

SEVEN DAYS SAFARIS AND PRIMATES TOUR IN RWANDA AND UGANDA

TOUR REPORT

Period: 13th to 18th June 2026

Visited sites: Kigali Genocide Memorial, Yussa Plaza, Akagera National Park, Mgahinga Gorilla National Park, Volcanoes National Park



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INTRODUCTION

The abundant wildlife in Uganda and Rwanda includes many species of primates (20 in Uganda and 13 in Rwanda), diversity birdlife and savannah wildlife. With a variety of habitats, ranging from rolling hills, lakes and wetlands, Akagera National Park (Rwanda) is a home to the Big5 of African and many species of Antelopes among others Zebra, Roan Antelope, Cape Eland, etc. It is also a home to Giraffe, Waterbuck, Zebra Impala and three species of primates: Olive Baboon and Velvet Monkeys and Blue Monkeys. Volcanoes National Park (Rwanda) and Mgahinga Gorillas National Parks, located in Virunga Massif, are a home to the endangered and endemic Golden Monkey and the fabulous Mountain Gorillas (*Gorilla beringei beringei*).

Our seven days' tour was conducted from 13th to 18th June 2026 and we covered mainly Eastern and north of Rwanda and South-west of Uganda. We started our tour with a tour of the City of Kigali and Genocide Memorial of Kigali. After lunch in Kigali, we drove to Akagera National Park, where we have spent 2 days exploring the Big5 and savannah animals. We were lucky to see 4 out of 5 Big 5; we missed the Leopard. On 16th, after a morning game drive, we drove to Uganda via Kisoro border, where we reached our lodge on dinner time. On 17th, after the early breakfast, we trekked the famous Mountain Gorillas in Mgahinga Gorillas National Park, where we were allocated to Nyakagezi group. After trekking, we drove back to Rwanda straight to Musanze town (former Ruhengeri), to prepare the visit of Dian Fossey Tomb on the following day. On 18th, we visit the Dian Tomb, the last resting grave of the legend Dian Fossey inside Volcanoes National Park. After a lunch at the headquarters of Dian Fossey Gorillas Fund, we visited the campus of Allen DeGeneres, a museum illustrating the information on protection, conservation, researches and other ultimate work of Dian Fossey as well gorilla trek gorillas with virtual reality headsets.

The last day of our tour, was on 19th when we trekked Golden Monkeys, the acrobatic and endangered primates, endemic to Volcanoes Massif. After trekking and lunch, we head back to Kigali.

DAY 1: ARRIVAL IN KIGALI/RWANDA

Our clients landed in Kigali, in the evening of 13th June 2026, from Canada with Air Canada connecting to SN Brussels via Belgium. On arrival, after greeting and a welcome note, we drove to Hotel Chez Lando, located in 20 minutes from the airport, and a dinner was served. While having a dinner, we discussed about the flight, then we went through the plan of the next days and give the tour briefing before we went to bed.

DAY 2: CITY OF KIGALI, GENOCIDE MEMORIAL AND DRIVING TO AKAGERA NATIONAL PARK

After breakfast, we started with a tour of Kigali, the cleanest City in Africa with a mix of moving history, vibrant local culture and modern development. We visited the old and new areas of Kigali, sides like Nyamirambo, Nyabugogo, etc. before we head to Kigali Genocide Memorial. At the memorial, clients understood the events leading up to the genocide against Tutsi in 1994.

The Kigali Genocide Memorial includes three permanent exhibitions, the largest of which documents the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi. There is also a children's memorial and an exhibition on the history of genocidal violence around the world. The education center, gardens, and Genocide Archive of Rwanda contribute to a meaningful tribute to those who perished, and provide a powerful educational experience for visitors.

Our clients understood the causes, implementation and consequences of the genocide, and other genocides throughout history, what can be done to prevent future genocides and they visited the burial for victims of the Genocide against the Tutsi.

After the visit of the memorial, we went to the curio shops at Yussa Plaza, a place of buying souvenirs, handcraft materials and local arts. The building also has a good restaurant and we had our hot lunch at Camellia restaurant. After lunch break, at 3pm, we drove to Akagera National Park and we reached the lodge, Akagera Transit Lodge, around 5pm and we relaxed until dinner and overnight.

DAY 3: SAFARIS AND NIGHT GAME DRIVE

Akagera Transit Lodge is located in 2 kilometers to Akagera National Park; we started our safaris early morning when the park opened the gate; we entered from southern entrance, Kiyonza. After registration, we drive along lake circuit and we sighted Hippopotamus and Crocodiles on sunbeam. We encountered also animals like Buffaloes, Waterbuck, Impala, Zebra, etc. and we had a break to stretch our legs at Mihindi picnic and campsite area before we head north via Muhana where we have seen a tower of Giraffe, herd of Topis, etc.

