

ACACIA AFRICA

GORILLA ENCOUNTER – TOUR DOSSIER

Tour Code **GEN14**

NAIROBI – NAIROBI

14 DAYS

Tour Departure – **08:00**

Pre-departure Meeting – **18:00 day prior to departure**

HIGHLIGHTS

Great Rift Valley
Lake Nakuru National Park
Lake Victoria
Jinja
Kampala
Queen Elizabeth National Park
Chimpanzee trekking
Bwindi Impenetrable National Park (or other gorilla trekking area)
Mountain Gorilla Trek
Lake Bunyonyi



Game parks, landscapes and culture. This safari gives a glimpse of East Africa's enormously diverse scenery; From Kenya's 'Great Rift Valley' to the terraced hillsides of Uganda and a very special wildlife encounter with the magnificent mountain gorillas in their own habitat. A truly unforgettable experience.

INTENDED ITINERARY

It is our intention to adhere to the route described below but a certain amount of flexibility is built into the tour and on occasion it may be necessary or desirable to make alterations to the published itinerary. Please therefore treat the following as a guide only.

The vehicle used for this tour is a fully-equipped safari truck, but a smaller safari vehicle (better suited to gameparks) may be used for Lake Nakuru and an additional vehicle for transfers to gorilla trek start point.

NB: The itinerary below differs from the tour description given on page 22 of Acacia's 2012/13 Africa brochure. This is due to an error in the copy-writing in the brochure, please note the itinerary below is correct.

Duration: 14 Days
Countries visited: Kenya, Uganda

DAY 1 - 2 Nairobi – Nakuru – Eldoret

Kenya is East Africa's most popular destination and has a long tradition of tourism and of welcoming visitors. Nairobi, the Kenyan capital, has seen rapid growth in recent years but still has a comparatively small city centre and interesting city market, numerous craft shops, book shops and plenty of cafes and restaurants. We recommend you arrive the day before the tour departure in order to relax and overcome any jetlag.

We depart Nairobi early on Day One and descend into the 'Great Rift Valley', an enormous cleft in the Earth's surface stretching from the Red Sea to Madagascar but with particularly marked escarpments here in Kenya.

Our first stop is Lake Nakuru National Park, a relatively small park (by African standards) on the Rift Valley floor. The shallow soda lake attracts a huge variety of birdlife – especially flamingos, which may gather in such numbers that (when viewed from above) they form a strikingly pink 'fringe' around the lake-shore. However Lake Nakuru is not simply a bird sanctuary, it is also home to buffalo, lion, rhino, leopard, warthog, baboon, antelope, and a variety of smaller animals. A delightful introduction to East Africa's wildlife diversity. From Nakuru we continue northwest to Eldoret, and the Uganda frontier.

DAY 3 - 5

Kampala – Queen Elizabeth – Lake Bunyonyi

We cross into Uganda, Winston Churchill's 'Pearl of Africa' and to the capital, Kampala. This is an attractive hilly city, bustling with roadside traders, markets and busy matatu (mini-bus taxi) stands.

From Kampala, we travel west to Queen Elizabeth National Park. Uganda is a wonderfully fertile country of green terraced hillsides, lush banana plantations, steep mountains and tangled forests.

We enter the QENP, with a view (further to the west) of the mountains that separate Uganda from central Africa. We game drive in the morning in search of the Uganda Kob (a type of antelope) as well as elephant, lion, buffalo, hyena and hippo. Nearby the park we visit the Kyambura Gorge for the trek to see the chimpanzees. Unlike the larger gorilla, chimps live mostly in the trees and so our viewing is necessarily at some distance. However the experience of seeing man's closest relative in the wild is a memorable one.

Continuing deep into the Kigezi Highlands we come to the picturesque Lake Bunyoni, an ancient flooded valley, where we usually base ourselves for the gorilla trekking.

