

Rwanda Kigali



Trip Summary

With three national parks, a thriving capital city, spectacular mountain scenery, and some surprisingly diverse wildlife, Rwanda has plenty to offer the discerning traveler. While genocide is a massive part of this country's history, Rwanda has evolved into a united, proud and optimistic country whose friendly locals welcome visitors with open arms. Whether you're exploring the (quite clean) streets of Kigali, learning about the miracle of Akagera National Park, or seeking out endangered mountain gorillas in Volcanoes National Park with an expert tracker, this Africa adventure is sure to inspire.

Itinerary

Day 1: Kigali Arrival

Fly into Kigali International Airport where your Austin Adventures representative will be awaiting your arrival • Your driver will transfer you through the city of Kigali to your hotel; you're sure to notice how clean the city is! • Transfer to your luxury, boutique hotel and enjoy dinner in the restaurant on site • *Overnight Heaven Retreat (L, D)*

Day 2: Kigali / Akagera National Park

Depart Kigali this morning as you set off along the Rwamagana – Kaylonza Road to Akagera National Park (shared transfer, 3 hours + stops) • As we travel, we're bound to come across a variety of birds, including the Marabou Storks and Black Kites soaring over the city • As we descend towards Akagera, we pass banana plantations and fruit and vegetable markets along the roadsides • Located at a low elevation along the Tanzania border, we eventually arrive to the national park we'll be spending the next several nights in • Akagera is dominated by a scenic labyrinth of swamps and lakes that follow the meandering course of the Akagera River • Arrive to Magashi Camp overlooking beautiful Lake Rwanyakazinga and settle into your spacious, luxury tent • Tonight, take advantage of the luxurious lounge, dining and bar area, expansive viewing deck, and fire pit at this secluded, cozy tent camp • *Overnight Magashi Classic Camp (B, L, D)*

Day 3: Akagera National Park

Spend the day exploring Akagera National Park with your knowledgeable guide • Akagera is Central Africa's largest protected wetland and the last remaining refuge for savannah-adapted species in Rwanda • Twenty years ago, this national park was on the verge of being lost forever • While peace was finally restored in the 1990s after the 1994 Genocide against Tutsis, Akagera's demise was just beginning • Refugees returning to Rwanda after the genocide were still battling for their own survival and turned to the forests for timber, wildlife for protein and the wild savannahs for their livestock • Lions were hunted to local extinction, rhinos disappeared, and the park's wildlife was displaced by tens of thousands of long-horned cattle • Biodiversity was practically lost, and with it so was employment and tourism • The park's value was diminished to the point of not existing at all • Which makes where Akagera is today, with its story of revival, even more remarkable • Today, you'll explore and learn the success story that is Akagera National Park • On a game drive with your guide, keep an eye out for sightings of Elephant, Buffalo, Antelope, Lions, Hippos and the elusive Eastern Black Rhino (reintroduced to the park in 2017) • *Overnight Magashi Classic Camp (B, L, D)*



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Day 4: Akagera National Park / Volcanoes National Park

After breakfast in camp, depart on a 4.5 hour drive (shared transfer) past coffee, tea, and banana plantations on a drive to Ruhengeri, a city in northwest Rwanda and the gateway to Volcanoes National Park • This city will serve as the perfect staging post for our venture into the park to track mountain gorillas tomorrow • This afternoon, you may choose a pleasant stroll around town or can opt for a viewing of the seldom-visited but lovely Lakes Burera, Ruhondo and Karago • Check into your accommodation for the next several nights, just a 25-minute drive from the park's entrance • This colonial style lodge will serve as the perfect place for an evening of relaxation and fine dining before our journey tomorrow • *Overnight The Bishops House (B, L, D)*

Day 5: Volcanoes National Park

Today, we head into Volcanoes National Park early for a once-in-a-lifetime experience: tracking endangered mountain gorillas! • We arrive at the parks' headquarters at 7:00 AM to register and, with the park staff's help, determine which group of gorillas we'll visit and where they were last located the previous evening • Ninety-six gorilla permits are given out daily with just a maximum of eight trekkers visiting any one troop of gorillas • Your lead guide will brief you on the trekking procedures and rules of behavior while you're in the presence of gorillas • After the briefing, you'll return to the vehicle to be driven up the mountain to the starting point of your trek • Trekking can take from two to six hours or more, depending on the gorillas' location, but once we've found them, we'll stop to observe these fascinating creatures from close range, a truly exclusive experience that can't be matched! • Your one-hour spent with the gorillas will provide plenty of opportunities for up-close photographs and too soon, it will be time to bid the gorillas goodbye • Trek back to your vehicle with your guide, drive back to Ruhengeri, and toast to a day well-spent gorilla tracking in Rwanda at dinner tonight! • *Overnight The Bishops House (B, L, D)*

