippos are common along the Semuliki river, as are crocodiles among other animals. More than 300 species of butterflies have been identified, including 46 species of forest swallowtail, together with 235 moth species. Over 450 bird species have been recorded in Semuliki National Park. The checklist includes 35 Guinea-Congo forest biome bird species like Spot-breasted Ibis, Hartlaub's Duck, Congo Serpent Eagle, Chestnut-flanked Goshawk, Red-thighed Sparrowhawk. Furthermore, another 12 species with extremely little distribution are found here and these are Congo Serpent Eagle, Nkulengu Rail, Grey-throated Rail, Yellow-throated Cuckoo, Blackthroated Coucal, Black Dwarf Hornbill, Red-billed Dwarf Hornbill, White-crested Hornbill, Black-Casqued Wattled Hornbill, Piping Hornbill, Red-rumped Hornbill, Grant's Bluebill.

Murchison Falls National Park, part of the greater Murchison Falls Conservation Area (MFCA), offers excellent wildlife viewing. The Victoria Nile bisects the park and boat trips to the spectacular Murchison Falls are a highlight – especially if you visit the top where the immense power of the falls is best appreciated. Murchison Falls became **one of Uganda's first national parks** in 1952.

At Murchison Falls, the Nile squeezes through an 8m wide gorge and plunges with a thunderous roar into the "Devil's Cauldron", creating a trademark rainbow.

The northern section of the park contains savanna and Borassus palms, acacia trees, and riverine woodland. The south is dominated by woodland and forest patches.

The 1951 film "**The African Queen**" starring Humphrey Bogart was filmed on Lake Albert and the Nile in Murchison Falls National Park.

Murchison Falls National Park lies at the northern end of the Albertine Rift Valley, where the sweeping Bunyoro escarpment tumbles into vast, palm-dotted savanna. First gazetted as a game reserve in 1926, it is Uganda's largest and oldest conservation area.

The park is bisected by the Victoria Nile, which plunges 45m over the remnant rift valley wall, creating the dramatic Murchison Falls, the center piece of the park and the final event in an 80km stretch of rapids. The mighty cascade drains the last of the river's energy, transforming it into a broad, placid stream that flows quietly across the rift valley floor into Lake Albert. This stretch of river provides one of Uganda's most remarkable wildlife spectacles. Regular visitors to the riverbanks include elephants, giraffes, buffaloes, Waterbuck, Bushbuck, and Baboon; while hippos, Nile crocodiles, and aquatic birds are permanent residents.

Murchison Falls is notably blessed with over 144 mammals, 556+ bird species, 51 reptiles, and 51 Amphibians. With a great number of African elephants, Murchison falls is impressive all year round. The aerial survey noted over 900 individuals and 1,330 and is at an increase. Historically Giraffes exclusively inhabit the northern sector of the park. Buffalo populations have spiked to over 10,000 while Uganda Kob have leaped to more than 35,000.

Notable visitors to the park include Winston Churchill, Theodore Roosevelt, Ernest Hemingway, and several British royals.

Kidepo Valley National Park is in the remote northeast corner of the country. The park has a true wilderness feel and is a great destination for the adventurous traveller. It has excellent wildlife viewing during the Dry season, featuring several species not encountered anywhere else in the country. The park

contains two rivers – Kidepo and Narus – which disappear in the dry season, leaving just pools for the wildlife.

The local communities around the park include pastoral Karamojong people, similar to the Masai of Kenya, and the IK, a hunter-gatherer tribe whose survival is threatened.

Kidepo Valley National Park lies in the rugged, semi-arid valleys between Uganda's borders with South Sudan in the north west and only 5km from the eastern border of Kenya, some 700km from Kampala. Gazetted as a national park in 1962, it has a profusion of big game and hosts over 77 mammal species.

Kidepo is Uganda's most isolated national park, but the few who make the long journey north through the wild frontier region of Karamoja would agree that it is also the most magnificent, for Kidepo ranks among Africa's finest wildernesses. From Apoka, in the heart of the park, a savannah landscape extends far beyond the gazetted area, towards horizons outlined by distant mountain ranges.