DAY 6 - 9

Gorilla Trek - Kampala

This region of Africa is home to the world's remaining 700 mountain gorillas, many of which inhabit the Bwindi Impenetrable National Park. [Occasionally we may travel into neighbouring Rwanda to trek for the gorillas.]

On the day of our trek we gather in the early morning to meet our local guide and tracker. Walking in small groups we trek into the thick rainforest. The trek can be demanding at times with uneven terrain and hilly rainforest but the privilege of spending time with a family of these gentle primates makes the effort well worthwhile. To many people, even those who stay in Africa longer than this two week tour, the day's trek and time with the gorillas remains their most exciting wildlife encounter in Africa.

The usual procedure, once we have located the gorilla 'family', is to squat or sit down and simply observe them for around an hour – the time set by the Uganda Wildlife Authority (the national body charged with controlling and maintaining the gorillas in Uganda). Gorillas are sociable creatures, living in groups between 12 and 20 individuals, usually led by an 'alpha male' (the 'silverback' - so called because of the silver hair on his back which grows once the male gorilla attains maturity). Most people find that the gorillas are remarkably human-like at close quarters – particularly in the social interaction between family members and in 'play' activity in which the young engage. Photography is permitted (although not with a flash and there are restrictions for those who wish to use a video camera.)

Your permit allows you one trek and gorilla viewing (time limited to one hour). However because the authorities maintain strict limits on the number of visitors allowed to view the gorillas each day we may spend several days in the area while all passengers in our group complete the trek and viewing.

DAY 10 - 14

Kampala - Jinja - Nairobi

When all members of the group have completed the gorilla trek we pack up and make our way back to Kampala. Pausing for the night we continue on to Jinja and our camp on the grassy banks of the River Nile. It was in 1862 that the British explorer John Hanning Speke recognised Lake Victoria as the 'source of the Nile' settling a long running dispute about Africa's (and the world's) longest river. From this modest monument the Nile begins its 4132 mile course through Uganda, Sudan and eventually Egypt to the Mediterranean Sea.

Our camp overlooks a dramatic set of rapids known as Bujagali Falls. It is here that we usually have the option to try rafting - an exciting day out for those enjoying the thrill of 'white water'. There is also the opportunity to make some difference to local children at a local school project: 'Softpower' is a locally run voluntary programme aimed at building and improving schools in the Jinja area to which your contribution of a few hours of painting or plastering is always most welcome. Other activities at Jinja include quad biking, village walks and even bungy jumping! From Jinja, we move on to Uganda's capital Kampala.

Finally we make our way back into Kenya, passing through Eldoret and the Rift Valley once again to the lights and bustle of Nairobi, where our tour ends.

NB Depending on the availability of gorilla permits the tour itinerary may vary in day to day running order from the above running order which is based on the brochure itinerary. From time to time we may visit neighbouring countries, eg Rwanda, for the gorilla trek (instead of Uganda) and this may entail extra visa fees although we shall endeavour to advise you before departure of any significant change to the tour itinerary.

TOUR INFORMATION

Travelling overland is great fun, but it can also be challenging! This is a *participation* tour and your help will be needed in setting up the camp each night and assisting (usually on a rota basis) with the various day to day campsite duties, such as shopping, cooking and keeping the truck and camp tidy. But don't worry it's not all hard work and it's a great way to meet the local people and get to know your fellow travellers. Your contribution benefits the success of the tour - most people find the greater their involvement, the greater their enjoyment of the whole trip.

Africa is an adventure destination and travelling here is not always predictable so be prepared to "expect the unexpected" in difficulties or delays which might come our way! However, you'll soon find that the diversity of the African landscape, the wildlife and the communities we pass on our way, make the sometimes rough travel and long driving days worthwhile.

Come with a sense of adventure and a flexible attitude and you will be sure to enjoy your Acacia overland tour across this amazing continent.