Day 6: Kigali

Enjoy breakfast and then load up your luggage for the 2.5-hour drive from Ruhengeri back to Kigali • As you pass through the rolling landscape one last time, you'll understand why Rwanda is called "The Land of a Thousand Hills" • Upon arrival to the city, head out on a guided historic tour • With your guide, you'll discover Kigali's older commercial "quartiers," business and residential areas, historic sites commemorating the 1994 Tutsi Genocide and the diverse neighborhoods and local attractions throughout the city • A visit to the Gisozi Genocide Memorial is a must as is the Natural History Museum • Tonight, settle into your hotel and enjoy one last dinner in Rwanda • *Overnight Heaven Retreat (B, L, D)*

Day 7: Kigali

Breakfast is served at the restaurant in your hotel this morning • You will be transferred to the airport in accordance with your flight departure time today • We recommend check-in at the Kigali Airport 3 hours prior to departure • *No Overnight (B)*

***Trip itineraries are subject to change without notice due to road, weather and other factors outside of our control, for the safety and enjoyment of our guests, as deemed necessary and appropriate by Austin Adventures.*

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Activities

Hiking / Walking: This Rwanda itinerary features short city and national parks walks (1-3 hours) and one day of trekking to search for mountain gorillas. The trekking on Day 5 will normally take 2-6 hours, depending on where the gorillas are at that day. In such mountainous country, you can expect to be hiking up and down hills, sometimes with significant elevation gain and loss. The guides stop frequently to allow trekkers a chance to rest and take photographs along the way. It is advised that you hire a porter (US \$10 per day) to carry your backpack and gear. To enjoy this trip as whole (particularly the day of gorilla trekking), you should have a reasonable level of fitness and be able to hike several hours at a time.

Discovery: Known as the land of a thousand hills, Rwanda's stunning scenery and warm, friendly people offer unique experiences in one of the most remarkable countries in the world. It is blessed with extraordinary biodiversity, with incredible wildlife living throughout its volcanoes, montane rainforest and sweeping plains. Explore the city of Kigali with its pleasantly low key, yet dynamic and progressive population of friendly locals. Trek through Volcanoes National Park with an expert tracker to seek out some of the world's last remaining mountain gorillas. Take a walk around the Kigali Genocide Museum to learn about a distressing history of the Rwandan people in an intensely powerful and moving memorial. Learn about the miracle that is Akagera National Park; it once protected 10% of Rwanda but was taken over by a massive number of refugees who returned to the country in the late 1990s. Today, strict conservation laws, better management, and reintroduction of key wildlife species have brought the park back to life. Come discover the fascinating country of Rwanda with the leaders in adventure travel!

Austin Adventures guides are experienced facilitators and regional experts. They will take the time to explain the details of each activity, answer any questions and demonstrate the use of all equipment. Each activity has been carefully planned to include options for all levels. Most importantly, Austin Adventures guides will help you select the distance that's right for you.



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Distinctive Accommodations

Nights 1 & 6: Heaven Retreat

The Retreat by Heaven offers 11 rooms with private bathrooms and patios, locally crafted teakwood furniture, and the services of a personal butler included in your stay. Crafted by Italian architects, The Retreat will offer an impeccable level of care as you rest in a superior king suite and dine at their in-house restaurant, the Heaven Restaurant.

Nights 2 & 3: Magashi Classic Camp

The Magashi Classic Camp sits in the north-eastern corner of Akagera National Park, accompanied by stunning views of lake Rwanyakazinga, a luxurious lounge and dining area, expertly crafted communal firepits, and a full-service pool. You will relax in one of six spacious tents and awake to the calls of the over 520 bird species that reside in the park.

Nights 4 & 5: The Bishops House

Located in the quiet town of Musanze, often referred to as the gateway to Volcanoes National Park, the Bishops House lodging is a gorgeous colonial style home boasting nine luxurious rooms. You will be invited to relax in a deluxe room, enjoy the resorts full-service breakfast, and converse with the in-house naturalist each evening.

Meals

The hallmark of an Austin Adventures vacation is our exceptional dining. All meals: breakfasts, lunches, snacks, dinners, refreshments and receptions are included as indicated by itinerary. (B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner). Alcoholic beverages and related gratuities are not included in the trip price.

Our Partner – Primate Safaris

Austin Adventures is proudly offering this trip in conjunction with Primate Safaris. Primate Safaris, just as the name suggests, evokes dreams of mysterious jungles filled with rare flora and fauna and the world of free-living primates. The reality will not disappoint the traveler bored with mass tourism, seeking an exclusive, highly enlightening and enjoyable eco-tourism experience like none other.

