



Trip Information

Uganda Safari Including Gorilla & Chimp Treks

Trip Dates: October 26 – November 3, 2024

Length of Trip: 9 days / 8 nights

Optional pre tour extension to the Nile River & Murchison Falls, Oct 23 – 26

Optional post tour to Rwanda, November 3 – 6

*from \$8998.00USD, *High Mileage Club Member Price*

(from \$9498.00USD, regular WC retail price)

A deposit of \$2400 is due with registration. Domestic air is not included.

*High Mileage Club Member pricing is available for all alumni guests.

To be eligible, guests must have completed at least one trip with the Walking Connection.

This trip begins in Entebbe, Uganda (EBB) on the evening of October 26, 2024.

This trip ends in Entebbe, Uganda (EBB) in the evening of November 3, 2024.

Pre and post options are available.

Guest Itinerary

Please note that the details of this itinerary including the specific hotels subject to change. Many of the planned activities are organized according to availability, events or seasonal dates, appropriate weather conditions or the discretion of our guides. We make every effort to provide the experience described in the itinerary with the understanding that some things may change.

Day 1 – Arrival

Arrive at your convenience at the Entebbe International airport, meet and greet provided and transfer to the Protea Hotel on the banks of Lake Victoria. (5 min transfer)

Ask about the pre tour extension to the Nile River and Murchison Falls!

Accommodation: Protea Hotel

Day 2 – Two Crater Lakes

Early morning transfer back to the airport for flight to Kasese.

We will be met by our local guide and vehicle for a transfer through the lush agricultural countryside passing through beautiful tea plantations and to the edge of the greater Kibale rainforest. Afternoon at leisure or enjoy a guided crater lake walk and a farm walk on the vanilla estate.

Our Accommodations: Owner operated Ndali Lodge is located in the ‘Crater Field Area’ overlooking Two Crater Lakes offering mesmerizing views and just a short 45-minute drive to the chimpanzee trekking starting point. The lodge is perched on the rim of an extinct volcano which has since become the Lake Nyinambuga. There are 8 cottages providing rustic luxury accommodation, each facing west to offer a panoramic view to the spectacular ‘Mountains of the Moon’ – Rwenzori. The interiors are imaginatively and comfortably furnished, using local materials. Each cottage, large enough to accommodate a family, has en-suite facilities with bath and shower, and a private verandah ideal for watching the sun setting behind the Rwenzori Mountains. At night the dining room is festooned with candles for a tranquil and intimate setting. The sitting room, reception and dining room open out onto Lake Nyinambuga and are connected by two open breezeways.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Ndali Lodge

Day 3 – Chimp trekking in Kibale Forest

Today look forward to the opportunity to explore Kibale Forest National Park. Home to 13 primate species, a guided forest trek will be offered in search of one of the most popular primate species in the world – the chimpanzee.

We will hike into the forest in search of primates. While trekking in the depths of the lush green forest, you will be surrounded by bird song and can expect to see at least 5 or 6 other types of primates, most probably the grey-cheeked mangabey and the red-tailed monkey and, of course, the chimpanzee. The walking is rated easy due to the well-maintained trails and reasonably flat terrain.

Enjoy a traditional lunch at Tinka’s homestead, prepared carefully for visitors and highlighting a variety of Ugandan specialties. John Tinka is a prominent community leader in the Bigodi district near Kibale Forest NP. His efforts to bring sustainable tourism to his community are visible in the community-run Bigodi Wetland Sanctuary, Bigodi Community Walk and lunch at his home. Tinka welcomes you into his home to enjoy a well-prepared traditional Ugandan meal. Not only will you be able to experience the typical Ugandan diet, Tinka will also describe each dish and give you background information on the farming techniques, harvesting and cooking methods involved in preparing the meal.

