

ASTEP AHEAD

custom guided journeys

UGANDA - THE PEARL OF AFRICA GORILLAS, CHIMPS & THE NILE

We begin on the Nile River to track chimps and wonder at the Murchison's Falls. We then visit the Queen Elizabeth National Park and enjoy its stunning wildlife, before ending in Bwindi Impenetrable Forest to track through virgin forest in search of the rare mountain gorilla. Spending a magical hour with these fascinating apes is one of life's great experiences.



12-DAY ITINERARY

Key to Meals that are included B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner

- Day 1 On arrival in Entebbe, you are met by your A Step Ahead guide and transferred 20 mins to [No.5 Boutique Hotel](#) for 1 night D only
- Day 2-5 Scheduled flight to Murchisons (1.5 hrs) and game drive to [Platinum Mobile Camp](#) on the North Bank of the River Nile for 4 nights. We enjoy chimp tracking, game drives, boat trips, visits to the Falls and fishing B,L,D
- Days 6-8 Scheduled flight (2.5 hours, with stops) to Kihikihi in the Southern Sector of Queen Elizabeth National Park. Transfer to [Ishasha Wilderness Camp](#) (1.5 hrs) for 3 nights B,L,D
- Days 9-11 Drive to [Buhoma Lodge](#), in the Bwindi Forest National Park, for 3 nights. We track gorillas on Days 10 and 11. Extra afternoon activities are not included B,L,D
- Day 12 Last Day. We drive around 1.5 hours back to Kihikihi for a scheduled flight to Entebbe. We depart on an international flight this afternoon. B only

End of A Step Ahead S.L. Services

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HIGHLIGHTS

Spending an unforgettable hour with wild chimpanzees. Spying an extremely rare shoebill while floating down the Victoria Nile; encountering a herd of elephants that charge through the undergrowth at Murchisons. Game driving in search of tree-climbing lions in Ishasha National Park. A magical hour (on 2 successive days) in the Bwindi Impenetrable Forest with Mountain gorillas.



ACTIVITIES (Some activities are not included in the cost and may need to be booked in advance)

Entebbe - Included - Botanical Garden visit **Not included** - Lake Victoria Sunset cruise (\$290)

Murchison Falls National Park - Included - Game drives, Chimp tracking, Bottom of Falls cruise, Delta boat trip, Top of Falls hike, 1 fishing permit per person **Not included** - Hot Air Ballooning (around \$500 per person), extra boat and equipment for serious fishing!

Ishasha Sector of Queen Elizabeth National Park - Included - Game drives, Community visit **Not included** - Maramabango Forest Walk

Bwindi National Park - Included - 2 gorilla tracks, Community Walk **Not included** - Forest Walks (\$70pp), Batwa Pygmy visit (\$80pp), Bird Watching Walk (\$70) (You may not have time for these)

PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS FOR GORILLA TRACKING

Participants must be 15 years of age and prepared to hike for 2-7 hours, sometimes up steep terrain. While tracking you initially follow forest paths. As you near the gorillas it may be necessary for the trackers to hack through jungle to make a trail. Terrain may be steep and slippery at such times. The descent can be steep.

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ENTEBBE

Entebbe is a town of about 80,000 inhabitants situated on the shores of Lake Victoria about 40 kms (24 mi) from Kampala, the Uganda's capital and largest city. Entebbe is most known for its airport and the Uganda National Botanical Gardens. The oldest golf course in East Africa is also here.



Entebbe International Airport has services to airports in Tanzania, Kenya, Ethiopia and Rwanda, and also flights to Dubai, London, Amsterdam and Brussels. There is a light aircraft airfield, Kajjansi, used for local flights and charters 20 kms south of Kampala.

NO.5 BOUTIQUE HOTEL

Nestled in the leafy suburbs of Entebbe, Hotel No.5 is a stylish new boutique hotel. Its 10 luxury en-suite rooms open onto the garden and swimming pool and are equipped with modern facilities - en suite bathroom, air conditioning, Wi-Fi and a mosquito net. Shared facilities include a spa and a hotel gym. Attention to detail and an attentive guest experience are synonymous with Hotel No. 5, making it the perfect choice for a restful stay in this busy city.