TOUR STYLE

Acacia Overland Tour

WHAT'S INCLUDED

Fully equipped safari vehicle, camping and cooking equipment including sleeping mattress, all road tolls and vehicle taxes, transport, services of driver and tour leader, meals as indicated.

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

Local Payment excursions, visas, travel insurance, flights, departure taxes, airport transfers, sleeping bag, optional activities, drinks, tips, meals not mentioned in itinerary, items of a personal nature.

ACCOMMODATION

We use 2-person dome tents with fly sheets, built in ground sheets, zip-up insect screens and thick foam sleeping mattresses. We mainly use designated campsites, which usually have permanent wash and shower facilities, electricity points and sometimes even a small shop and bar/restaurant.

TRANSPORT

24-seater, self contained, custom-built safari truck with onboard tables, plug sockets, freezer, library, i-pod jack, safety features and 70-litre individual lockers. A smaller safari vehicle (better suited to game parks) may be used for Lake Nakuru. Similarly an additional vehicle is used for transfers in Uganda to gorilla trek start point.

MEALS

Meals included are – Breakfast (B) x13, Lunch (L) x14, Dinner (D) x13

These meals are prepared in camp by the group and help preparing the meals is invited. Most dietary requirements can be catered for on the road. Please ensure you inform Acacia of any special requirements when you book or at your earliest convenience.

GAME PARK VISITS

In order to maximise the quality of game driving and to comply with local authority rulings, some of our National Park visits and game viewing is carried out using services provided by local African ground handlers. As well as enhancing our experience it also allows us to contribute at a 'grassroots' level to local economies from which local people benefit. These local services are included in the Local Payment.

GORILLA PERMITS

The Uganda Wildlife Authority imposes strict regulations regarding the gorilla trekking permits. One of these is that permits must be booked and paid in advance. In order for us to do this we must collect your permit money, in addition to your normal deposit, at the time of booking. Like your deposit, the permit money is not refundable if you cancel your tour. The permits currently (Oct 2011) cost US\$510 per person. Please ask your agent or Acacia for the equivalent amount in your own currency.

On rare occasions, subject to permit availability, we may purchase trekking permits to view the gorillas in neighbouring Rwanda.

TOUR PREPARATION

BOOKING INFORMATION

When you make a confirmed booking for your tour you will be sent your booking documents and a pre-departure booklet with detailed information to help you prepare for your trip. Once you have paid in full you will receive a Travel Voucher giving details of your joining hotel. Nairobi is well served by a number of airlines and your travel agent can advise on flights to the start of the tour.

JOINING INFORMATION

This tour starts and finishes in Nairobi. **The pre-departure meeting is held at 18:00** on the evening prior to departure. **The tour begins at 08:00 on day 1 and ends on day 14 in Nairobi.**

Meeting/end point in Nairobi :	Boulevard Hotel
Address:	Harry Thuku Rd PO Box 42831 Nairobi
Contact details:	Tel. +245 2 337221 / 227567/8/9 Fax +245 2 334071
E-mail:	hotel@hotelboulevardkenya.com
Pre-dep. meeting:	18:00 prior to departure day
Tour start time:	08:00 on day 1
Tour end time:	mid/late afternoon of day 14

PRE TOUR ACCOMMODATION

This tour departs Nairobi on day 1; we strongly recommend therefore that you plan to arrive the day before departure to overcome any jet-lag and to acclimatise to Africa. We would be happy to book pre-tour accommodation for you – please call or email us (or speak to your agent) with your arrival details and accommodation requirements.

However please book early to avoid disappointment and the risk of having to find more expensive (or less convenient) lodgings.

If time allows, you may wish to plan a night or two after your tour in Nairobi. The Kenyan capital is a bustling city with shops, restaurants, markets to explore. There is a national park on the outskirts of town – you can book morning (or afternoon) game drives - and one or two small but interesting museums.

See below for a guide to extra accommodation costs. These prices are correct at time of print but are subject to change so please check with Acacia or your agent for current prices.

