



## AFAR MAGAZINE



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BY JESSICA SILBER

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### 7 Ways to See Gorillas in Uganda and Rwanda

In "Path of Dreams," writer Patrick Symmes introduced Patrick Otim to the breathtaking beauty of Uganda. Here are seven gorilla safaris worth taking.

Buy a ticket to Japan and  
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## COX & KINGS

Mountain gorillas, chimpanzees, and golden monkeys are among the primates one may encounter on Cox & King's eight-day "Great Ape Safari." Animal tracking is enriched by cultural excursions, including an opportunity to meet children orphaned by the Rwandan genocide. *Departures year-round from \$6,980. Gorilla permits \$750 per person per day.* (800) 999-1758, [coxandkingsusa.com](http://coxandkingsusa.com)

## SANCTUARY RETREATS

Sanctuary Gorilla Forest Camp, in Uganda's Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, serves as the base for Sanctuary Retreats' four-day "Gorilla Tracking Adventure." After a day's encounter with primates, visitors return to camp to relax in the newly opened spa or take in jungle views afforded from each tent's bathtub. *Departures year-round from \$2,790. Gorilla permits cost an additional \$500.* 44/(0) 20-7190-7728, [sanctuaryretreats.com](http://sanctuaryretreats.com)

## ABSOLUTE TRAVEL

Track gorillas in two different countries with Absolute Travel's nine-day Hills of Rwanda and Uganda itinerary. In Rwanda, guests can also arrange a hike through the jungles of the Virunga volcanoes to visit Karisoke Research Station, where primatologist Dian Fossey spent eighteen years studying mountain gorillas. After completing a second trek in Uganda, trade forests for the urban jungle on your final day in Kampala; downtown, energetic Owino Market beckons with its lively local scene and assorted goods. *Customized departures begin at \$600 per person per day.* (212) 627-1950; [absolutetravel.com](http://absolutetravel.com)

## BROWN & HUDSON

This outfitter can arrange tailor-made trips to Uganda, Rwanda, or both, with gorilla tracking at the core of flexible itineraries. Clients meet esteemed researchers and conservationists, including Gladys Kalema-Zikusoka, a veterinarian and founder of the nonprofit Conservation Through Public Health. *Customized departures year-round from \$12,750.* 44/(0) 20-3358-0110, [brownandhudson.com](http://brownandhudson.com)

## EXTRAORDINARY JOURNEYS

Along with treks in Rwanda and Uganda, Extraordinary Journeys' newest itinerary brings visitors to the secluded Odzala-Kokoua National Park in the Republic of the Congo. A maximum of 12 guests per day can depart on foot directly from Ngaga Camp, located within the home forests of three families of western lowland gorillas. *Departures May-December 2013 from \$4,235 for six nights, including gorilla permit.* (212) 226-7331, [extraordinaryjourneys.net](http://extraordinaryjourneys.net)

## MICATO SAFARIS

The five-day Tracking Majestic Mountain Gorillas itinerary in Rwanda begins with a tour of the capital, Kigali, before moving to the upscale Sabyinyo Silverback Lodge, where cottages look out on the Virunga volcanoes. Guests also have the chance to speak with former poachers who are now conservationists. *Customized packages year-round from \$3,185. Gorilla permits cost \$750 per person per day.* (212) 545-7111, [micato.com](http://micato.com)

## VOLCANOES SAFARIS

Patrick Symmes and Patrick Otim traveled with Volcanoes Safaris. The outfitter operates four lodges in Uganda and Rwanda. A portion of each safari fee is donated to the Volcanoes Safaris Partnership Trust, a community-based nonprofit whose projects can be seen during a tour of a nearby village. *Departure dates year-round from \$2,389 for four days, including one gorilla permit.* (866) 599-2737, [volcanoessafaris.com](http://volcanoessafaris.com)

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### Related Question BY JENNICA PETERSON

Hi there! I'm a senior editor at AFAR. I'm working on an article for our Good Trips department about socially conscious safaris in Africa. These trips are with companies that empower the local communities, promote conservation, and provide meaningful exchanges between travelers and locals. Have you taken a safari with a company like this? Please tell me about your experience, and AFAR might quote you in an upcoming issue!

+ 9 more answers

*Tags: Kenya, South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, Mozambique, Zambia, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Ethiopia, Swaziland, Madagascar*

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### When to travel

Departure dates are flexible, although it's advised to avoid the wet season, March through mid-May. June through September are ideal months for travel. Gorilla permits can be hard to obtain, so book well in advance.

*Photo by Dook.*

Posted on Oct 26, 2012

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