During the dry season, the only permanent water in the park is found in wetlands and remnant pools in the broad Narus Valley near Apoka. These seasonal oases, combined with the open, savannah terrain, make the Narus Valley the park's prime game viewing location especially with its dense populations of Lion, Buffalos, Elephant and many similar ungulates.

Kidepo's elephant population has surged from around 200 in the mid 1990's to between 650 and 1000 today. The African Buffalo population is now estimated at 10,000-15,000. The Rothschild Giraffe is very notable, breeding more than 50 individuals from the bottleneck of the mid 1990's population of three and supplemented several from translocation.

The bird checklist of over 476 species with the Common Ostrich, Secretary Bird, Northern Carmine Bee-eater, Little Green Bee-eater, Abyssinian Scimitarbill and many more colourful and visible species.

Mt. Elgon National Park This extinct volcano is one of Uganda's oldest physical features, first erupting around 24 million years ago.

Mt. Elgon was once **Africa's highest mountain**, far exceeding Kilimanjaro's current 5,895m. Millennia of erosion have reduced its height to 4,321m, relegating it to the 4th highest peak in East Africa and 8th on the continent.

Mt Elgon is **home to two tribes**, the Bagisu and the Sabiny, with the marginalized Ndorobos forced to dwell deep within the forest of Benet.

The Bagisu, also known as the BaMasaba, **consider Mount Elgon to be the embodiment of their founding father Masaba** and refer to the mountain by this name.

At 4,000km² Mt. Elgon has the largest volcanic base in the world. Located on the Uganda-Kenya border it is also the oldest and largest solitary, volcanic mountain in East Africa. Its vast form, 80km in diameter, rises more than 3,000m above the surrounding plains. The mountain's cool heights offer respite from the hot plains below, with the higher altitudes providing a refuge for flora and fauna.

Mount Elgon National Park is home to over 300 species of birds, including the endangered Lammergeyer. The higher slopes are protected by national parks in Uganda and Kenya, creating an extensive trans-boundary conservation area which has been declared a UNESCO Man & Biosphere Reserve.

A climb on Mt. Elgon's deserted moorlands unveils a magnificent and uncluttered wilderness without the summit-oriented approach common to many mountains: the ultimate goal on reaching the top of Mt. Elgon is not the final ascent to the 4321m Wagagai Peak, but the descent into the vast 40km² caldera.

The mammalian fauna of Mount Elgon is poorly known. The most common species, or at least the most visible to hikers, are Blue Monkeys and Black and white Colobus Monkey. A small number of Elephants are residents of forests and several montane moorland endemics.

Money and Costs Currency

Uganda Shillings (Shs or UGX)

Daily Costs

Budget: Less than \$90

- Dorm bed \$50
- Steamed rice and beef \$6
- Nile Beer \$1
- Kampala to Bwindi by bus \$20

Midrange: \$140 - \$425

- Hotel room with bathroom \$100
- 3 Course meal \$15
- Drink in a bar \$1
- Entebbe to Kihikihi flight \$275

Top End: More than \$330

- Room in lodge US\$150
- Two-course meal \$25
- Cocktail \$4
- 4WD with driver, \$150 per day

Bargaining

Bargaining is a way of life in Uganda and prices at craft stalls and in markets are definitely negotiable.

Money

ATMs are virtually everywhere, with almost all accepting Visa and Master card. Exchange bureaus are found in most major towns.

Exchange Rates

Australia A\$1 - 2,602

Canada C\$1 - 2,911

Euro zone €1 - 3,802

US US\$1 - 3,828= UK UK£1 - 2,405

Tipping

Tipping has become common everywhere although it is known to be a token of appreciation. (a tip of 10% to 15% should suffice). Bell boys or bag handlers at lodges will often expect a tip but will not ask for it and \$5 should make them happy.

Changing Money

The best currencies to bring are US dollars, UK pounds and Euros, in no order. Foreign exchange bureaus give lower exchange rates for small US\$ denominations, so pack your \$50 and \$100 notes. Note that: Notes produced before 2018 is not be accepted in Uganda.

