



*Explore East Africa*

# TRAVEL GUIDE

BY INSIGHT GLOBAL EDUCATION

**Insight**  
Global Education

## EAST AFRICA

# TRAVEL.EXPLORE. DISCOVER.

---

East Africa is a region filled with rich culture, complex history, stunning landscapes and spectacular wildlife. During your time in the Semester in Development program, you'll have the opportunity to enjoy amazing safaris, beautiful beaches, vibrant cities, and breathtaking nature.

Please note that the Insight team will provide assistance and feedback as you prepare for your travels. However, Insight will not be planning or organizing any trips as part of the SID program.

All pricing information provided in this document is based on July 2017 prices, and are thus subject to change.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS



## THINGS TO KNOW

- Before You Leave
- Safety Tips

## UGANDA

- Safari
- Rafting on the Nile
- Gorilla Trekking
- Sipi Falls
- Lake Bunyonyi
- Fort Portal

## RWANDA

- Kigali
- Lake Kivu
- Congo-Nile Trail

## TANZANIA

- Zanzibar
- Safari
- Mt. Kilimanjaro
- Chimpanzee Trekking

## KENYA

- Safari
- Mombasa

# THINGS TO KNOW

## BEFORE TRAVELLING IN EAST AFRICA

### BEFORE YOU LEAVE

- **Don't forget these commonly forgotten items:** passport, USD for visas and cash for exchange, anti-malarials, yellow fever card, hat, sunscreen, camera, camera charger, swimwear, towel
- **Choose your method of transportation:** Flying is often the fastest yet most expensive option, however, you can also take a bus to Kenya, Rwanda, and Tanzania if you're on a budget. Private hire is another option.
- **Be mindful of traditions and cultural norms.** On the Swahili Coast (e.g. Zanzibar and Mombasa), dress conservatively (i.e. knees and shoulders covered) and behave conservatively when outside of the resort and private beach areas. Greetings are also important, so say 'jambo' (hello) to people you pass by.
- Check **visa requirements** when travelling outside of Uganda. If you have an East African visa you can travel freely to Rwanda and Kenya. Keep in mind that the Tanzanian tourist visa is \$50 USD for Canadian citizens and you will also have to pay for another Ugandan visa upon re-entry. US citizens have to pay \$100 USD for a Tanzanian visa. A Rwandan single-entry visa is \$30 USD and requires you apply in advance if you are a Canadian citizen.
- You can only pay with new (2009 or later) \$50 and \$100 bills at borders for your visa.
- Tour operators that provide meals have set menus. Make sure they're aware of dietary restrictions in advance.

### SAFETY TIPS

- **Be wary of theft and keep an eye on your valuables,** especially in popular tourist destinations on the Swahili Coast. People may try to scam you and cause distractions.
- **Do not enter unmarked vehicles** claiming to be taxis.
- **Avoid 'Beach Boys'** in Zanzibar and Mombasa who will try to scam you. They often offer to carry bags and will look for ways to extort money from you.
- In **Zanzibar** in particular, you'll come across plenty of people offering tours in the streets. These are often scams, so give them a quick 'no, thank you' and be on your way. **Book tours through your accommodation or tour operators.**
- **Stay hydrated and use plenty of sunscreen.**
- Be aware of sea urchins and falling coconuts on the coast.
- **Watch what you eat.** It would be awful to fall ill during your trip!
- **Keep emergency contact information with you at all times.** This includes the numbers of Insight staff, your family, your accommodation provider, and your insurance provider.
- Ultimately, **be aware and be smart.**



THE PEARL OF AFRICA

# UGANDA



## SAFARI

During an East African safari, you'll feel like you're in a scene from the Lion King as you observe awe-inspiring wildlife in their natural habitats. In Uganda, the primary safari options are **Murchinson Falls National Park** and **Queen Elizabeth National Park**. We generally recommend Murchinson Falls as there's more wildlife and picturesque landscapes.

For a Murchinson Falls excursion, we recommend Red Chilli Hideaway, a popular hostel in Kampala, which provides the most affordable and highly rated safari options. Rates for a 3-day safari and Nile cruise are \$320 USD including transport and accommodation. Food is not included but is available at their restaurant (\$5-\$15 USD/meal).

Alternately, you can check in with Patrick from Road Gurus (+256 778 317 914) to see if he can take you. You can compare prices with other companies and see whether he will match them.

Keep in mind that you should be wearing airy, comfortable clothing and drinking plenty of water during any safari in East Africa.

# RAFTING ON THE NILE

Enjoy an incredible white water rafting experience in Jinja, the source of the Nile. Whether you're the adventurous type or the reluctantly adventurous, rafting on the Nile is a lot of fun! You'll be rafting through a number of exciting rapids (including some Grade 5 rapids), and will also enjoy time in still water to swim in the Nile. Rafting typically costs \$140 for a full day, inclusive of transport to and from Jinja, accommodation, and a breakfast and lunch on rafting day with the rafting company, Nalubale. You can contact them using the following email: [bookings@nalubalerafting.com](mailto:bookings@nalubalerafting.com).



