



Uganda Trip Preparation

ARRIVAL TIPS

After collecting your luggage and completing the immigration and customs procedures, you will walk through the exit gate. Take your time to look for the welcome sign with **GoPhilanthropic logo**. A GoPhilanthropic representative and guide will be there to meet you.

If you are approached by anyone offering transport services, **DO NOT** follow him or her. If after some time you are unable to find the welcome signboard, please call your GoPhilanthropic Guide for immediate assistance.

If you are not traveling in a GoPhilanthropic group, please call the emergency contact provided on your travel documents.

In the rare case that you are unable to locate your guide, take a taxi to the hotel on your itinerary.

Please keep a copy of your completed Immigration and Customs form as you will need to present it at Immigration upon departure.

REQUIRED TOURIST VISAs

Please make sure your passport is valid more than 6 months from the date of arrival in each country you are visiting. You can purchase a visa at the airport upon arrival for \$50 US (bring exact change). This is the easiest way to obtain a visa for Uganda. If you would like to purchase a visa in advance, you can find information at [http:// www.ugandaembassy.com/visa.html#6](http://www.ugandaembassy.com/visa.html#6) Be sure that there is sufficient space in your passport to allow for all immigrations procedures. Keep a copy of your passport details just in case you lose your passport.

INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS

You are responsible for purchasing flights to and from your start and end location for your trip. Please be careful when booking your flights as the times of arrival and departure can be late at night or in the early hours of the morning. This can cause confusion in planning for the correct dates.

We will need copies (email is fine) of all of your flight itineraries in order to arrange your pick-up at the airport.

Please note that for group trip travelers--if you are not able to arrive on the correct arrival day or depart on the assigned departure day for your quoted trip there, you are responsible for extra costs in coordinating with the rest of the group.

We are happy to assist in purchasing your long-haul flights through our partner Fly For Good.

<http://www.flyforgood.com/> Contact: lynette@flyforgood.com

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Travelers are highly recommended to purchase trip and travel insurance. Trip insurance covers the cost of your trip should you be forced to cancel your trip for objective reasons such as a death of a family member or accident before you start the trip. The tour operator will still apply the full charge and the insurance company will cover the loss. Whereas, travel insurance covers such costs as emergency and medical evacuation, hospital fees, property loss, cancellation of a scheduled trip due to weather during the trip. Coverage for the trip and travel insurance varies depending on the policy purchased.

For more information on purchasing travel insurance please click on our Travel Insurance link on the GoPhilanthropic website.

TIME ZONE

Standard time Zone – UTC/GMT + 3 hrs. No daylight savings time in 2010.

COUNTRY CODE

The country code for Uganda is 256.
The city code for Kampala is 41.

MOBILE PHONES

For those with iphones and blackberries – we suggest buying a one month international plan to reduce costs. For those with iphones it is suggested you turn off your data roaming to avoid large roaming charges.

INTERNET

Internet access is available at most hotels and internet cafes. Several hotels have a computer room available to guests and some offer wi-fi, however it is limited to certain hours of the day. Additional fees may be required.

ELECTRICITY

Uganda has 240V, 50Hz electricity. An 3 prong flat adapter is required. Make sure that what you are plugging is converts the currency or you will need to bring a converter as well.

IMMUNIZATIONS

The following immunizations are recommended for travelers in Uganda. You are advised to consult with your doctor or local health department to discuss your immunization requirements. For further information, please look refer to the CDC's website www.cdc.gov

Make sure that all of your routine vaccinations are current with your doctor before you leave.

*Hepatitis A and B - if you already have these vaccinations, they provide immunity for up to 20 years. Otherwise it is recommended to receive this vaccination.

*Malaria medication is a must. There is no complete vaccine available for malaria, however, you may want to consult with a doctor for their recommended anti-malarial medication. The most effective way is to prevent being bitten by a mosquito in the first place. We encourage clients to sleep beneath a mosquito net in open-style rooms, and always apply mosquito repellent.

(It is only recommended to receive a yellow fever vaccination when traveling to Uganda if you have been to another country where it is endemic; you are required to have a certificate verifying that you have had the vaccine.)

Remember to pack all of your prescription medications in your carry on. There is an international hospital in Kampala; however it is necessary to check with your health insurance about your coverage before you leave. It may be necessary to purchase additional insurance.

LUGGAGE ALLOWANCES

Each airline has its own luggage allowance policy. Excess baggage is charged at a specific rate depending on the individual route. You are advised to check your airline prior to travel since the below price is subject to change. All airlines now stipulate that liquids, gels and/or aerosols in HAND LUGGAGE must be in completely closed containers of 3 oz/100ml or less (even if the container is partially filled).

DEPARTURE AIRPORT TAX

No airport tax is levied.

EATING & DRINKING

Most people outside of the major cities produce their own food. Meals are prepared by women and girls in a kitchen, which is separate from the main house. Cooking usually is done on an open wood fire. The

mainstays of the Ugandan diet include *matoke* (a staple made by steaming plantains), cassava (manioc), posho (made by cooking maize flour), sweet potatoes, chicken and beef stews, and freshwater fish. These dishes are usually served with a bean or pea sauce. Other foods include white potatoes, yams, corn, cabbage, greens, pumpkin, tomatoes, millet, peas, sorghum, beans, groundnuts (peanuts), goat meat, and milk. Oranges, papayas, lemons, and pineapples also are grown and consumed.

Kampala is packed with has quality restaurants. Some serving traditional Ugandan food, while others offer quite a variety of international food. Buffets are quite popular and are inexpensive.