Description	Price
Nairobi	
Pre /post tour accommodation – triple share pppn	£35
Pre /post tour accommodation – Twin pppn	£40
Pre /post tour accommodation – Single pppn	£61

WHAT TO BRING

Please try to keep your luggage to a minimum, bearing in mind that most airlines impose a 20kg limit. It should be brought in a soft holdall or rucksack along with a smaller day bag. You will need to bring a mixture of lightweight clothing and warm clothing for the evenings and early morning game drives. You also need a sleeping bag (and small pillow if preferred). We recommended you pack a small torch or headlamp, mosquito spray and a money pouch/ belt that can be easily hidden. Please try to avoid bringing unnecessary valuables and use your hotel safe to store the bulk of your money, passport, and airline tickets. A full 'What to Bring' list is included in our **pre-departure booklet (online version)**, issued when you book.

VACCINATIONS/HEALTH

The table below indicates the vaccinations suggested for travel on this tour but **should be treated as a guide only**. You should seek professional medical advice from your GP or clinic at least six weeks prior to departure.

Please be aware that the areas visited on this tour are **malarial**. We strongly recommend your seeking professional medical advice for the appropriate anti-malarial tablets.

Country	Tetanus	Diphtheria	Polio	Hepatitis A	Hepatitis B	Typhoid	Meningitis	Rabies	Yellow Fever	Malaria
Kenya	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R*	R
Uganda	R	R	R	R	R	R	-	R	R*	R

C = Compulsory, **R** = Recommended, * = If travelling from infected countries a certificate of proof may be required.

VISA REQUIREMENTS

The table below indicates the visas required for travel to the countries on this tour but **should be treated as a guide only**. At least one month prior to travel seek confirmation from embassies or a visa specialist, that these requirements are still current. For UK citizens the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) offers free up-to-date travel info: www.fco.gov.uk For other nationalities a number of travel advice websites are listed on the Acacia website.

Nationality	UK	AUS	NZ	USA	CAN	BEL	IRE	NED	DEN	ITA	GER	AUT	SWE	FIN	NOR	MEX	KOR
Kenya	Yes																
Uganda	Yes																

MONEY MATTERS

PERSONAL EXPENSES

Naturally you will require extra money for your own personal spending on the tour, for snacks, drinks, souvenirs, tips and items of a personal nature. Everybody has different spending habits but as a guideline we suggest you budget US\$15-25 per day. Also keep US\$ cash for relevant airport taxes and visas needed, optional activities and any additional accommodation before or after your tour.

- **Spending money** is best carried as cash in US dollars, Sterling or Euro which you then exchange into local currency on arrival. Your guide can advise how and when you can change the rest of your money throughout the tour.
- **Currencies** are as follows: Kenya – Kenyan Shilling; Uganda: Uganda Shilling.
- **ATM machines** are found in Nairobi and Kampala BUT please note they are sometimes unreliable and therefore we recommend you do not rely on them. Please remember that ATMs will only dispense local currency and will not provide you with US Dollars cash (and therefore cannot be used to draw your Local Payment).
- **Credit cards** can be used to pay for optional activities although charges may be may be high by western standards (+/- 5%).
- **Travellers cheques** can be difficult to cash but make suitable emergency funds.

We recommend you bring your spending money in several different ways (some cash, some t/cheques, some cards); your guide can best advise on what to use where.

LOCAL PAYMENT

A Local Payment (LP) is to be paid to your tour leader at the group meeting on the first evening.

The LP fund is administered by the tour leader in conjunction with the group and covers most meals, all game drives using our own vehicle, campsite fees and meals prepared at the truck (usually two or three per day). You can choose to pay either the Basic Local Payment at the beginning, and then pay for your excursions along the way, or else you may pay for everything up front in the Fully Inclusive Local Payment.