# GORILLA TREKKING

There are only 786 Mountain Gorillas left in the world, many of which are in Uganda, and they are truly a sight to see. Trekking would take place in the beautiful Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, where you will push your way through the forest. Gorilla Trekking can be combined with a Rwanda trip to save on transport.

Transport will be approximately \$100 USD, accommodation will cost about \$20 USD/night, food is about \$5-\$15 USD/meal, and the trekking permit is \$600 USD. Please note that prices may vary seasonally.



# SIPI FALLS

Enjoy beautiful hiking and see up to three of Sipi's separate waterfalls. Great for an affordable weekend trip, especially if you travel by matatu (mini bus). Check out Crow's Nest Hotel for accommodations and contact Juliet (+256 704 326 278) from Widows Coffee Tours for a coffee tour. Note that there will be additional costs for tour guides.



# LAKE BUNYONYI

Located near the Rwandan border, Lake Bunyonyi has a lot to offer. You can enjoy swimming in the lake, camping, hiking, kayaking, and more. Be sure to check out the sunset from the Arcadia Cottages viewpoint. For accommodation, we recommend staying on the lake at Bunyonyi Overland ([resort@bunyonyioverland.com](mailto:resort@bunyonyioverland.com)).

# FORT PORTAL

Fort Portal is a town located in Western Uganda, and offers beautiful scenery, nature, and adventure. You can explore the Crater Lakes, track chimpanzees at Kibale Forest National Park, or visit the hot springs in Semuliki National Park.



THE LAND OF A THOUSAND HILLS

# RWANDA



## KIGALI

Rwanda has breath-taking landscapes, a tragic and deeply important history, and a cool city to visit in Kigali! Transport to Kigali (10-11 hours) will cost between \$70-\$100 USD by private hire. Buses are cheaper and flights are more expensive.

- Visit the Kigali Genocide Memorial. We suggest that you research the Rwandan genocide beforehand. Some documentaries and films you can see include: Shake Hands with the Devil, Shooting Dogs, Sometimes in April
- Visit Nyamata Church Memorial
- Have a coffee at Hotel des Milles Collines (also known as 'Hotel Rwanda')
- Hike up Mount Kigali
- Check out the handicrafts available at the Caplaki Craft Market
- Grab a bite at: Papyrus (Italian, Fusion), Sole Luna (Italian), Zen (Japanese), Tangren (Chinese), Heaven Restaurant & Bar, Meze Fresh (Mexican fast food)
- Grab a drink at: Trattoria, Sundowners, Papyrus, Le Must

# LAKE KIVU

Visit Gisenyi, a city in the western part of Rwanda that is right on the border with the Democratic Republic of Congo. Gisenyi is about a three-and-a-half hour bus ride from Kigali. You can buy bus tickets from any bus company in Kigali.

You can stay at the Discover Rwanda Youth Hostel in Gisenyi, which offers cheap accommodation and is right across the beach where you can swim in Lake Kivu. Conveniently, there is a tourist information office right by the hostel that can provide more information and travel tips.

Alternatively, you can enjoy Paradis Malahide Guesthouse for a cozier setting and access to their private beach.

You can also start the Congo Nile hiking trail from the edge of town.

We also highly recommend **Nyungwe National Park** and **Akagera National Park**.

# CONGO-NILE TRAIL

The Congo-Nile Trail is a network of trails and roads that run from Gisenyi at the north end of Lake Kivu 227 kilometers south to the town of Cyangugu at the southern end of the lake.

You can walk up to 4-5 days or bike for about 3-4 days across this long trail. The landscapes are extremely scenic and the trail is quite difficult, both for this simple reason: Rwanda is, in fact, the land of a thousand hills.

Contact Annie (+250 727 927 902 for WhatsApp; [uwarithe@gmail.com](mailto:uwarithe@gmail.com) for email) if you want a reliable guide for the Congo-Nile trail. She also does other tours around Rwanda, and day tours in Kigali.





MOUNTAINS, BEACHES, PLAINS, AND CRATERS

# TANZANIA



## ZANZIBAR

Zanzibar is a stunning semi-autonomous island just off the coast of Tanzania. It is home to gorgeous beaches, rich culture, and fascinating history as a former centre for slave trade. Flights are about \$450 USD. Prices for accommodation and flights vary based on peak and low seasons.

**Stone Town** is a unique and exciting place. Take city tours or spice tours, explore the architecture and historical buildings, visit the markets, eat at the great restaurants, try a Zanzibar pizza from Forodhani Gardens at night, visit Prison Island and see the giant tortoises, or simply get lost in the narrow streets. Please respect the culture and dress conservatively (aside from in resorts and beach areas on other parts of the island).

If you're interested in nightlife, go to a Full Moon Party in **Kendwa Rocks**. Kendwa Rocks is a popular accommodation option, as it is affordable and has the nicest beaches on the main island.

If you're looking for a quieter spot, we recommend **Jambiani**. This charming town has nice beaches (but be aware that it has low tides), a nearby cave system, and is walking (or biking) distance to **Paje**, a more tourist-friendly location. Paje is great if you're looking for kite-surfing (and other water sports), and fun bars.