The local beer is Nile, but many also prefer Kenya's Tusker.

MONEY

The currency in Uganda is the Schilling (UGX) Current exchange is 1 USD – approximately 2,200 UGX If you prefer to change US currency when in Uganda, it is best to bring 50's and 100's and make sure that they are newer than the year 2000. Do not bring travelers checks as they are difficult to get cashed. There is access to ATM machines throughout Uganda.

TIPPING

Note: if you are on a group trip with GoPhilanthropic, guide and driver tips may be included in your tour cost. Please consult with your trip director for details.

If you are pleased with the services provided by your tour guide and driver, then a tip for their hard work and being away from home for long periods will be very much appreciated.

Below are some suggested tipping guidelines:

Party of 1-2 people: US\$10-15 / day for driver / guide (they are one in the same)

Party of 3-6 people: US\$15-20

Party of 7-14 people: US\$20-25

Party of 15+ people: US\$25-30

BEHAVIOR, CLOTHES AND CULTURAL CUSTOMS

SAFETY TIPS

Ugandan's are generally quite friendly and generous people. Pleasantries count. Even if you are asking for directions, take time to greet them by shaking hands. You will find that at any local gathering you will be greeted with singing and dancing.

It is customary to wear modest clothing. Shorts that cover the knee and long skirts for women are preferred. Sleeveless shirts are fine, but short shorts are not acceptable. Lightweight clothing is recommended as it can be hot during the day.

Please ask for permission from adults if you want to photograph them. On the other hand, children love to have their photos taken and then see themselves on your camera.

General safety tips:

- Don't tempt people by flaunting your money. Be cautious and do not leave it exposed where it could be stolen.
- Avoid external money pouches, dangling backpacks, and camera bags and leave your jewelry and fancy watches at home.
- Put your valuables in your hotel safe rather than leaving them out in the open in your hotel room.
- Carry small amounts of cash separate from your other money so that you don't have to pull out large amounts in order to pay for purchases.
- Use common sense.

PACKING ESSENTIALS

The following should act as a useful checklist of essential items worth thinking about taking.

- ~ **Passport** – Ensure that it is valid and in good condition with empty pages available. Make a photocopy as well
- ~ **Insurance** – Ensure that it will be valid for the whole journey
- ~ **Passport Photos** – Will invariably be needed for identification passes and certain overseas visas
- ~ List of emergency contact numbers of the ground tour operator
- ~ Insurance 24 hour emergency contact number and next of kin contact details
- ~ Debit/credit card cancellation numbers
- ~ Friends/family with international dialing code
- ~ Air tickets and Itinerary
- ~ Money belt – Ensure that it is discrete and comfortable to wear
- ~ First Aid kit - Basic travel kit to cover basic mishaps which may occur along the way
- ~ Personal Medication
- ~ Sun block – High UVA protection ideally
- ~ Sunglasses & sunhat
- ~ Comfortable walking shoes
- ~ Insect repellent
- ~ Binoculars
- ~ Camera & battery (plus an extra battery and scan disk)

CLOTHING

It is generally warm to hot during the days so dress in modest light clothing. Bring a wrap / sweater or jacket for evenings. If you are traveling in the mountains, bring warmer clothing and sturdy hiking boots. Don't forget a hat, waterproof jacket (poncho) and sunglasses.

MEDICATION

It is important to bring your personal medications while on vacation as it might be difficult to replace. Remember to always carry your medicine with you and do not pack it in your suitcase.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

You should bring a money-belt or pouch to safely carry your travel documents and cash. Bring photocopies of your passport and visa, you do not need a passport-sized photos if you're applying for an on-arrival visa.

CLIMATE

Uganda sits on the equator and therefore enjoys a tropical climate that remains fairly stable throughout the year. The exception being the mountains the east and west that boarder the land where it has been known to drop below freezing. The hottest months are January and February. Typically, the rainy seasons are in the spring and fall, however with the current global warming, the spring months have been delightful.

LANGUAGE AND RELIGION

Language:

English is the official language in Uganda. However, Luganda is widely spoken. The majority of the population speak both English and their tribal language.

Religion:

Eighty five percent of the population is Christian, split evenly between Catholics and Protestants. The majority of the remainder of the population practice Islam.

COUNTRY INFO

Winston Churchill described Uganda as the "Pearl of Africa". It contains the best of everything the continent has to offer. It is home to the tallest mountain range in Africa. The mighty Nile River, the world's longest river, flows from Lake Victoria, the continent's largest lake. It also boasts the highest concentration of primates in the world, including more than half of the remaining mountain gorillas and the world's best bird watching. Even with all of this, Uganda remains underdeveloped in the travel industry and one can enjoy the country without a crowd.

Uganda's population is made up of a complex and diverse range of tribes. Lake Kyoga forms the northern boundary for the Bantu-speaking peoples, who dominate much of east, central and southern Africa. In Uganda they include the Buganda and several other tribes. In the north live the Lango and the

Acholi, who speak Nilotic languages. To the east are the Teso and Karamojong, who are related to the Maasai and who also speak Nilotic languages. Pygmies live in the forests of the west.

Despite living through years of upheaval, terror and bloodshed, life in Uganda is now stable. The people of Uganda are positive and friendly. They will greet you with a smile

Uganda has been heavily affected by HIV/AIDS. It was one of the first countries to be struck in epidemic proportions. The Infectious Disease Institute in Kampala is the center of the AIDS research in East Africa and is a leader in working on solutions.

Agriculture is still the most important industry in the country, employing 75% of the population.