Traveler's cheques

Traveler's cheques are no longer exchanged in Uganda.

Credit Cards

Midrange and top-end hotels tend to accept credit cards, but at a surcharge.

Travel with Children

Aside from the daily struggle of getting them to swallow malaria tablets, travel with children in Uganda needn't be difficult. There are plenty of child-friendly restaurants all over the country, offering high chairs, kids' menus and even small play areas. Many of the larger hotels if not all have a kids' pool and/or a playground and can provide cots or extra beds for children. Nappies are available in supermarkets and general stores throughout the country.

Gay & Lesbian Travelers

Homosexuality is illegal in Uganda and since it is usually not a public show, no one will get to know since same-sex people are allowed to share a room.

Travelers with Disabilities

There are few facilities for travelers that are differently abled in Uganda, though more upmarket chain hotels sometimes offer lifts and wheelchair-friendly rooms. However, we usually improvise and make it a success.

Arriving in Destination

Entebbe International Airport (Entebbe) You'll be met with numerous offers from taxi drivers after exiting customs. A taxi from the airport to the Entebbe town is \$15 and Kampala should cost no more than \$40.

Entry & Exit Formalities

You need a yellow-fever vaccination certificate to enter Uganda.

Customs Regulations

- You'll need a permit from the to bring/take out animals or animal products.
- You are not allowed to bring/take out plants or plant products.
- Residents and nonresidents arriving in Uganda are permitted to carry up to US\$10,000

Visas

Visas are required by everyone except (East African States) nationals. Visas upon arrival are no longer issued.

Further Information

We advise you apply for your visa online ahead of travelling and come with a printed approval. Single-entry three-month visas (US\$50) and multiple-entry east African visas (US\$100) are standard. You can get a visa extension at the Immigration Office in in Kampala.

Apply for your visa through this link. <https://visas.immigration.go.ug>

Planning Tips What to Take

- Malaria tablets
- Diarrhea medicine
- Insect repellent
- Hiking boots

- Lightweight walking trousers
- Binoculars
- First-aid kit
- Digital thermometer
- Sun tan lotion
- A cap/hat
- Rain gear

What to Wear

Dinners are usually formal, so you might feel more comfortable in a long skirt or trousers. Take long sleeves and trousers for the evening, as well as something warm for cold areas.

Pre-Departure Checklist

- Organize your tourist visa in advance by applying for in online. <https://visas.immigration.go.ug>
- Check that your passport has at least six months' validity after your intended departure date.
- Make sure you've had the relevant vaccinations.
- Start taking your antimalarial tablets.
- Book your accommodation and all that is needed to be booked. •

Carry a Visa/Master card with you to use at local ATMs and payments where possible.

Etiquette

Ugandans are an affable lot and greetings are of paramount importance. You will always be welcomed, greeted and asked how you are and it is expected you do the same in return.

- Humor is entrenched in Ugandan culture and always the best way to deal with tricky situations.

Brief Political History of Uganda Independence through the 1960s

Uganda gained her independence on October 9th 1962. Since 1894 she was a British protectorate that was put together from some very organized kingdoms and chieftaincies that inhabited the lake regions of central Africa. At independence, Dr. Milton Apollo Obote, also leader of the Uganda People's Congress (UPC) became the first Prime Minister and head of the government.

The Republican leaning UPC came into power through an "unholy" alliance with a promonarchy party called the Kabaka Yekka (KY), which had a stated aim of protecting the institution and power of the

kingdom of Buganda. The UPC had earlier on, one year before independence, lost the first ever general election to the Democratic Party(DP) and now needed the strategic partnership of allies to avoid another defeat.

In November 1963, Kabaka Mutesa II King of Buganda was elected ceremonial President of Uganda thus seemingly sealing the political alliance of UPC and KY. However, this marriage of political convenience was short lived since both Obote and Mutesa and their following had differing agendas.