CONNECTIVITY - There is phone and cell network coverage in Entebbe and wifi for guest use at the hotel.

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MURCHISON'S FALLS NATIONAL PARK, UGANDA

Murchison's National Park is Uganda's oldest and largest wildlife reserve. This national park is 3,893 km² (1,500 mi²). The total protected area also includes bordering Bugungu and Karuma Wildlife Refuges and Budongo Forest Reserve, which increases it to 5,663 km² (2,186 mi²).



Murchison's National Park is bisected by the Victoria Nile, which races through rapids and eventually plunges over a 45m escarpment at the dramatic Murchison's Falls, the centerpiece of the park. After the falls the river transforms into a broad and placid watercourse that flows calmly into Lake Albert, before exiting the lake as the Albert Nile.

This stretch of the river provides one of the most remarkable wildlife spectacles. Aside from the river being populated with crocodiles, hippos, various fish species, and a huge variety of birdlife, other visitors to the river bank include elephant, giraffe, Uganda kob, Defassa waterbuck and Cape buffalo.

Most of the accommodation is on the south bank of the river, and a quaint ferry takes passengers across to the north bank for game drives. There Uganda kob, Rothschild's giraffe, warthog and oribi abound, as well as predators, such as side-striped jackal, lion, leopard and spotted hyena.



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SPECIAL SPECIES

Murchison's Falls is renowned for its Rothschild's giraffes, Jackson's hartebeest, and the dry country Patas monkey. It is also one of the best places to see the Abyssinian ground hornbill, and it is sometimes possible to see the unusual shoebill, the collared, black-winged and rock pratincoles, and the standard-winged nightjar.



This is one of the eastern-most points in Africa to see the red-throated bee-eater, a bird that you do not see in most of the other frequented "safari" countries of eastern and southern Africa.

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PLATINUM MOBILE CAMP

We stay in an exclusive private tented camp with a dedicated crew who can cater to our needs. The camp is usually set up in a remote area on the north bank of the Nile.



The camp has its own mess or dining tent, with a full bar, comfy cushions to relax in, and a bank of electrical outlets to recharge camera batteries, etc. Each accommodation tent has large beds with crisp linen, dressing area and an en suite bucket shower and flush loo. A daily laundry service is included (except ladies' "smalls").

The camp also has a game drive vehicle and a boat at its disposal, allowing for flexibility in activities. Early in the morning, or just before dusk we can game drive in the wildlife-rich area near camp. Later in the day we can set out on the Nile by boat, exploring westwards towards the Delta with Lake Albert, or eastwards to Murchison's Falls, watching wildlife, fishing, or finding a spot to relax and birdwatch.

There is nothing better than sipping cocktails around the campfire at dusk, listening to the water lapping along the river bank, and a serenade of roaring lions in the distance!

On one morning, we take an early morning boat trip across the river and then drive 1.5 hours to the Budongo Forest to track chimps. We hope to find them after a couple of hours hiking and we can then stay with them for 1 hour.



CONNECTIVITY - There is very patchy cellphone coverage. There is no wifi or internet connection.

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QUEEN ELIZABETH NATIONAL PARK (SOUTHERN SECTOR), UGANDA

The 1,978 square km (764 sq mi) Queen Elizabeth National Park is one of Uganda's most diverse national parks, with several distinct sectors, each different to the other. These include swampland, varied crater lakes, the lakeshore of Lake Edward, the Kyambura Gorge and its contrasting forests and grasslands, the dense Maramagambo Forest, and in the most remote corner in the far south of the park, the savannas of Ishasha. It is not surprising that the park harbors 95 mammal species (including about 20 different predator species), 10 primate species (including chimpanzees), and over 600 species of birds! The most common antelope species are Uganda kob, topi, Defassa waterbuck and bushbuck. Warthog are also widespread. As a result it is also Uganda's most popular park for visitors keen to see big game.

