

Gorilla Trekking in Rwanda

Itinerary dates: February 11 - 16, 2019

Tour Escort: Beth Whitman

HIGHLIGHTS

- Spending a **day in the jungle** with experienced guides observing gorillas.
- Visiting the gravesite of **Dian Fossey**.
- **Touring Kigali** and learning about the genocide that occurred less than 25 years ago.

The adventure starts in Kigali on February 11, 2019. If you are part of the [Tanzanian Safari](#), you'll be arriving late at night with the group from Arusha, Tanzania. If you are not part of the safari group, consider arriving in Kigali a day or two in advance of the trip in case of flight delays. This will also help you get over jet lag.

Important note: This arrival date is based on currently available flights from Arusha, Tanzania, to Kigali. If there are changes in the flights (for instance, if they no longer fly from Arusha to Kigali on Mondays), the start date may be Tuesday, February 12, 2019. We expect more information in March of 2018.

* Note that a certain level of fitness/adventure is highly recommended for this trip given the sometimes-difficult terrain in getting to the gorillas.

ITINERARY

Day 1

Monday, February 11, 2019 – Kigali

Meal: N/A

Upon arrival at Kigali International Airport, we'll be met by our driver/guide and transferred to our hotel.

For those arriving directly from the [Tanzania Safari](#), we expect to arrive late at night so no meals are included on this day.

Overnight in Kigali at [Serena Hotel](#) or similar.

Day 2

Tuesday, February 12, 2019 – Kigali – Virunga Mountains

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

After breakfast, we'll take a brief city tour, including the **Kigali Memorial Centre**, which focuses on the Rwandan Genocide of 1994. Time permitting, we may visit other parts of Kigali including a tour of **old Kigali** where the **colonial buildings** now form the heart of Rwanda's business district.

We'll have lunch at a local restaurant before beginning our drive to the **Virunga Mountains** (about 2.5 to 3 hours).

Dinner and overnight at [Mountain Gorilla View](#) or similar.



HIGHLIGHT! Rwanda's **recovery from the genocide** (during which as many as **one million people** are believed to have been killed) has been incredible and a true testament to humankind's resilience. The museum is enlightening to visit as you learn about this tragedy.

Day 3

Wednesday, February 13, 2019 – Virunga Mountains Gorilla Trekking

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

After an early breakfast, we'll drive to **Volcanoes National Park** headquarters (15 minutes from our lodge) where we'll meet with our trackers (by 7:00 a.m.). We'll then be driven to the trailhead to begin our hike to see **mountain gorillas in the wild!**

Our trek starts in the foothills of the **Virunga Mountains**, but then enters the national park where we'll be immersed in the rainforest. It's here where we'll be surrounded by the call of birds and the chatter of golden monkeys. This area is also home to buffalos and elephants.

We'll make our way through **hanging vines**, moss-covered **hagenia trees** and **giant lobelias** that thrive in the tropical climate as our experienced trackers guide us to one of the mountain gorilla families. We'll stay with them for about an hour as they go about their daily life. We'll observe them feeding, playing, resting and raising their young. Though the visit is short, **it will surely be a transformative experience.**

We'll return to our accommodation in time for lunch. In the afternoon, we'll take a tour of the nearby [ex-poacher's village](#) where ex-poachers renounce their old ways and become conservation activists. The village provides incentives and livelihood-based projects to former poachers and communities to help them make a living in new ways.

Dinner and overnight at [Mountain Gorilla View](#) or similar.



HIGHLIGHT! Coming **face to face with a giant silverback** will truly be one of the greatest wildlife experiences you may ever have!

Day 4

Thursday, February 14, 2019 – Virunga Mountains

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

After an early breakfast, we'll depart the lodge so we can visit **Dian Fossey's grave**. As you may know, Fossey was an American conservationist known for her work with gorillas. We'll start with a 30-minute drive from the park headquarters to the trail head. It's here we'll find the **Karisoke Research Center**, which was founded by Fossey, and where we'll start our walk to the park boundary (10 minutes) and then another 1.5 hour walk up steep slopes to her gravesite as well as that of her **favorite gorilla friend, Digit**.

We'll return to the lodge for lunch in the early afternoon and then drive about an hour to visit the peaceful **Burera and Ruhondo Lakes**. Known locally as the **Twin Lakes**, this is a very scenic spot with outstanding views of the volcanoes. We'll take an **easy guided walk** and, if there's time, visit the **local market at Musanze**. We'll then return back to the lodge in the late afternoon.

Dinner and overnight at [Mountain Gorilla View](#) or similar.

Day 5

Friday, February 15, 2019 – Virunga Mountains – Kigali – Onward Travel

Meals: Breakfast

Depending on our departure times from Kigali, we'll return in time for our flights.

**** Itinerary subject to change without notice.**