Afternoon Bigodi wetlands walk. Bigodi village is situated in the highlands of western Uganda, in the shadow of the Ruwenzori Mountains, the famous "Mountains of the Moon". The swamp walk takes place in the Bigodi Wetlands Sanctuary, which is in the Magombe wetland. The sanctuary is a major eco-tourism attraction in the Kibale Forest area. The Sanctuary is operated by the Kibale Association for Rural and Environmental Development (KAFRED), a registered local community-based organization.

*Permits of \$200.00 USD are required to participate in the Chimp trek and are non-refundable. The number of permits issued each day are limited. Price of permits is expected to go up in 2024, but if purchased prior the price will remain the same.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Ndali Lodge

Day 4 – Queen Elizabeth National Park

This morning we gently descend into **The Great African Rift Valley** and **Queen Elizabeth National Park**. Queen Elizabeth National Park resides in a fertile, equatorial area and has beautiful scenery. It is Uganda's most popular and accessible savannah reserve, with a total area of 1978km². It is primarily associated with grassy savannahs, but this impressive park also includes within its boundaries, leafy rainforests, dense papyrus swamps, and natural volcanic crater lakes. As a result, it has one of the highest biodiversity ratings of any game reserve in the world, including a total of **95 recorded mammal species** and more than 610 species of birds.

Enjoy a mid-morning game drive and lunch at the lodge. After a siesta, enjoy afternoon lodge-based activities including a visit to the Women's Coffee Co-op, a beekeeping project, or the active buffer zone walk and tree planting.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Kyambura Gorge Lodge

Our Accommodations: The luxurious Kyambura Gorge Lodge is set overlooking the lush Kyambura Gorge and Queen Elizabeth National Park...with the Mountains of the Moon in the distance. The former coffee storehouse was completely refurbished starting in 2018 and each of the ten stylish guest bandas reflect the local building style with artisan touches and private balconies. Four are deluxe bandas offering spacious suites with prime views of the Gorge. (Optional upgrades available) A personal attendant is offered with each banda.

Day 5 – Kazinga Channel

This morning's game drive is private boat ride along the Kazinga Channel. The launch trip along the Kazinga Channel is one of the most popular activities in Queen Elizabeth National Park. It provides an amazing chance to sit back, relax and enjoy the fresh river breeze whilst observing a large selection of animals. Those species commonly seen along the riverbank are **elephants, buffalo, waterbuck and Ugandan kob**. On occasion, visitors will also see **giant forest hog, leopard and lion**. The waterbirds in the area are plentiful; in particular, water thick-knee, yellow-billed stork, various plovers, white/pink-backed Pelicans and white-bellied cormorants, with 560+ recorded species and a record of 296 bird species seen in one 24-hour period. You will also view some of the **largest concentration of hippo in the world** (reported to be about 30,000).

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Kyambura Gorge Lodge

Day 6 – Lion Tracking and Community Tourism

This morning we will join the Uganda Carnivore Project (UCP) in the northern Kasenyi plains for an adventure in tracking lions.

The Uganda Carnivore Program is devoted to the research and conservation of Uganda's large carnivores, including lions, leopards, and hyenas. Previously active in many of Uganda's national parks, today it is focused on the northern sector of QENP. They collaborate closely with the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) and Makerere University.

UCP has two primary focuses, first, scientific research and monitoring of resident carnivores and, second, community-based wildlife conservation with the goal to develop a collaborative, holistic plan to reduce deadly instances of human wildlife-conflict with communities around the park.

During the early-morning game drive on the Kasenya plains, a UCP researcher will join us in our safari vehicle and use radio-telemetry to track and locate the collared lions being researched. Within QENP, vehicles must stay on the designated tracks. But one of the distinct advantages of the lion tracking activity is the ability to drive off-road in search of the lion and affords the privilege of essentially a private lion observation experience.