In 1964, Obote championed a bill in Parliament providing for a referendum on the belonging of the counties of Buyaga, Bugangaizi and Buwekula then of Buganda but claimed by the neighbouring kingdom of Bunyoro. This culminated in two of the counties opting to secede from Buganda and revert back to the Bunyoro Kingdom. As Kabaka of Buganda and President of Uganda, Sir Edward Mutesa II, was placed in an invidious position of signing the two acts pertaining to the "lost counties". It was upon accusations of dereliction of duty by the President, not to mention other fabricated reasons, that Obote suspended the 1962 constitution on 22nd February 1966 and took over all powers of State, thus giving rise to what came to be known as the 1966 Crisis.

On 15 April 1966, in a Parliament surrounded by troops, Obote introduced without notice a new constitution to be voted upon that very day. It was passed without debate and the Prime Minister Informed Members of Parliament (MPs) that they would find their copies in their pigeonholes. This constitution came to be known as the Pigeonhole Constitution. Amongst other things, the federal constitutional status of kingdoms was abolished and the office of Prime Minister merged with that of the President and all executive powers became vested in Obote. Uganda was declared a Republic.

The Kabaka and his kingdom establishment at Mengo refused to recognize the supremacy of the pigeonhole constitution, insisting on the 1962 version. This culminated in the 24th May 1966 storming of Kabaka's palace by the Uganda army under the command of General Idi Amin but on the orders of Obote. Although the Kabaka managed to escape, he was exiled in Britain where he later died.

In 1967 Obote abolished all monarchs. Parliament became the constituent assembly and later all political parties were outlawed, except UPC. In a move that left, Uganda became a one-party state.

Idi Amin

It was against this background that Idi Amin led a disgruntled section of the army to overthrow Obote on 25th January 1971. This coup was met with great jubilation but was to begin an era of terror and enormous tribulation for the people of Uganda. This dark period would last 8 long years. It was also during this period that all Asians, mainly Indians, were expelled from Uganda. As a result, the economy of Uganda suffered tremendously. The fiscal mismanagement and insecurity that followed did not help the situation.

An estimated 300,000 Ugandans lost their lives through indiscriminate extra judicial killings during Idi Amin's regime.

The Fall of Idi Amin, the UNLF and Obote II

In April 1979, a combined force of Ugandan exiles, under the umbrella of Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLF), and the Tanzania Peoples Defence Force (TPDF) overthrew Amin's regime.

The UNLF was created through the patronage of President Nyerere of Tanzania at the Moshi Conference. It brought together a disparate group of Ugandan organizations and individuals with a common goal of ousting the Amin regime. The first UNLF government was led by Prof. Yusuf Lule as President and though well liked only lasted 68 days.

President Lule was followed by President Godfrey Binaisa, and then Paulo Muwanga who chaired the ruling Military Commission which organised the December 1980 general elections. UPC was declared winner of those elections though they were marred by multiple irregularities and generally considered rigged. For a second time, Obote became President of Uganda.

During Obote's second tenure as president, Ugandans went through a very trying period. Insecurity, fuelled by the government's own security organs as well as an ongoing liberation struggle devastated the country. An estimated 500,000 Ugandans lost their lives in just 5 years of Obote's reign. The economy was shattered and so was the people's faith in government.

NRA liberation struggle

In direct protest against the marred elections of 1980, Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, then Vice Chairman of the Military Commission and President of the Uganda Patriotic Movement, launched a liberation struggle. It was on February 6th, 1981 and with only 26 compatriots organized under the banner of the National Resistance Army (NRA) that the war of liberation started.

As the NRA made staggering advances towards Kampala, having already cut the country off into two different administrative zones, elements of the UNLA on July 26th 1985 ousted Obote in a bid to find better negotiating ground. The Military Junta of Generals Bazilio and Tito Okello replaced Obote II's government.

By February 26th 1986 the "Okello's Junta" had fallen and shortly after the entire country was under control of the NRA.

The NRA's struggle was unique in that, for the first time in post-colonial Africa, a home grown insurgency, with no rear bases in a neighbouring country and little external support, was ultimately successful. It was essentially an uprising of oppressed Ugandan citizens.

