



Uganda

POP 34.6 MILLION

Includes ➔

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Best of Nature

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Best of Culture

- ➔ Sipi Falls coffee tours (p730)
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Why Go?

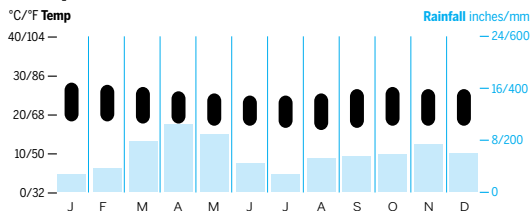
Emerging from the shadows of a dark history, a new dawn of tourism has risen in Uganda, polishing a glint back on the 'pearl of Africa'. Travellers are streaming in to explore what is basically the best of everything the continent has to offer.

For a relatively small country, there's a lot that's big about the place. It's home to the tallest mountain range in Africa, the world's longest river and the continent's largest lake. And with half the remaining mountain gorillas residing here, and the Big Five to be ticked off, wildlife watching is huge.

Although anti-gay sentiments have cast a shadow on the otherwise positive tourism picture, and tensions continue to simmer with the Karamojong in the northeast, Uganda remains one of the safest destinations in Africa. Other than watching out for the odd hippo at your campsite, there's no more to worry about here than in most other countries.

When to Go

Kampala



Jun–Sep The best bet weather-wise, with minimal rainfall and not too hot.

Jan–Feb Also great weather; the perfect time to climb the Rwenzoris or Mt Elgon.

Oct–Nov Can be a little rainy but, with fewer travellers, gorilla permits are much easier to obtain.

KAMPALA

📍 0414 / POP 1.5 MILLION

Kampala makes a good introduction to Uganda. It's a dynamic city with few of the hassles of its eastern neighbour, Nairobi, and some worthy attractions to keep you occupied. It's safe to walk around virtually everywhere in the daytime, and downtown doesn't shut down until well into the evening. Mix in the excellent international restaurants and a thumping nightlife and there's enough going on to stop you from just touching down and rushing off.

👁️ Sights

Kasubi Tombs

MAUSOLEUM

(Map p720; www.kasubitombs.org; adult/child incl guide US\$10,000/1000; ☀️ 8am-6pm) The Unesco World Heritage-listed tombs, a huge reed and bark cloth mausoleum for the previous four kings of the Baganda people, was an amazing site until it burned down in March 2010. Fortunately, it's in the process of being rebuilt. Take a minibus to Kasubi trading centre; from there it's 500m uphill.

Uganda Museum

MUSEUM

(Map p720; Kira Rd; adult/child US\$3000/1500; ☀️ 10am-5.30pm) One of East Africa's best museums with ethnographic exhibits (get the lowdown on banana beer here) and a hands-on display of traditional musical instruments.

Buganda Parliament

BUILDING

(Map p720; Kabakanjagala Rd; admission incl guide US\$10,000; ☀️ 8am-5pm) A great place to learn about the history and culture of the Buganda Kingdom. Guided tours take you inside the parliament building, and provide interesting stories and details about the 56 different clans.

Mengo Palace

PALACE

(Map p720; Twekobe; admission incl guide US\$10,000) Built in 1922 this former home of the Buganda king has remained empty since 1966 when the then prime minister Milton Obote ordered a dramatic attack to oust King Mutesa II. The adjacent site became a notorious underground prison and torture-execution chamber built by Idi Amin in the 1970s.

👉 Tours

Coffee Safari

SAFARI

(Map p722; 📞 0772-505619; www.1000cupsoffee.com; per person US\$100; ☀️ 7.30am Fri) You can trace back your coffee from the cup to the

SET YOUR BUDGET

Budget

- ➔ Double room with shared bathroom US\$20
- ➔ Plate of *matoke* (mashed plantains) and beans US\$0.90
- ➔ Beer (500mL) US\$0.75-1.25
- ➔ Car rental (self-drive) per day from US\$55

Midrange

- ➔ Hotel double room from US\$65
- ➔ Two-course dinner US\$15
- ➔ Short taxi ride US\$6
- ➔ Car rental (with driver) from US\$80

Top End

- ➔ Hotel double room US\$150
- ➔ Two-course dinner US\$25
- ➔ Glass of wine US\$5

farm with this safari run by 1000 Cups Coffee House. Book before noon on Thursday.

Uganda Bicycle

CYCLING

(📞 0787-016688; www.ugandabicycle.com; per person US\$100,000) Popular cycling tours explore some less visited parts on the outskirts of Kampala. Tours depart daily, meeting at Casisia Lodge at 8am.

🛏️ Sleeping

Budget lodging fills up fast, so reservations are advised if you're arriving late in the day.

Red Chillii Hideaway

BACKPACKERS \$

(📞 0414-223903; www.redchillihideaway.com; campsite per person US\$5, dm US\$8, d from US\$30, s/d without bathroom from US\$15/20, cottages from US\$50; 📍📞📺) One of Kampala's most popular backpackers, Red Chillii is always packed out with young travellers for its dorms, cottages, kitchen facilities, free internet and budget tours into the national parks. There are plans to move to a new site in Butabika, a few kilometres from its current spot.

Backpackers Hostel

BACKPACKERS \$

(Map p720; 📞 0772-430587; www.backpackers.co.ug; Natete Rd, Lunguja; campsite per person US\$12,000, dm US\$16,000-18,000, s/d US\$45,000/60,000, without bathroom US\$26,000/48,000; 📍📞📺) Kampala's original budget hostel is still