Relax in the afternoon with free time for lodge-based activities. **One complimentary 30-minute massage is included for you to enjoy!**

Community bee-keeping project (included lodge activity for guests at Kyambura Gorge Lodge)

In January 2012 the VSPT, in association with Malaika Honey, organized beekeeping training. The course provided apiary management, care, and harvesting information to fifteen members of the Omumashaka Bee Keepers Co-Operative, who have been producing honey in Kyambura since 2006. The local farmers were taught the necessary skills to become commercial beekeepers through practical, on-site training. The hives have been set up to create a fence surrounding farmers' land, helping to deter elephants from raiding the crops and reducing human-wildlife conflict as elephants detest bees. Sales of honey and fees paid by international visitors help make the project sustainable and increase the livelihood of local people.

Women's Coffee Co-op (included lodge activity for guests at Kyambura Gorge Lodge)

The Kyambura Women's Coffee Cooperative is a community-based initiative designed to provide vocational training to women and an alternative, but sustainable, source of income. Eleven local women and their families are actively involved in the cooperative. At least 30% of the group is HIV positive and many are widowed. They tend to over 1,500 Arabica and Robusta coffee plants in 100 acres of rejuvenated VSPT land, and process the coffee by hand at a communal processing plant. Members of the cooperative commit to growing coffee organically, without the use of pesticides or chemical fertilizers.

The coffee is sold in the Kyambura and Bwindi Lodges. The coffee tours are also a popular tourism attraction for Volcanoes Safaris guests, who can see how African coffees are harvested and processed before sampling the 'best cup of coffee in Uganda'. The coffee plantation also acts as a buffer zone between the protected area of the gorge and local farmlands, reducing animal / human conflict.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Kyambura Gorge Lodge

Day 7 – Tree Climbing Lions

Morning game drive and leave behind the lush savannah grass plains of QENP as we travel through Ishasha sector. Ishasha is one of only two places in the world that you can spot the rare tree climbing lions. These lions have deviated from their species' usual behavior and can be found lazing in acacia and fig trees. There are four prides of lion in the plains with a total of about 50 individuals.

Continue on to Buhoma/Bwindi Impenetrable Forest National Park, arriving in Buhoma town in the late afternoon. Bwindi forest is a magnificent luxuriant swathe across the steep ridges of the Albertine Rift Valley, this ancient rainforest – one of the few in Africa to have flourished throughout the last Ice Age – is regarded to be one of the most biologically diverse forests in Africa.

Bwindi Impenetrable Forest National Park has at least **90 mammal species, including 11 primates** and is ranked as one of the best in Uganda for forest birding, with 23 highly localized Albertine Rift endemics. Bwindi is renowned for its **mountain gorilla population**, with slightly more than half the world's total in residence. In Bwindi there are an estimated 480 individuals living in over 15 groups. Looking deep into the expressive brown eyes of these gentle giants is an extremely special privilege and an encounter unparalleled in most likely the whole of Africa.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: **Bwindi** Lodge



Our Accommodations: Hide away after gorilla trekking in this peaceful enclave, the Bwindi Lodge. The ten stone and thatched bandas are scattered through the forested setting along the river at the edge of Buhoma town. A series of narrow stone pathways leads to each banda where guests will find luxurious, crisp linens, beautiful Ugandan textiles and artisan details, cozy sitting areas (perfect for savoring a cup of the lodge's home-grown coffee), and thoughtfully designed bathrooms with steaming-hot showers. No detail has been spared.

Day 8 – Gorilla Trekking Day!

After breakfast take a short drive to Park Headquarters and meet with our specialist local guides and trackers who will give a talk on the etiquette of gorilla trekking. We then hike into the forest where the gorillas were seen the night before and track from that point. The trekking can take from 1 to 6 hours and climb to altitudes not more than 7,500 feet. The terrain is rough and at times muddy. Although the hike is physically demanding the beauty of the forest and surrounding scenery make the trekking worthwhile. Once the gorillas are located all fatigue is forgotten, as the experience is often described as being the most profound natural history experience in the world.