Yoweri Kaguta Museveni was sworn in as the President of the Republic of Uganda. The task of rebuilding the entire country and its human fabric from scratch began. To enable this task, political parties were suspended and Uganda was governed by an all-inclusive Movement system. A lot was to be achieved over the next eight to ten years.

The NRA/M however continued to face the challenge of reactionary UNLA forces especially in the northern part of the country.

The Movement System of Government

In 1995, a new constitution was promulgated creating a non-party all-inclusive Movement System of government. Under this system, political parties remained in abeyance. Elections to most political offices was by universal suffrage. Marginalised groups like the women, the disabled, the youth and workers were given special slots on all administrative units of Government. The military was also given representation in parliament. The aspect of keeping this system was to be reviewed by referendum every 4 years.

General elections were held in 1996 under the Movement System and Yoweri Museveni was returned as President of Uganda. By this election, he became the very first Ugandan to be directly elected to the post by universal suffrage. In 2001, he was again returned by popular mandate to the Office of President.

Return to Multi Party Politics

In July 2005 a national referendum was held in which the people of Uganda resolved to return to multi-party politics. The result of the referendum in effect marked an end to the Movement System of government. On February 23rd 2006, multi-party elections were held for both the office of president and for parliament. President Yoweri Museveni of the National Resistance Movement (NRM) won the presidential elections and the NRM took the highest number of seats in parliament.

Stats

Currency

Uganda Shillings (Shs or UGX)

Language Spoken

LANGUAGE: Uganda's official language is English, which is spoken by most educated Ugandans. The three major indigenous language families are Bantu, Central Sudanic, and Nilotic. **Swahili and Luganda** are also widely spoken.

Population

The current estimated population of Uganda is 45 million. Uganda has a very young population, with a median age of 15 years. Uganda is home to many different ethnic groups, none of whom forms a majority of the population. The population of Uganda consists of: Baganda 16.9%, Banyakole 9.5%, Basoga 8.4%, Bakiga 6.9%, Iteso 6.4%, Langi 6.1%, Acholi 4.7%, Bagisu 4.6%, Lugbara 4.2%, Banyoro 2.7%, other 29.6%

There are around 20,000 White residents in Uganda. Most Whites are Europeans mainly from The United Kingdom. Other White residents come from the United States.

Time

Time zone in Uganda (GMT+3)

Electricity

220 – 240 V AC, Three pin plug

Mobile Operators

MTN and Airtel

International Dialling Code

+256 followed by 6-digit local number

Fire and Police

999 and 112

People of Uganda

There are four ethnic groups in Uganda, the Bantu, the Nilotics, the Nilo Hamites and the Hamites. The largest ethnic group in Uganda is the Bantu with the Baganda taking up a high percentage of the Bantu group.

Religion

Uganda is a religiously diverse nation with Christianity and Islam being the most widely professed religions. According to the most recent census, **82 percent of the population is Christian**. The largest Christian group is Roman Catholic with 39 percent; 32 percent is Anglican, and 11 percent Pentecostal Christian. According to official government estimates, Muslims constitute 14 percent of the population.

Religions: **Protestant 45.1% (Anglican 32.0%, Pentecostal/Born Again/Evangelical 11.1%, Seventh Day Adventist 1.7%, Baptist. 3%), Roman Catholic 39.3%, Muslim 13.7%, (mainly Sunni) other 1.6%, none 0.2%** (2014 est.) The Northern and West Nile regions are dominated by Roman Catholics and Iganga District in the east of Uganda has the highest percentage of Muslims.

Good Friday, Easter Monday, Eid al-Fitr, Eid al-Adha, and Christmas are recognized national holidays.

Health & insurance

- Get comprehensive travel insurance to cover theft, loss and medical problems, ambulances, emergency flights and more.
- Buy, extend and claim your worldwide travel insurance online anytime – even if you're already on the road!