**Nungwi** or **Matemwe** are great for snorkelling. You can enjoy half-day snorkelling excursions for about \$25 USD.

You can also visit **Jozani Forest** to see the world's only Red Colobus monkeys, near the eastern side of the island.

# SAFARI

The **Serengeti** is the inspiration behind The Lion King, and you'll see why if you choose to visit. The landscapes are expansive and seem endless, and the wildlife is incredible. We recommend a 3-day safari to be combined with

**Ngorongoro Crater** (2 days Serengeti, 1 day Ngorongoro). The Ngorongoro Crater is a volcanic crater with stunning landscapes. Be sure to time your safari with the migration patterns (there are certain months in which The Serengeti will have more animals and other months where the Masai Mara in Kenya has more.

We recommend starting from either Mwanza or Arusha/Moshi. Try to join a larger group and push for prices at around \$500 - \$600 USD (including park fees, accommodation, food, transport, a vehicle, and a guide for three days and two nights). Depending on the season, you could end up paying more, so do your research.

# MT. KILIMANJARO

That's right! You can climb Mount Kilimanjaro, the tallest mountain in Africa. Standing at 5,896 metres, Mt Kilimanjaro is also the highest free-standing mountain in the world. Make sure you do research first to prepare for the climb.

The climb is pricey at around \$1,500 - \$2,500, and takes 6-8 days to complete, depending on your route. Operators will provide a guide, accommodation, a porter (most of the time), and food for the duration of the excursion.





# CHIMPANZEE TREKKING

Visit **Gombe**, the place where Jane Goodall did her transformative chimpanzee research! Gombe is an island off of the coast of **Kigoma**. We recommend spending a night or two in Kigoma and staying at Jakobsen's Beach and Guesthouse to enjoy their private beach on Lake Tanganyika. Kigoma is also home to the Jane Goodall Institute and some beautiful markets. Jakobsen staff can help you arrange a boat for you to get to Gombe for chimpanzee trekking.

Once you arrive in Gombe (by either public or chartered boat), you will be required to pay a \$100 conservation fee (park fee) plus an 18% VAT (tax) for every 24 hours that you will stay on the island. In addition to this, you'll pay a \$20 guide fee per group of five people per excursion.

If you're staying on the island overnight, accommodation is \$20 per night (or more if you want to camp). Meals are \$10 per person for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Keep this in mind as you are not allowed to bring outside food due to the wildlife (the baboons, in particular). You can spend leisure time on the island's beach as well! Depending on the season, you may have to book ahead at: [gonapachimps@yahoo.com](mailto:gonapachimps@yahoo.com); [chimps@tanzaniaparks.com](mailto:chimps@tanzaniaparks.com); +255 282 804 009.

Note: Chimpanzee trekking is also available in Uganda.





HOME OF THE 'BIG FIVE'

# KENYA



## SAFARI

You have the option of doing a safari in the beautiful Maasai Mara in Kenya, which is contiguous with the Serengeti. In addition to the safari, you can learn more about the Maasai culture by partaking in a village visit. We recommend timing your safari appropriately so that you visit during the migration months (animals begin arriving in the Maasai Mara in July and remain until October).

Flights to Nairobi are typically between \$200-\$300 USD. You also have the option of taking a bus if you're looking for more affordable options. However, keep in mind that the trip will be approximately 20 hours.

Safaris are between \$500-\$750 USD and include transport, a guide, park entry fees, accommodation, 3 meals per day, and 1 L of water per day. We recommend 'Kenya Walking Survivors Safaris for budget safari options. For example, they offer a 3-day game drive in the Maasai Mara for \$500. Some service providers offer safari tours that include Mombasa in the itinerary. This may or may not be more cost-effective for you, depending on pricing for other transport options to Mombasa. Prices will vary by season and the time of booking.



# MOMBASA

A city on the coast of the Indian Ocean, Mombasa is the most popular tourist destination in Kenya. Interestingly, it has more in common with the coast of Tanzania than it does with Nairobi in terms of language and culture. Mombasa is a blend of Indian, Arabic, and African influences, adding to its charm. You can reach Mombasa from Nairobi by train.

You can enjoy both the activities in city, and the beautiful beaches it has to offer. This means anything from admiring the architecture (check out Fort Jesus) and markets, to relaxing on some of the most beautiful beaches in Africa (we recommend Diani Beach).

The Kenyan coast has a lot to offer. Here are some fun things you can do in Mombasa:

- Take a dhow – traditional wooden boats – on the Indian Ocean for a romantic view of what it has to offer.
- Raise your adrenaline by taking on some water sports! Windsurfing and kitesurfing are particularly popular.
- Go diving or snorkelling to admire the colourful life beneath the surface. You can also take diving courses at Diani Beach, Malindi, and Wasini Island.
- Enjoy some of the amazing restaurants Mombasa has to offer!
- Visit the historical attractions and markets while roaming around town.
- There are a number of city, wildlife, and ocean tours available. Check them out!





*Safe Travels!*

**INSIGHT GLOBAL EDUCATION**



@insightglobaled



/insightglobaleducation



insightglobaleducation

insightglobaleducation.com