*Permits cost \$700.00 USD are required to participate in the Gorilla trek and are non-refundable. The number of permits issued each day are limited to 150 . The price is expected to go up in 2024, but if purchased prior will remain the same.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Accommodation: **Bwindi** Lodge

Day 9 – Return to Entebbe (or Rwanda extension)

This morning we depart the lodge for the drive to Kihiki airstrip (approx. 1.5 hrs) for your scheduled flight back to Entebbe airport, transfer to Entebbe Protea Hotel.

Guests traveling on to Rwanda will travel by vehicle to cross the border. ASK FOR DETAILS.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch
Accommodation: Day room at Protea Hotel

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Inclusions

This Walking Connection trip includes:

- Unique itinerary designed by Walking Connection co-founder, Jo Ann Taylor in partnership with our local team in Uganda.
- Trip will be escorted by Gene **and/or** Jo Ann Taylor with a minimum of 8 guests.
- Professional, experienced drivers, and guides who are knowledgeable in all aspects of Uganda Safaris.
- Airport transfers when arriving on October 26 and departing on November 3.
- 8 nights lodging at boutique lodges, as indicated in the itinerary
- Daily meals, as indicated in the itinerary.
- One 50-minute massage at Kyambura Gorge Lodge.
- One 50-minute massage at Bwindi Lodge.
- Prepaid Uganda trekking porter, includes salary and tip.
- Complimentary beverages with some meals.
- Water refill available in vehicles.
- Ground transfers throughout.
- Transportation of luggage each day.
- All activities and tours detailed in the itinerary.
- Detailed *Know Before You Go* information, including recommended website, current Covid-19 protocols including resource information for testing needed for entry and departure, reading lists, packing list, and weather forecast.

Exclusions

This Walking Connection trip DOES NOT include:

- Local guide and driver gratuities
- Uganda Gorilla Permit (\$700USD) Price guaranteed if purchased before the expected price increase.
- Uganda Chimp Trekking Permit (\$200USD) Price guaranteed if purchased before the expected price increase.
- All international and **domestic airfares** with tax.
- Airport transfers outside of the dates of the scheduled itinerary.
- All items of a personal nature, including beverages and shopping.
- All passport and visa application fees, vaccination, and medical consulting fees.
- Covid-19 testing if required for entry into Uganda/Rwanda or returning to country of origin.
- All international departure taxes collected at airport of departure.
- Additional hotel stay pre- or post- scheduled itinerary.
- Early check-in or late check-out of rooms.
- Optional tours.
- Photographs or phone calls
- Discounts/Refunds on any unused portion of the tour.
- Travel Insurance.
- Anything that is not expressly stated in the itinerary or on the inclusion list above.

Price & Payments

Price per person:

- Double Occupancy: *from* \$8998.00 USD **High Mileage Club Price, \$9498 reg. WC retail price.
- Single Occupancy: *a limited number of single rooms are available for a \$1100 supplement. (wait list).*
- *Deluxe Cottage Upgrade is available at Kymbura Gorge Lodge: \$375.00 USD total per person for 3 nights.*
- *Price does not include domestic flights of approx. \$600.00.*

****High Mileage Club pricing is the exclusive alumni benefit of guests who have previously traveled with the Walking Connection ONLY.**

Deposits:

An initial deposit of \$900.00 USD per person is required to purchase the Chimp and Gorilla trek permits and \$1500.00USD to reserve your space on this exclusive trip. No space will be held without a complete deposit. Initial deposit can be made by credit card, PayPal, Venmo, or check. Due to the exclusivity of this trip and the limited permits, all deposits are non-refundable. (Deposits from postponed trips can only be transferred and not refunded.)