Before You Go

Recommended Vaccinations

Yellow Fever (certificate essential to enter the country)

Diphtheria

Hepatitis A

Hepatitis B

Measles Meningococcal meningitis

Mumps

Rubella

Polio

Tetanus

Typhoid

Health Insurance

Make sure you have comprehensive health insurance that covers the cost of any medical treatment and repatriation.

In Uganda

Tap Water

Stick to drinking bottled water in Uganda and try to avoid drinking or brushing with tap water.

Availability & Cost of Healthcare

You will easily reach health facilities in any part of the country. Uganda is divided into districts, spread across four administrative regions: Northern, Eastern, Central (Kingdom of Buganda) and Western. The districts are subdivided into counties. Parallel with the state administration, five traditional Bantu kingdoms have remained, enjoying some degrees of mainly cultural autonomy.

HOSPITALITY & CULTURE

Ugandans are known for their hospitality and friendliness towards each other and visitors alike. However, it is advisable to be cautious when dealing with strangers. Police officers are very helpful and are easily identified by their uniforms. Like everywhere in the world valuables should always be safeguarded or left in the hotel safe box. If you do not know where to obtain a certain service or you are not sure always contact the Hotel Information Desk.

Uganda has a very strong cultural heritage. Many regions in Uganda have kingdoms including Buganda, Busoga, Bunyoro and Toro. Ugandans are remarkably hospitable and hail from a diversity of rich cultures and lifestyles. Culture and traditions are also expressed through a wide range of arts and crafts.

CLIMATE

Uganda enjoys a tropical climate, with abundant sunshine all year round. Uganda's temperatures are moderate throughout the year. In Kampala, near Lake Victoria, average daily temperatures range from 18° to 28° C (65° to 83° F) in January and from 17° to 25° C (62° to 77° F) in July. The climate is tropical; generally rainy with two dry seasons (December to February, June to August). It is semiarid East Sudanian savanna in north near Sudan.

GEOGRAPHY

Uganda, twice the size of Pennsylvania, is in East Africa. It is bordered on the west by Congo, on the north by the Sudan, on the east by Kenya, and on the south by Tanzania and Rwanda. The country, which lies across the equator, is divided into three main areas—swampy lowlands, a fertile plateau with wooded hills, and a desert region. Lake Victoria forms part of the southern border. Despite being on the equator Uganda is more temperate than the surrounding areas due to its altitude. The country is mostly plateau with a rim of mountains. This has made it more suitable to agriculture and less prone to tropical diseases than other nations in the region.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Anti-malaria tablets are recommended throughout Uganda. Visit your local travel clinic to determine which type is best for you. Even if you are taking anti-malarials, you should still wear insect repellent, long-sleeved shirts, and closed shoes. All accommodation in high risk areas will have mosquito nets so be sure to use them. Bring all prescription medications with you as they may not be readily available in Uganda. Be sure to purchase travel insurance before you begin your trip, including medical evacuation in case of an emergency. All visitors require vaccination against yellow fever.

TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION

Visitors can get airport taxi or hotel courtesy buses on arrival and departure to Entebbe Airport. For public transport commuter mini buses and taxis (special hire) are the main means of public transport in Kampala. There are both buses and mini buses for inter-city services. Distances are relatively short and road surfaces good.

If your cell phone is compatible, you may be able to purchase an inexpensive SIM card, widely available throughout the country. The international dialing code for Uganda is +256 see more at <http://www.ugandawildlife.org/visitor-guide-2/travel-essentials/travel-faqs>

For more information on preferred accommodation, restaurants, entertainment and shopping please contact the International Relations Unit at the Uganda Communications Commission.

GETTING TO UGANDA

The main entry point for flights into Uganda is Entebbe International Airport (EBB) located near the town Entebbe, about 46km/29mi from the capital, Kampala. Uganda is a relatively compact country and

further transportation within the country is usually done by vehicle. In most cases your local tour operator will pick you from the airport or hotel and will arrange further transportation as part of your safari-package.

The visa is USD 50 for a single entry and USD 100 for a multiple entry (6-12 months).