We continued our safaris in Kilala plain, towards north, and we have seen a crash of White Rhinoceros (about 15 individuals) and herds of Buffaloes and more giraffes.



While having our packed lunch, the 3rd big five was sighted, rolling in the grass heading to the shade and guess what, the lion!!! We were excited to see and photograph this majestic King of the jungle and later afternoon we drove to the lodge, Karege Bush Camp.

After checking in and a brief relax, at 5:30pm, we started a night game drive at Kilala plain. We have seen most of the animals of the park in one place and luckily seen a pride of lion hunting. The night safaris went until 8pm, when we head back to the lodge for dinner and overnight.

DAY 4: EARLY MORNING SAFARIS AND DRIVING TO KISORO (UGANDA)

Remote, charming and scenic, Karengé Bush Camp's early-morning access to the game-rich Kilala Plains offers excellent wildlife viewing. We left the lodge at 5.30am to experience the morning activities, to try lion hunting and elephants. This time, is a dry season, with limited food, and most of animals are in plain and wetlands.

As we were driving from the lodge, towards back to Kilala Plain, where we were heading to try lions and white rhinoceros, we had a warm welcome of the bull Elephant after the park reception (north). The elephant was blocking the road by its gigantic size! We stayed with the elephant for about 30 minutes and we were forced to reroute our driving to Kilala by driving back near the Lodge.



In Kilala, we tried lion for a better picture, but we failed but we encountered a group of Rhinoceros and many antelopes among others Topi and Zebra. At 9am, we drove to the lodge for breakfast before we drive to Kisoro/Uganda.

Our breakfast was taken until 10:30 when we left Akagera with our packed lunch and we drove along Nyagatare and Musanze road with a quick stop at Soko coffee shop for our lunch and soft drink/coffee. At 5pm, we crossed Cyanika border; after screening and presenting our passports/viza, we drove about 15 minutes to reach our lodge, Travelers Rest Inn Hotel, a charming budget lodge in Kisoro town.

DAY 5: TREKKING MOUNTAIN GORILLAS AND DRIVING TO MUSANZE

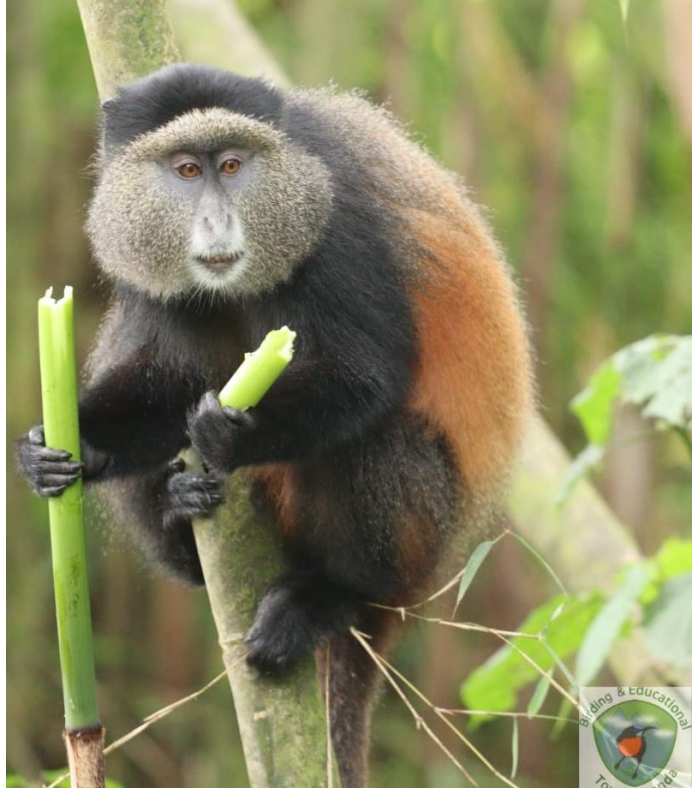
After an early breakfast, we drove to the headquarters of Mgahinga Gorilla National Park. After briefing on trekking Mountain Gorillas, we were allocated to Nyakagezi group and we walked with a ranger-guide up to a group of Gorillas. On the way, the ranger gave us an overview of the forest, some trees were named together with the history of the park and a group that we were about to trek. We were curious to know about the group we are visiting and see the majestic Mountain Gorillas, which was a lifetime experience to our clients. The Nyakagezi gorilla family is the only fully habituated gorilla group in Mgahinga Gorilla National Park. The family is composed of 9 members; 4 silver backs, 2 infants, 2 Adults females 1 juvenile. The dominant silverback is Mark who took over leadership from his father Busingo! A rare but an interesting fact about the Nyakagezi group is that Busingo still lives in the family yet in most cases, once the dormant silverback is overthrown, he is banished and dies in isolation or seeks refuge from other gorilla groups. Trekking went until 12pm when we drove to the lodge for dinner before we cross the border to Rwanda.