Primate Safaris is determined to provide only the best quality products to our guests and strive to achieve that goal. They select only the finest hotels and lodges in the cities and out in the bush. Each is thoroughly chosen to reflect not only their own high standards but also the spirit of the itinerary in which it is used.

The strong team is headed by a group of professionally trained personnel who have the expertise and resources to plan safaris for you in a short span of time. Primate Safaris has a well-maintained and comfortable fleet of vehicles run by well-experienced driver/guides and quality transportation services with guaranteed window seats.

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Arrival & Departures

Day 1 of your trip begins with a pick-up by your guide at the Kigali International Airport. Your trip ends with a drop-off on Day 7 at Kigali International Airport. We recommend drop-off approximately 3 hours prior to your flight departure time.

Trip Price

Call for pricing

Trip Length

7 days / 6 nights

2020 Dates

Departs weekly, call for availability.

Host City

Kigali, Rwanda (KGL)

Reservations & Availability

1-800-575-1540

*Seek out endangered mountain
gorillas with an expert tracker in
Volcanoes National Park*



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Trip Reservations

Reservations, Deposits and Balances Due

To make a reservation, contact Austin Adventures with your choice of trip and dates. A 30% nonrefundable deposit is required to confirm your reservation. Full nonrefundable payment for gorilla permits is also due at time of booking. **Some Custom and International programs may require additional deposits.** Full payment is required at the time of booking if your trip departs within 90 days. Choose one of the following contact methods:

Toll free: 800-575-1540

Phone: 406-655-4591

Online: austinadventures.com

Email: reservations@austinadventures.com

Mail: Austin Adventures, P.O. Box 81025, Billings, MT 59108

* You may also book your Austin Adventure with your preferred travel professional.

** We accept most major credit cards and personal checks (U.S. funds made payable to Austin Adventures). Please do not send cash.

Included in the Trip Price

- All airport transfers and assistance
- Accommodations as listed in itinerary (double occupancy)
- Private transport in a 4x4 tourist converted Jeep
- Meals as listed in itinerary (B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner).
- Services of English-speaking drivers and guides
- Compulsory emergency evacuation service
- Activities as listed in itinerary
- Game drives and park entry fees in Akagera National Park
- Bottled water while trekking and in vehicle

Not Included in the Trip Price

- Gorilla permits (\$1,500 per person confirmed at time of booking – nonrefundable)
- Meals not listed in detailed itinerary
- Alcoholic beverages
- Passport and visa fees and service charges for obtaining visas
- Gratuities to drivers, guides, and other conveyance attendants
- Pre- and post-trip accommodations and associated expenses
- Air and land transportation to/from host cities
- All types of personal insurance
- Personal expenses (laundry, minibar, etc.)

Pre-departure Information

After receiving your reservation and deposit, we'll send you a pre-trip planner with general information about the area you'll be visiting, a packing list, exercise guidelines, a guest information questionnaire and a liability release agreement for you to sign and return within 10 days.

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Private Custom Trips

Maybe your vacation schedule doesn't fit our list of trips and dates. Or perhaps you'd prefer a slightly different itinerary or level of luxury and activity. A Custom Adventure is the perfect answer. You pick the date and destination and brief us on the size of your group, what activities you want, your "must haves" and just how you like to relax and unwind. No detail is too small, no idea too outrageous. Our staff of experts will help create a tailor-made vacation that's just right for you and your group. In short, if you can dream it, we can make it happen.

Room Occupancy, Single Supplements, and Shared Room Assignments

All trip prices are based on double occupancy. Single rooms are available for an additional charge, referred to as a "single supplement." If you're traveling alone and wish to share a room, make the request at the time of booking. Austin Adventures will attempt to find a suitable roommate for you.

Minimum Age

The minimum age on our non-family designated adult and teen adventures is sixteen years old.

Cancellations and Refunds

The following cancellation policies and cancellation fees are in effect:

***As with deposits on some international and custom programs, refund schedule may vary, speak with your Adventure Consultant for details.

Cancellation 61 days or more before trip departure – Full trip payment less 30% nonrefundable trip deposit

Cancellation 31-60 days before trip departure – 50% of the trip payment is refunded

Cancellation 0-30 days before trip departure – No refund is given

****Gorilla Permits** – Nonrefundable

Our Guarantee

Exceeding your expectations is our number one priority. In the unlikely event that you are dissatisfied with something during your trip, immediately notify your guide(s). If he or she is unable to resolve the issue, call our main office and give us the details of the problem, and a chance to correct it. We will do our best to find a resolution. If we are unable to do so during your trip, we will work with you upon your return home to arrive at a fair and equitable solution, including up to a full refund.