The East African Tourist Visa is now available, and you can visit Kenya, Uganda and Rwanda on a single USD 100, 90-day visa. Nationals from the East Africa Community (EAC) and COMESA (Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa) are exempt from visa required into Uganda. COMESA countries are Angola, Burundi, Comoros, Eritrea, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Madagascar, Rwanda, Seychelles, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Other Countries exempt from Visa requires to Uganda are: Antigua, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Fiji, Gambia, Grenada, Jamaica, Lesotho, Malta, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Tonga, Vanuatu, Italy (only Diplomatic Passports) and Cyprus.

HEALTH AND VACCINATIONS

Anti-malaria tablets are recommended throughout Uganda. Visit your local travel clinic to determine which type is best for you. Even if you are taking anti-malarials, you should still wear insect repellent, long-sleeved shirts, and closed shoes. All accommodation in high risk areas will have mosquito nests so be sure to use them.

Bring all prescription medications with you as they may not be readily available in Uganda. Be sure to purchase travel insurance before you begin your trip, including medical evacuation in case of an emergency.

All visitors require vaccination against yellow fever.

Capital: Kampala

President: Yoweri Museveni

Population: 45.74 million (2020) World Bank

Currency: Ugandan shilling

Prime minister: Robinah Nabbanja

Gross domestic product: 37.37 billion USD (2020)World Bank

Climate

Uganda's climate is largely tropical with two rainy seasons per year, March to May and September to December. The northern region, which forms one quarter of the country lies outside the tropical belt, and hence experiences only one rainy season, March to October.

Location

Eastern Africa

Uganda is located in **eastern Africa, west of Kenya, south of South Sudan, east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and north of Rwanda and Tanzania.**

Hailed as West Africa's golden child, Ghana deserves its place in the sun. One of Africa's great success stories, the country is reaping the benefits of a stable democracy in the form of fast paced development. And it shows: Ghana is suffused with the most incredible energy. With its welcoming beaches, gorgeous hinterland, rich culture, vibrant cities, diverse wildlife, easy transport and affable inhabitants, it's no wonder Ghana is sometimes labelled 'Africa for beginners'. It's easy to come here for a week or a month, but no trip can be complete without a visit to Ghana's coastal forts, poignant reminders of a page of history that defined our modern world. Travel north and you'll feel like you've arrived in a different country, with a different religion, geography and cultural practices. The beauty is that this diversity exists so harmoniously, a joy to experience and a wonder to behold in uncertain times.

What is Uganda most known for?

Uganda's outstanding features are the largest freshwater lake on the continent, the source of the longest river, the strongest waterfall, the largest number of primates, and the highest number of mountain gorillas worldwide.

What makes Uganda beautiful?

Uganda is a diverse and beautiful place, hence its nickname the Pearl of Africa. It has magnificently high mountains (some of the highest in Africa), spectacular waterfalls, gorgeous forests, vast lakes (like Lake Victoria), expansive plains, and mighty rivers (including the Nile!)

What are Uganda's natural resources?

Uganda's reserves include copper, tungsten, **cobalt, columbite-tantalite, gold, phosphate, iron ore, and limestone.** Gold, cobalt, and columbite-tantalite are mined. Gold is an important export, but it is complicated by the fact that gold has been smuggled into Uganda from the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

What are 5 interesting facts about Uganda?

1. **8% of the world's mammal species can be found in Uganda.**
2. Uganda has some of the friendliest people in Africa.
3. Uganda is the second largest banana producing country in the world.
4. Uganda is one of the countries in the world where you can find the endangered mountain gorillas
5. Over 1100 birds are found in Uganda

Why you should visit Uganda?

Wonderful Uganda birding opportunities, wild chimpanzee trekking, beautiful scenery, Ugandan local foods, the vibrant culture of Uganda, and friendly people are part of the many reasons why you should visit Uganda.

How would you describe Uganda?

This beautiful country we call home is right at the heart of Africa; at the crossroads of East and West, North and South. We have **rich, misty primordial forests. Hot, vast grasslands with impossibly big skies. Glacier-peaked mountain ranges and palm-fringed tropical islands with sandy beaches.**