However the southern Ishasha section of the park is so remote that it is little visited. Nevertheless this area is renowned for its tree-climbing lions. Along the Ishasha River hippopotamus are common, and in the bordering forest bushbuck and black and white colobus monkeys are seen, as well as a variety of birds including the black bee-eater, the broadbill roller and Cassin's grey flycatcher.



Further from the river, in the open savanna areas Uganda kob and large herds of topi and buffalo are seen. Elephants also frequent the area.



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ISHASHA WILDERNESS CAMP

Ishasha Wilderness Lodge is situated in the south-western corner of Queen Elizabeth National Park, in a grove of shady trees on the banks of the Ntungwe River.



There is a central lounge and dining area includes a charging bank for charging batteries for video, cameras and other electronics, and some wifi access. Freshly prepared meals are often served in the shade of trees on the river bank, and sundowners are enjoyed around the campfire.

There are only ten canvas rooms for guest accommodation in the woodland near the river. Each has mosquito netting over the beds and an en-suite dressing area and bathroom with an eco-flush toilet, and bush shower. Lighting is low-impact solar powered.



ACTIVITIES

Game drives - usually in open style safari vehicles

Bird viewing - excellent bird viewing areas are accessible on walks or on game drives

Community village project - Visit the nearby village, and learn about local village life, the problems and solutions to living next to a national park, visit a school or buy locally made handicrafts. **Maramagambo Forest walk (extra cost)**- it's a 1.5 hour drive from camp to the forest

CONNECTIVITY - There is patchy cellphone coverage. The camp has some wifi.

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BWINDI IMPENETRABLE FOREST NATIONAL PARK, UGANDA

In the far south-western corner of Uganda lie a series of densely forested ridges and valleys sliced by mountain streams flowing mainly westwards into Lake Edward. This mountainous area, known as the Kigezi Highlands, is covered in ancient forests which existed long before the creation of the Great Rift Valley. The altitude here varies from 1,160m (3,800ft) - 2,607m (8,550ft) at the top of Rwamunyonyi Hill providing contrast between the swamps in the valleys and the high ridges. Although this area was first gazetted as a forest reserve in 1932, it was not fully protected until 1991 when 331 km² (128 mi²) of this forest became the Bwindi Impenetrable National Park in 1991. This is a haven for a variety of wildlife species, including the chimpanzee and the rare Mountain gorilla (*Gorilla beringei beringei*).

SPECIAL SPECIES

In 1989 the estimated world population of Mountain gorillas was 620. Happily the population has increased in 2012 to 880 individuals. About 400 of these inhabit the Bwindi Impenetrable National Park. Most of the gorillas here, and all of the chimpanzees are not habituated, so they are not used to seeing humans. Occasionally it may be possible to hear their calls and grunts while hiking in



the forest, but it is almost unheard of to see them. Luckily a few families have been habituated to human presence to enable them to be studied, and to allow wildlife enthusiasts to see them in the wild. The greatest attraction of visiting this park is undoubtedly to spend a magical hour a day with one of these few families of habituated wild gorillas.

Bwindi is also home to a number of other primate species, including black-and-white colobus monkey, L'Hoest's monkey, red-tailed monkey, blue monkey, vervet monkey and olive baboon. In addition there are about 80 other mammal species including duiker, a few elephant, bushbuck, bush pig, giant forest hog and several small cat species, including the rare golden cat. It seems extraordinary that despite it being perfect habitat, both leopards and buffalo were hunted to extinction here.

More than 350 species of birds have been recorded here including some endemics. Look out for the three species of brilliantly coloured turacos, the black bee-eater, some of the iridescent sunbirds, or the listen for the cackle of the crested guinea-fowl.



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BUHOMA LODGE, BUHOMA, BWINDI

The lodge has 10 comfortable cottages which have been carefully built. Each has its own private verandah, allowing wonderful views of the forest canopy of the National Park. Inside the spacious cottages are comfortable beds, a well-appointed en suite bathroom with flushing toilet and a hot shower.



ACTIVITIES

Gorilla tracking - Our main focus is gorilla tracking. The hike could take anything from a couple of hours to most of the day, so we should be prepared for anything!

