

A wildlife encounter in Uganda

The following ground package was created, with an eye toward environmental and social considerations, by Stephanie Lee, director of marketing at Travel Quest/Carlson Wagonlit in Albertville, Minn. Lee worked for four months as a volunteer in an orphanage for boys in Uganda.

Day 7

Travelers hike through the forest to view endangered mountain gorillas.

PERFECT ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrive at the airport in Entebbe, Uganda, and take a taxi to Munyonyo, just outside Kampala. Check into the Speke Resort, a luxurious resort on Lake Victoria. Take the rest of the day to relax.

Check out the only horse stable in Uganda, order room service or have a picnic on

the resort's lawn overlooking the lake.

Day 2: Take a day trip into Entebbe to visit its botanical gardens (said to be where one of the "Tarzan" films was made). Grab a late lunch at the Equation Cafe, where you can sample matoke (plantain) in groundnut sauce, a popular Ugandan dish.

Walk to the animal orphanage, where you can see the national bird, the crested crane, while monkeys scurry about your feet.

Don't forget to visit the lions, rhinos, zebras and, my personal favorite, the chimps at feeding time.

Day 3: Transfer to Kampala. Stay in the heart of downtown at the Speke Hotel. Visit the Kasubi Tombs, the Baha'i Temple and Kabaka's Palace if time permits. Come back to a wonderful meal at the best Chinese restaurant in town, Fang Fang.

Day 4: Stop by the bustling Nakasero market and pick up some fresh mangos for breakfast. Visit the National Theatre's craft center.

Take in a quick lunch across the street at the Masala Chaat House. Transfer to Fort Portal for a stay at the Fort Motel.

Day 5: Track chimps in the morning at Kibale Forest and visit the hot springs. Have

lunch in the park. Drive to Queen Elizabeth National Park for a game drive to the crater area. Spend the night at the Mweya Uganda Safari Lodge, which is located along the beautiful Kazinga Channel.

Day 6: Start the day with a boat ride down the Kazinga Channel to see the buffalo, elephants and hippos. Leave for Bwindi Impenetrable National Forest to see endangered mountain gorillas.

Arrive at the park and stay at Mantana Tented Camp, which is equipped with solar lighting and ecofriendly toilets. Enjoy a walk along the Waterfall Trail before dinner.

Attend the evening's cultural performance, with proceeds dedicated to improving the welfare of local residents.

Day 7: Gorilla trekking day. After a full day of hiking, head to Lake Bunyonyi, where you'll take a canoe to the Byoona Amagara Island Resort, a nonprofit lodge focused on sustainable tourism.

Days 8, 9 and 10: Transfer to the Ssesse Islands after lunch on Day 8. Stay at the Ssesse Palm Beach Resort for relaxation, sunbathing and walking. Take day trips to other islands if you're up for it.

On Day 10, head to Entebbe via ferry for the flight home.