For the GORILLA ENCOUNTER 14 DAY tour:

The Basic Local Payment is: USD 430 per person

The Inclusive Local Payment is: USD 460 per person

Payment must be made in **US\$ cash in clean, post-2005 edition notes**. Traveller's cheques and credit cards **cannot** be accepted as means of payment. The LP amounts set out in the brochure are estimates of local costs at the time of printing. It is subject to inflation, exchange rate changes and local price rises. These may vary from the amounts set out in the brochure or website and on rare occasion where there is a shortfall, passengers may be asked to contribute further.

TIPPING

This is always a matter for your own individual discretion but as in many areas where tourism is an important contributor to the economy, it has become customary to give a small gratuity to local staff, including your tour leader and driver, at the end of a tour if services rendered have been to your satisfaction.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

In order to give you maximum flexibility on tour we offer a number of optional activities on the tour. To help budget, approximate prices are listed below (in US\$ unless otherwise stated. subject to change and availability).

Activity	Price	Activity	Price
Uganda	USD	Village Walk	\$10
Quad Biking	\$50	Bungy Jumping	\$60
White Water Rafting	\$95	Forest Walk	\$5-10

INSURANCE

It is a booking condition of Acacia that you have full travel insurance valid for the duration of your tour to cover you for medical emergency and repatriation to your home country. Your guide will ask you for a copy of this when you join the tour. It is also important that you leave a copy of your insurance with the person nominated as your emergency contact. We can recommend a respected, specialist travel insurance provider for this tour. Please refer to: http://www.acacia-africa.com/travel_info/travel_documents.php for more details.

Useful Swahili Words

Hello	Jambo	Yes	Ndiyo
How's things?	Habari gani?	No	Hapana
Thank you	Asante	Bring here	Lete hapa
Mister	Bwana	To eat	Kula
Go away	Enda	Today	Leo
Slowly	Pole pole	Tomorrow	Kesho
Coffee	Kahawa	To sleep	Kulala
Tea	Chai	Goodbye	Kwaheri
Milk	Maziwa	How much?	Ngapi?
Water	Maji	Come here	Njoo hapa
Sugar	Sukari	Welcome again	Karibu tena
Food	Chakula	See you	Tutaonana
Please	Tafadali	No, thanks	Hapana santé

ACACIA ON THE ROAD



RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

We strongly believe that you get the most out of a journey by respecting the culture and people of the places you visit. On our tours we try to travel in a way that benefits the communities we pass through and minimises negative impact on the environment. This can be from ensuring the campsites we use are clean when we leave and dressing respectfully in conservative areas to getting involved with local charity projects. We ask that you are open to this when you travel with us. Being proactive in responsible travel helps develop cross-cultural understanding and friendships with the local people, and will greatly enhance your experience in Africa.

GET CONNECTED

Join our facebook group www.facebook.com/AcaciaAfrica and get connected with other Acacia travelers, check out the pictures, videos and feedback from their tours and meet up with other people booked on your tour

Follow us on twitter @AcaciaAfrica and get the latest buzz. Got a question? Ask us on twitter!

Follow our blogs from the road <http://acaciaontheroad.blogspot.com/> and <http://africastuckonyou.blogspot.com/> get regular updates from our crew on the road as well as other Acacia Travellers

Don't forget to sign up to our newsletter to get regular updates and special offers www.acacia-africa.com

For information on our Premium Overlanding, Acacia Small Group Safaris, Short Safari's & Treks, Short Breaks & City Stays, Voluntours and Dive Tours please visit www.acacia-africa.com



Acacia Adventure Holidays Ltd

London

23A Craven Terrace
London
W2 3QH
Tel: +44 (0)20 7706 4700
Fax: +44 (0)20 7706 4686
Email: info@acacia-africa.com

Cape Town

PO Box 27632
Rhine Road
Cape Town 8005
Fax: +27 (0)21 557 5983
Tel: +27 (0)21 556 1157
Email: info@acacia-africa.com