Other activities - Buhoma village is only a few minutes walk from the lodge so it is possible to enjoy activities such as visiting the Batwa (pygmy) people, or seeing a community project operate.

Bird viewing walk - amble through the nearby forest accompanied by an expert local guide, perhaps birdwatching (there are some wonderful regional special species here), or in search of some of the shy forest wildlife such as duiker, giant forest hog, or maybe even the forest elephant. A longer hike can offer fantastic views of the surrounding countryside, and even vistas into the Congo.

Cultural & community visit - Visit the nearby area meeting the local predominantly Bantu peoples - merchants, tea pickers, or even a traditional medicine man. You may find out how to make local beer from bananas, or visit the local clinic or school.



CONNECTIVITY - There is no patchy cellphone coverage and wifi.

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COST OF THE ABOVE 11 NIGHT/12-DAY UGANDA SAFARI IN 2020 IN US DOLLARS

With A Step Ahead guide and private vehicle throughout, including scheduled flights

Number of guests	4	6	8	10
High season - Jan-Feb, Jul-Sep & Dec	\$15,900	\$13,200	\$11,500	\$10,500
Mid season - March, June & October	\$15,440	\$12,500	\$10,880	\$9,920
Low season - Apr-May & June	\$15,160	\$12,220	\$10,600	\$9,620

PLUS - 2 x gorilla permits @ US\$ 700 each permit = US\$1,400 per person

Notes:

1. The above costs include scheduled flights Entebbe-Murchison's-Kihiki-Entebbe.
2. It is possible to do the scheduled flights as private charters, if preferred. Costs supplied on request.
3. If anyone would like to do serious sport fishing while at Murchison's, we would advise that you hire a special fishing boat for that purpose at an extra cost of around \$320 for a 2-person boat for a full day. Extra fishing permits may be required and fishing equipment may need to be hired.
4. Extra afternoon activities in the Buhoma area are not included as the gorilla tracking can take all day, or you may be tired after the gorilla tracking and prefer to relax at the lodge. If anyone would like to do extra activities after the gorilla tracking, your A Step Ahead guide can organize that. Any extra park or entrance fees are not included.
5. It is possible to stay at Gorilla Forest Camp in Buhoma, instead of Buhoma Lodge. There is a supplement of around US\$ 1,200 per person to stay at Gorilla Forest Camp.

Included in the above safari price: Services of A Step Ahead guide from Day 1 to Day 12; full board accommodation from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 12; services of a fully trained crew and daily laundry service when in Murchison's (except ladies' smalls); private boat and private safari vehicle for activities in Murchison's; 1 chimp tracking permit & 1 fishing permit per person in Murchison's; ground transport in private, customized 4 wheel drive vehicle in Ishasha and Buhoma; laundry services at Buhoma and Ishasha; all park entry and camping fees; soft and local brand alcoholic drinks (except premium brands) everywhere; drinking water on game drives; scheduled flights Entebbe-Murchison's-Kihiki-Entebbe; Flying Doctor membership (covers air evacuation to Nairobi Hospital in an emergency); transfers to/from the lodges/camps and airports.

Not included in the above safari price: Any snacks, drinks or laundry services at Hotel No 5; any activities in Entebbe at the beginning or end; 2 days of gorilla tracking in Bwindi; any extra fishing permits or extra chimp tracking permits; hot air ballooning at Murchisons; any extra afternoon activities while at Buhoma Lodge; any meals, snacks or drinks in Entebbe on the last day; any kind of insurance (such as medical, evacuation, trip cancellation, or travel insurances); international flights; any regional flights (please see separate cost above); items of a personal nature (e.g. visas, airport taxes, telephone or fax services, massages, spa treatments, internet services etc.); gratuities.

Note: This safaris is sold and organized by A Step Ahead S.L.

PLEASE SEE OUR *TERMS & CONDITIONS (2020)* DOCUMENT FOR MORE DETAILED INFORMATION ON TERMS AND INCLUSIONS & EXCLUSIONS

If they are not attached to this itinerary a copy of the *Terms & Conditions (2020)* and our *Liability Waiver* are available for your perusal [on our website](#).

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