The main town of Volcanoes NP is Musanze (Rwanda) while Kisoro town in Uganda is the main town of Mgahinga Gorilla National Park. The two towns are close, separated by 32km, and you can trek in one or another park by just crossing the border.

DAY 6: TREKKING GOLDEN MONKYES AND VISIT TO ELLEN DEGENERES CAMPUS

Golden monkey trekking in Rwanda takes place in the bamboo forests at the base of the Volcanoes National Park. Trekking started with a briefing at the park headquarters, where we presented the trekking permits and passports before being allocated to the group of Kabatwa, on foot of Sabyinyo volcano. After driving about 20 minutes, we walked 40 minutes to meet the group. The Kabatwa group of golden monkeys has approximately 218 habituated individuals and we have seen most of them; some swinging in bamboos and others feeding on potatoes on the edge of the park. Trekking was conducted until 12pm when we stopped at the Headquarters of Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund, to visit Ellen DeGeneres Campus. After a hot lunch and coffee at the campus restaurant, we have explored the immersive interactive exhibits, research facilities, and sustainable landscapes dedicated to mountain gorilla conservation. We have also experienced a virtual trek with gorilla trek virtual reality (VR) headsets. Using this device, you seem to be in the jungle alongside real gorilla families for a life-like trekking! At 4pm, we drove to Fatima Hotel and enjoyed the swimming pool until dinner time.



DAY 7: DIAN FOSSEY TOMB AND DRIVING TO KIGALI

As we visited the office of Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International (DFGFI)/Karisoke Research Center, a fund created in 1978 originally under the name the Digit Fund to finance active anti-poaching patrols and protect endangered mountain gorillas and to save the ecosystems in which they live through a scientific and people-centered approach to create a healthier planet for all. On the last day of our tour, we visited the tomb of Dian Fossey to honor her life's work and immense contribution to saving endangered Mountain Gorillas.

As previous day, we started with registration at the park headquarters. After briefing, we drove to the parking where we start walking with our guide and the walk from the parking was about one and half hours.

At the tomb, we first of all honored Fossey, who spent 18 years studying and protecting mountain gorillas in Rwanda. Alongside Dian Fossey tomb, we visited the graves of Digit (her favorite silverback) and about 20 other mountain gorillas killed by poachers. From the guide, we also learnt the difficult anti-poaching struggles and ultimate sacrifice she made before she was murdered in 1985. The visit lasted about 2 hours when we walked back to the car and after lunch we drove to Kigali to reach our hotel, Chez Lando, at 5pm, **END**.

Brief, the tour was conducted successfully and services appreciated by our clients who ranked the tour with 5 stars on TripAdvisor page ([Ten Days to discover the natural beauty and wildlife of Rwanda \(with Reviews\)](#)). The hotels were in middle class, more locally run hotels as well as luxury tented campsites, and sometimes budget but clean. The attractions were super and easy to sight; we have seen the 4 big 5: Lion, Elephants, Rhinoceros and Buffaloes and we have trekked successfully Mountain Gorillas and Golden Monkeys. Tracks in Akagera national park are well maintained and road connecting Rwanda to Uganda are all asphalted and board process are very easy.

Here is a review from the client: *We arranged a private tour with Claudien on the recommendation of a colleague and we were very pleased with what he arranged for us! From*

the very beginning Claudien was communicative and responsive to our questions and quickly made any adjustments that we requested. If you ask, Claudien will deliver! We spent a few days in Kigali, Akagera National Park (Karenge Lodge was spectacular! Don't miss this magical place!) Claudien is so knowledgeable about all the wildlife, it was like having our own personal naturalist on the tour. We also wanted to get off the beaten track a bit and he organized for our Gorilla Trekking to take place in Uganda which led to a very intimate and personalized experience there. The Mountain Gorillas were the highlight of our trip. We also enjoyed the trip to Dian Fossey's Camp and Gravesite and the Golden Monkeys. An added bonus was that we needed to go to Kenya for a conference and Claudien arranged an amazing additional tour there which included Amboseli and Masai Mara. Claudien did a great job of giving us the opportunity to stay in more locally run hotels as well as luxury tented campsites, a nice mix of experience so that we felt that we weren't just on a tourist circuit. We felt like we were in very good hands with Claudien and we can't wait to go back!