*After making your initial deposit, we advise you to purchase Cancel for Any Cause insurance. If you choose this type of insurance it needs to be purchased within 24 hours of your deposit being made. Recommended partner:
<https://www.generalitravelinsurance.com/?partner=81350509>

Payments:

Payments must be made according to the schedule & are subject to cancellation and penalty policy. Final payment is due on or before 90 days prior to the trip. We request that all final payments be made by check, wire transfer or credit card/PayPal. **Credit card and PayPal payments for final amount due are subject to a 3% surcharge of total due.** Canadian (or other non-U.S. Credit cards) are subject to a 4.5% surcharge. Credit card payments can be made online or by phone.

Price Variation:

Prices are based upon the current government fees for park, concession fees and sanctuary entry and all taxes at the time of publication of this information. Should the government impose any new taxes, raise the current tax or increase the entry cost to any park or sanctuary, the price increase will be passed along and charged to you. You will be notified of this increase at the time that Walking Connection is notified. All payments received by Walking Connection are subject to the cancellation policy already published and in effect.

Cancellation, Penalty & Refund Policies:

Should you have to cancel your tour the following terms will apply:

- For cancellations 91 days – 15 months your deposit is non-refundable.
- For cancellations and no shows 90 days or less prior to the trip, 100% of the trip price is nonrefundable.

No refunds will be made for any unused portion of the tour.

All cancellations must be made in writing and delivered to Walking Connection via e-mail and/or US Postal Service. Your cancellation date is the date your notice is received and confirmed by Walking Connection, not the date of postmark.

Travel Arrangements

Travel Roommates and Single Supplements:

There is limited availability, and a supplement will apply. Please contact us for details. If you have registered for double occupancy but don't have a travel roommate, you may be charged for a Single Supplement for any portion of the trip where you will be rooming as a single.

Trip Minimum and Maximum:

Minimum of 8 full paying guests. Walking Connection specializes in traveling in small groups, many times we stay in boutique hotel properties, historical inns, private homes and bed & breakfasts. For this and contractual related reasons, some trips may require a minimum number of guests traveling together to go. FOR THIS TRIP, an additional Small Group Surcharge may be assessed, or the trip may be canceled at the option of Walking Connection if sign-ups do not meet the 8-person minimum. This trip will be guaranteed to be conducted either when we have reached the minimum number of guests or evaluated 90 or 60 days prior to departure. Also, should the minimum not be met, Walking Connection is at its sole discretion to elect to operate the trip without a Walking Connection host. **Please do not make your international or domestic air arrangements until the trip is confirmed.**

Maximum of 12 guests

Uganda Passports/Visas:

Valid passports must have 3 blank pages and a minimum of 6 months remaining before expiration. Visas are required for all US and Canadian citizens to enter Uganda and Rwanda. We recommend securing documentation prior to arrival. The Walking Connection will supply information for the proper paperwork for all guests.

East African Tourist Visa

An East Africa Tourist Visa is available and allows travel between Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda. The holder of the East Africa Tourist Visa shall enter the region from the country that issued the visa and move within the two other countries without applying for another visa or paying another visa fee.

For passport applications and renewals:

<http://www.passportvisasexpress.com/?affid=992183579f5e584ff2a965b511618cc9>

Inoculations:

Uganda has adopted the WHO policy of lifetime validity for yellow fever vaccines. Proof of Yellow Fever immunization is required for entry into Uganda. Not all travelers are asked to show proof of vaccination upon entry, however it is a requirement, and you may be denied entry if you are not able to prove you have been immunized. You must carry your original yellow fever certificate with you.

Travelers who cannot have the vaccination for medical reasons (age, allergy, pregnancy, undergoing medical treatment, etc.) may get a waiver certificate; however, it must come from a doctor at an officially registered travel clinic on letterhead. Those without a certificate will be given a shot on arrival at Entebbe airport at a fee of \$40.

Domestic Air:

Our group will be taking several domestic flights. Your flights will depend on whether you extend your stay pre or post. If you are not extending your stay, you will need two flights. At the time of publishing this information, those fares will be approximately



\$300.00 USD/person/flight including taxes and airport fees. We will assist in making these air arrangements. **The cost of these flights are NOT INCLUDED in the price of the trip.**

International Air Arrangements:

Arrival airport: Entebbe (EBB) on October 26/Day 1 (October 23 for pretour). We will be transferring out of Entebbe early the next morning.

