

UGANDA AT A GLANCE

POPULATION: 39,570,125 (July 2017 est.)

LANGUAGES: English, Luganda, Swahili

PREDOMINANT RELIGIONS: Christianity, Islam, traditional religions

TIME ZONE: Seven hours ahead of Eastern Daylight Time (New York City)

TELEPHONE CODES: 256, country code; 41, Kampala city code; 42, Entebbe city code; 481, Masaka city code

After a turbulent past, Uganda has once again become an outpost of hope in East Africa. As it makes steady progress toward peace and works to improve its tourist facilities, travelers have returned in ever-increasing numbers to enjoy stunning landscape — green rolling hills, lush rainforests, snowcapped mountains, majestic rivers and massive lakes — and fascinating wildlife, including about half of the world’s remaining mountain gorillas.

Uganda has some of Africa’s major attractions. It is bordered to the west by the Ruwenzori Mountains, named a World Heritage Site for their eerie, craggy tips and giant vegetation. And the majestic Virunga volcanoes rise along the southwestern border with Rwanda. Uganda is also one of the sources of the Nile, which empties out of Lake Victoria — the world’s second-largest lake — at Jinja. Home to more than 1,000 species of birds, Uganda is one of the richest birding destinations in Africa, and its richly varied savannah wildlife — large herds of elephants, tree-climbing lions, snorting buffaloes and peering giraffes — is complemented by one of the highest concentrations of primates on the continent.



COMPASSION IN UGANDA

Compassion’s ministry in Uganda began in 1980. Today, more than 83,100 children are served by more than 325 Compassion-assisted child development centers throughout the country. Compassion’s church-based child development centers are places of hope for impoverished children in Uganda. Under the guidance of caring Christian adults, children’s pressing needs for nutrition and medical attention are met. Children also receive tutoring to help with their academics. Health and hygiene lessons teach them to care for their own physical well-being, and positive social skills are modeled and encouraged.

WEATHER

The best times to visit are December through March and June through September. It can be somewhat rainy then, but not as much as in the rainy season, March through June. December through February and June through July are the driest times, when things can even be a bit dusty. Although the country lies astride the equator, most of Uganda is on a plateau 3,600-6,000 feet/900-1,830 meters above sea level, and evenings can be cool.

CURRENCY

The official currency of Uganda is the Ugandan *shilling* (UGX). Don't count on using credit cards, and outside of Kampala there are very few ATMs. When changing cash, dollar bills attract a lower exchange rate than larger denominations. Be aware that counterfeit U.S. banknotes, printed on plain paper, are circulating in Uganda.

FOOD

Most hot, freshly cooked food should be safe, but peel fresh fruit and raw vegetables before eating, choose meat that is cooked thoroughly, avoid local dairy products, and assume the water is unsafe (stick with prepackaged or boiled drinks).

SHOPPING

Uganda is not known for its shopping, but some local handicrafts, including wood carvings, woven goods and pottery, make great souvenirs. If you see something you like, buy it — you may not see it again anywhere else.

ELECTRICAL OUTLETS

Uganda uses a voltage of 240V, and electrical outlets accommodate plug type G. (For up-to-date plug and outlet information, check whatplug.info and click on your destination country.) You may wish to take a universal plug adaptor, available in the luggage/travel section of most big-box stores.



DO'S AND DON'TS

- **Do** bargain if you go to the Nakasero Market in central Kampala.
- **Don't** take photographs of the military or any government buildings, as your camera may be confiscated. There have been problems with this in central Kampala.
- **Do** take a bird-identification book for East Africa. Uganda has one of the highest concentrations of birds in the world.
- **Do** stop at all police roadblocks on the highways and show your passport or visa if requested.
- **Do** stop at the equator sign on the road between Kampala and Masaka to take a souvenir photograph.
- **Don't** swim in freshwater lakes or rivers, as they may contain bilharzia, a liver-destroying parasite.
- **Don't** use the mail service for valuables — it's considered highly unreliable.

DRESS

Light, casual clothing is the order of the day, and at night you might want to cover up with long trousers and sleeves, socks and shoes to minimize mosquito bites. A light sweater will come in useful in the highlands, as will a waterproof jacket during the rainy season. Shorts on men are acceptable in informal circumstances, but many Ugandans consider them inappropriate for men whose school days are long past. Women should avoid skin-baring attire, especially in towns and villages, where it may give offense.

Women: Modest, loose-fitting tops (nothing form-fitting) are recommended; sleeveless tops are acceptable, but please cover your shoulders in places of worship; pants, capris, longer skirts and loose-fitting, casual dresses are recommended for women.

Men: Button shirts and polo shirts are recommended. T-shirts are allowed in casual settings. Long, non-denim pants are recommended for center visits and church services.

Both: Shorts are highly discouraged outside of beachside locations. A light jacket is recommended for cool evenings or rainy days.

Shoes: Closed-toe shoes are recommended during the day due to potential unsanitary or uneven terrain.

GENERAL SECURITY PRECAUTIONS

Leave at home all unnecessary credit cards, Social Security card, library cards and similar items you may routinely carry in your wallet. Carry items in front pockets, not back pockets. Do not display large sums of money in public; make visible only the amount of money that approximates your purchase. Never leave items with cash in them (purse, wallet, backpack, etc.) on a bus car, or any other location. Stay alert and be cautious at all times. Don't take safety and security for granted.

U.S. EMBASSY INFORMATION

Website: ug.usembassy.gov

Phone: 256-312-306-001

Address: 1577 Ggaba Road, Kampala, Uganda

We strongly advise you to contact the CDC (www.cdc.gov) or check with your personal physician for more information about your specific health needs while traveling, including any recommendations for immunizations.

*All information taken from the World Factbook and
Compassion International.*

USEFUL WORDS AND PHRASES

The official language of Uganda is Swahili. The country's secondary language is English. Some common Ugandan greetings include:

Welcome	Karibu
Good morning	Habari ya asubuhi
How are you?	Hujambo?
I'm fine	Nzuri
What is your name?	Jina lako nnani?
My name is....	Jina langu ni (name)
Nice to meet you	Nafurahi kukuona
Friend	Rafiki
Do you speak English?	Unasema kiingereza?
I don't understand	Sielewi
How was the journey?	Habari ya safari?
Goodbye	Kwaheri
How much is this?	Hii ni bei gani?
I'm sorry	Samahani
Yes	Ndiyo
No	Hapana

OK

I'd like ...

Please

Thank you

You're welcome

I love you

Where is the bathroom?

May I take a picture?

Sawa

Nataka

Tafadhali

Asante

Starehe

Ninakupenda

Ni wapi choo?

Naomba kupiga picha?