



## Rwanda - Dian Fossey Memorial Discover the Gorillas and the Dian Fossey Grave!

Trek the gorillas and hike to Dian Fossey's grave! It is at the Karisoke Research Centre on the slopes of the Bisoke Volcano where she carried out her studies on the mountain gorillas for 18 years. She was murdered on the 27th of December 1985 at the Karisoke Research Centre and buried near Digit, her favourite gorilla. The excursion will provide excellent background information and this is a wonderful site to see!

- Min. 2 participants. For gorillas the min. age is 15 years.
- You can choose from 2 hotel categories. see the hotels proposed in the day by day program, itinerary)
- Only the Park Authorities will assign you a gorilla group. Communicate your wishes to our driver-guide he will make some arrangements for you! The Sussa group leaves at the Karisimbi volcano and is more challenging with much longer hiking times!
- Flash photography is not permitted when tracking the gorillas.
- What is included?

**Tour Includes:** Airport transfers, accommodation, all meals, plenty of mineral water, the services of a driver-guide, all park and entry fees, all activities as per programme: visit of Kigali including the Genocide Memorial Centre at Gisozi, 1 gorilla trekking, a visit of the Dian Fossey grave and the former Karisoke Centre. **Excludes:** Airline ticket, beverages, tips, visas and personal expenses.

## ■ What to bring with you?

Money for your personal expenses (average of \$ 50 p.p.), outfit with adapted colours for wildlife observation, good walking shoes, raingear, a few long-sleeve shirts, slippers, sweater for cool evenings, sun protection: hat, sunglasses, sun cream, video/photo camera, a 200 mm or longer telepholens is very usefull, reserve batteries, films and a torch.

- Flights to Tanzania: We are the booking Agent of Rwandairexpress (Kilimanjaro) and Coastal Aviation (charter flights to Arusha, Serengeti, Manyara).
- **WARNING:** Gorilla permits are in high demand and need to be booked and paid in advance! Book your gorilla safari accordingly and avoid disappointment!

**Duration :** 4 Days

**Travelstyles :** Road Safaris, Private Safaris, Lodge Safaris

**Activities :** Gorilla Trekking, Guided Nature Walks & Hikes.

**Parks & places :** Genocide Memorial Centre - Gisozi & others, Volcanoes National Park

## Itinerary

### Day 1 : Arrival and transfer to Volcanoes NP

Meet and greet at the Airport by your Safari Driver - guide. Depending on your arrival time, your Driver-Guide may proposed you a visit of Kigali city which includes the Genocide Memorial at Gisozi.

Transfer to Kinigi at the foothills of the Volcanoes. Diner is included in the package. Hotel accommodation at your choice. (L-D)

Flights: There are daily flights to Kigali out of Nairobi with Kenya Airways and Rwandair Express.

**Parks & places :** Genocide Memorial Centre - Gisozi & others

### Day 2 : Gorilla Tracking

After breakfast, you will depart for the headquarters of the Park, where your guide will accomplish the necessary formalities for you. You will meet your ranger guide(s) for a briefing about the greatest animal experience ever. Magic Safaris will drive you to the slopes of one of the Virunga volcanoes for your trekking.

After the trekking, if time allows, lunch at Ruhengeri and in the afternoon an excursion to explore the beautiful lakes in the region (Lake Bulera & Ruhondo). Overnight at Kinigi. Your guide will make the necessary arrangements for the next day. (B-L-D)

**Activities :** Gorilla Trekking

**Parks & places :** Volcanoes National Park

### Day 3 : Visit of the Diane Fossey grave (Bisoke)

After breakfast, you will report to the headquarters for your excursion to slopes of the Bisoke and pay a visit to the former Karisoke centre where the grave of Dian Fossey is located. Fantastic views, lush forested slopes and an exceptional environment. After the trek we will drive you back to Kigali. Overnight at your hotel. (B-L-D)

*Karisoke became one of the most successful primate study sites in the world in the 1970s. For the past three decades the mountain gorillas of Karisoke Research Center have been the subject of many studies focusing on*

*their behavior and ecology. Karisoke still functions as an important base for international research; biologists come and go, some studying the gorillas, and some focusing on other aspects of the environment and its wildlife. Karisoke is still funded by the "Digit" fund, although it has been re-named as "The Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund".*

**Activities :** Gorilla Trekking

**Parks & places :** Volcanoes National Park

## **Day 4 : Kigali visit and Departure**

Pick up at your hotel, depending on your departure time and if you missed the opportunity the first day, you will have Kigali city trip including the visit of the Genocide Memorial centre at Gisozi. Transfer to the Airport for your departure. (B-L)

*Genocide Memorials: In Rwanda you will find all over the country Memorials to remember the genocide of 1994. The most important Genocide Memorials are those of Kigali (Gisozi) and Murambi (Gikongoro) where the history of the genocide is explained. A visit to the genocide memorial is for most visitors an emotional event.*

**Parks & places :** Genocide Memorial Centre - Gisozi & others

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**All itineraries are subject to change without prior notice.**

The American naturalist Diane Fossey (Author of *Gorillas in the Mist*) dispelled the myths and revealed that gorillas are in fact shy and gentle creatures, intelligent, sociable and given to aggression only as a means of defence. We owe Diane Fossey a great debt for bringing the gorillas to public attention and inspiring the governments to introduce laws for their protection. She also contributed largely to set out the basic rules for gorilla viewing. Today the International Gorilla Conservation Programme covers all three countries, and it is most certainly a great privilege to be able to visit these mountain gorillas (gorilla gorilla beringei ).

