



# Burundi

## Includes »

Bujumbura .....	558
Around Bujumbura .....	564
Understand Burundi .....	564
History .....	564
The Culture.....	565
Economy.....	566
Environment.....	566
Survival Guide.....	566
Directory A–Z .....	566
Getting There & Away ..	567
Getting Around.....	568

## Best of Nature

- » Saga Beach (p559)
- » Chutes de la Karera (p564)
- » Source du Nil (p564)

## Best of Culture

- » Les Tambourinaires drummers (p562)
- » Bujumbura Central Market (p559)
- » Musée National de Gitega (p564)

## Why Go?

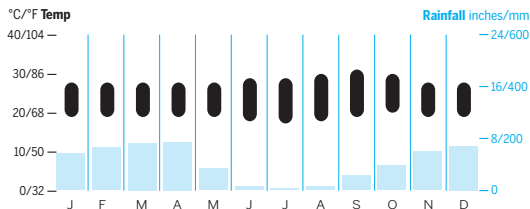
Tiny Burundi is an incongruous mix of soaring mountains, languid lakeside communities and a tragic past blighted by ethnic conflict.

When civil war broke out in 1993, the economy was shattered and the tourist industry succumbed to a quick death. Since then, many of the upcountry attractions have been off limits, including the southernmost source of the Nile and the ancient forest of Parc National de la Kibira.

Now the word is out that the war is over, Burundi is receiving a trickle of travellers and the country is safer now than it has been for years. Its steamy capital, Bujumbura, has a lovely location on the shores of Lake Tanganyika, and just outside the city are some of the finest inland beaches on the continent. Burundians also have an irrepressible *joie de vivre*, and their smiles are as infectious as a rhythm laid down by a Les Tambourinaires drummer.

## When to Go

### Bujumbura



**Year-Round**  
Altitude affects regional temperature. Bujumbura is warmer than elsewhere.

**Oct–May** Mild rainy season with a brief dry spell in December and January.

**Jun & Aug** Locals flock to Lake Tanganyika beaches during the 'long dry' season.

## BUJUMBURA

Frozen in time, thanks to more than a decade of conflict, there has been almost no development in Burundi's capital since the 1980s, a stark contrast to the changes in Kigali (Rwanda) and Kampala (Uganda) to the north. Indeed, Bujumbura retains much of its grandiose colonial town planning, with wide boulevards and imposing public buildings, and continues to function

as one of the most important ports on Lake Tanganyika.

'Buj' has earned a freewheelin' reputation for its dining, drinking and dancing scene, especially given the recent influx of international peacekeepers, aid workers and foreign officials. But the capital isn't exactly the safest city in the region, so keep your wits about you; especially once the sun goes down.



### Burundi Highlights

- 1 Dine out in style and dancing into the wee hours of the morning in Burundi's surprisingly vibrant capital **Bujumbura** (p558)
- 2 Down a cold one under the shade of a palm tree

- on **Saga Beach** (p559), one of Africa's finest inland beaches
- 3 Take a cold shower under one of four waterfalls at the **Chutes de la Karera** (p564)

- 4 Travel to Burundi's very own pyramid, a memorial marking a small stream in Kasumo, the southernmost **Source du Nil** (p564)