Departure airport: Entebbe (EBB) on November 3/Day 9 or Kigali (KGL) on November 6 for post-tour Rwanda extension.

BEFORE you make your international airline arrangements, please contact Walking Connection by phone – (800)-295-9255 to reconfirm the details of the trip. Walking Connection will provide you with recommended arrival and departure airports, times, and any additional information you may need **BEFORE** you book your flights.

Covid-19 Protocols:

We follow all of the local government’s mandates and recommended protocols as well as the official recommendations of the CDC.

Recommended Travel Insurance provided by: [Generali Global Assistance](https://www.generalitravelinsurance.com/?partner=81350509)
<https://www.generalitravelinsurance.com/?partner=81350509>

More Details

Trip Grading – Moderate + + +

- Each day usually consists of 3-5 hours of activities, most centered around walking over various terrains. See below for gorilla trek.
- Most days have a range of activity available.
- Terrain includes cobblestone walkways, well-worn countryside trails with uphill and downhill components. See below for terrain on Gorilla trek.
- Your day pack will include a liter of water, snacks, rain gear, sunscreen, personal items, and a camera
- Please note that the Gorilla trek can be strenuous depending on where the families are. See description.

TREKKING & PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS for Gorilla Trek

To ensure that you enjoy your visit with the gorillas to the fullest, we recommend engaging in an exercise program for several weeks or even months before your trip. The treks, which usually last between **two and eight hours**, including one hour spent with the gorillas, may cover more than four miles and occur in any kind of weather. It can rain at a moment’s notice. Please note that the gorilla treks occur at altitudes of up to 7,500 feet above sea level and can be very physically strenuous. It can be very humid, and the terrain is steep, rough, and, at times, slippery and muddy. The goal is to be able to walk uphill for several hours, so make sure your exercise regimen includes inclines.

Gear & Personal Items:

We will provide a detailed list of personal items you will need that will make your journey safe and convenient. There is no special gear required for this trip though you will receive a list of recommended items, including supportive hiking boots and socks. We can help with information on types, brands, and what to look for if you are purchasing new gear items for the trip.

Special Supplier Gifts & Items:

As a local custom, vendors, suppliers, ground operators, restaurants and hotel properties may offer complimentary beverages that may or may not contain alcohol. Should you elect not to accept this gift, complimentary water may not be offered as a replacement and may only be offered for sale. This is a local custom beyond the control of Walking Connection.



Your Local Guides and Trip Host/Escort:

At Walking Connection, our philosophy is simple: each trip is designed in partnership with locals and delivered by local legends. We work with a small number of trusted travel partners to deliver the best experiences in the safest way possible. During this trip, you and your small group will be accompanied and led by one of our highly trained professional guides. Walking Connection Co-Founders, Gene Taylor and/or Jo Ann Taylor, will be hosting this trip. ****PLEASE NOTE** that another host and guide may be substituted should either Gene or Jo Ann is unable to lead this adventure for any reason.

CONTACT:

Jo Ann Taylor- +1 602.561.7240 Voice/Text/WhatsApp
ja@WalkingConnection.com

QUESTIONS TO ASK? READY TO BOOK? If you want to get in touch, please send us an email or give us a call. We accept bookings online, by email, or over the phone. A deposit of \$2400.00 USD is required at the time of booking to secure the trip with the balance payable 90 Days before departure. If booking less than 90 days before the trip start date, full payment of the adventure is due with registration.

Walking Connection – Person-to-Person Guest Hotlines: Info@WalkingConnection is your best way to ask and receive information about all departures. To chat directly, please call +1 623.561.0846.

**We will do everything within our power to assure that you have a great adventure.
Thank you for choosing the Walking Connection.**

“We Know The Way”

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