The entire world population is found in 2 only conservation area. The volcanic Virunga Mountains, which straddle the common borders of Congo, Rwanda and Uganda, and in South Western Uganda's Impenetrable Forest. Both conservation area give a different gorilla experience. The habitat in Bwindi Impenetrable NP is a dense rainforest while in Kinigi, Volcanoes National Park (Rwanda) and Mt Mgahinga (Uganda) the habitat of the gorillas is part of the Virunga, the famous chain of volcanoes located in Congo, Rwanda and also partially in Uganda.

A typical gorilla trekking starts with assigning the visitors to the respective habituated gorilla groups. In Bwindi the groups are assigned when buying the gorilla permit while in Rwanda the Park Authorities will assign them on site the day of the trekking.

After this formality the Rangers will give you a briefing of the way they will conduct this fantastic guided nature walk to the gorillas. They will give you extensive information on the environment, the gorilla family you will visit and the way you should behave with them. The so named "gorilla rules" will be clearly set out because it's a corner stone in the conservation of the gorillas. There is not only a high risk of disease transmission to gorillas and vice versa, but the daily visits can cause behavioural disturbance and stress to gorillas. Please respect the rules!

After the briefing we will drive you to nearest location outside the park and from there your rangers will guide you to the gorillas. Gorilla trekking is unpredictable and it's difficult to foresee how many hours you will hike. In Bwindi the hiking time are generally much challenging. The terrain is usually more difficult in the rainforest and hiking times are longer because when looking for food Bwindi gorillas tend to travel longer distances per day. In Rwanda the gorilla trekking is usually easier except for the challenging Sussa group located at the Karisimbi volcano.

This doesn't mean that you don't need a good physical condition in Rwanda. We have seen several times that visitors had some problems during their trekking. Rain can get you by surprise and during the dry season gorilla

tend to climb higher for their preferred bamboo shoots. It has to be said that the park rangers and the porters are extremely helpful and will do everything they can to make sure that visitors can see the gorillas. We therefore strongly advise not to hesitate to take a porter. Porters can not only be very efficient but in return you help local communities to benefit from tourism! There is also a very efficient rescue team available in the parks for visitor getting in trouble!

For conservation purposes the time spent with the gorillas is limited to one hour. The daily visits have an impact on gorilla activity patterns. The daily visits are a source of animal stress and less feeding are a strong justification for the one-hour rule.

Gorilla trekking is the strongest animal experience ever! Tracking the gorillas is a unique experience - it leads you to meet unusual creatures on their own terms and it's a very intense and thrilling experience! You will be rewarded with a certificate of the National Park!

## GORILLA RULES

Eco-tourism is nature-based tourism that meets conservation objectives and favours sustainable development. Gorilla tourism depends largely on the conservation of these magnificent animals. Some rules have been developed to protect the gorillas and the park rangers will brief you before the trekking. Please respect them.

## PHOTOGRAPHY

- You will have excellent photo opportunities in Rwanda.
- When photographing people we advise you to respect their privacy. Be discreet when taking pictures or ask first. Some will refuse, some will accept and some will ask you for money.
- Special photographic film conditions are applicable to professionals, a non-professional video camera will be allowed during the visit, without additional charge.
- Flash photography is not permitted when tracking the gorillas!

## WHAT TO BRING WITH YOU?

- Money for your personal expenses: US Dollars or Euro!
- Outfit with adapted colours for wildlife observation, good walking shoes, rain gear, gloves (nettle stings), a few thick long-sleeve shirts, slippers, sweater for the cool evenings!
- Sun protection: hat, sunglasses, sun cream.
- Mosquito repellent
- Video camera/ photo camera, a 200 mm or longer telephoto lens will be very useful, reserve battery, films (with a few high speed films – 800/1600 ASA)
- Binoculars, if you can. Highly recommended!
- A torch

Note that due to the altitude the mornings, evenings and nights are quite cold. During the trekking you can expect both sun and rainfall (raining season) and we recommend long trousers and long sleeve shirts to avoid nettle stings. Waterproof raingear is essential for your trekking!

## VISA AND INOCULATIONS

**Visa:** A valid passport is mandatory. Visas are required by all visitors except nationals of the USA, UK, Germany and Canada. Nationals of countries without an embassy can obtain a visa on arrival by prior arrangement.

**Inoculations:** Yellow fever is required! Ask your physician for malaria protection.

**Security:** There are no security problems in Rwanda. After the tragedy of the genocide in 1994, Rwanda has now stabilised and welcomes visitors.

**Safari guide:** Your guide is an experienced person speaking English and the local language. He will be your guide from your arrival till your departure.

# Footprint Itinerary

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