



## CHEESEMANS' ECOLOGY SAFARIS

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### Mountain Gorilla Extension

*Gentle Giants of the Forest*

February 27 to March 3, 2020



*Silverback © Debbie Thompson*

### EXTENSION OVERVIEW

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Trek the forests of the Virunga Mountains to encounter Rwanda's "gentle giant," the mountain gorilla. Few animals in Africa have as many legends circulating around them as the mountain gorilla – their enormous size, extraordinary strength, and the fact that they live in deep, dark, mysterious forests of lush vegetation have contributed to this mystique. Only about 900 mountain gorillas remain in the wild today, giving you a special opportunity for this rare experience. These social apes and their large appetites may have you observing youngsters playing, the silverback eating by stripping leaves from huge branches, friendly grooming between pals, or tiny babies nursing from their mother. Bringing mountain gorillas to light, Dr. Dian Fossey dedicated her life to their future and was immortalized in the book-to-film adaptation "Gorillas in the Mist." You will walk away with unforgettable memories and amazing photographs.

#### HIGHLIGHTS

- Come face-to-face with individual mountain gorillas as they interact within their family group.
- Trek through lush forest along the slopes of inactive volcanoes in Virunga National Park, Africa's oldest national park.

**TRIP OPTION:** This is a post-trip extension to our combined Tanzania safari ([www.cheesemans.com/trips/tanzania-feb2020](http://www.cheesemans.com/trips/tanzania-feb2020)) and Kenya extension

([www.cheesemans.com/extension/kenya-ext-feb2020](http://www.cheesemans.com/extension/kenya-ext-feb2020)) from February 5 to February 28, 2020. The information contained in this itinerary is supplemental to the main itinerary.

**DAYS:** 6, adds 4 days to the main safari and Kenya extension to total 28 days, including estimated travel time.

**GROUP SIZE:** 4 to 6.

**COST:** \$6,850 per person, double occupancy, singles extra. See the Costs section on page 3.

Date	Description	Accommodation	Meals
Feb 27	Relax before departing for Rwanda.	Ole-Sereni Hotel, Nairobi	—
Feb 28	Fly from Nairobi to Kigali and then drive to the Virunga Mountains.	Mountain Gorilla View Lodge	B, L, D
Feb 29	Gorilla trek.		B, L, D
Mar 1	Gorilla trek and then return to Kigali.	Kigali Serena Hotel, Kigali	B, L, D
Mar 2	Kigali city tour and Genocide Memorial Centre visit before flying home.		B, L
Mar 3	Arrive home.		

## DETAILED ITINERARY

### Feb 27 ~ *Overnight in Nairobi*

Spend the night in Nairobi, Kenya, at the end of the Kenya extension ([www.cheesemans.com/extension/kenya-ext-feb2020](http://www.cheesemans.com/extension/kenya-ext-feb2020)).

### Feb 28 ~ *Travel from our Kenya extension to Kigali, Rwanda*

Meet our local operator's representative at the hotel to transfer to the Nairobi Airport for your flight to Kigali. Your Primate Safaris guide will meet you at the airport in Kigali and take you to lunch. Then drive about 2.5 hours through Musanze and the Virunga Mountains in a spacious Land Cruiser, arriving at the Mountain Gorilla View Lodge in time for dinner.

### Feb 29 ~ *Gorilla trekking*

After breakfast, drive to the Volcanoes National Park Headquarters where you'll meet your two park guides before driving to a trailhead to trek to your gorilla group. You may hire an agile porter to help you carry your photo equipment and water. The trek to your gorilla group can take one to three hours of hiking each way with your time limited to one hour with the group. Your park guides will go over safety rules and body language required when visiting gorilla groups, but you'll soon realize that this is one of the most exhilarating and moving wildlife experiences you will ever have.



*Silverback © Debbie Thompson*

The trackers already know where each group is located. To reach the group, you may climb through several vegetation zones – farms, bamboo, luxuriant hagenia, and hypericum forest with twisted gnarled trees covered in soft emerald mosses, lichens, and epiphytes. Watch out for stinging nettles!

As you approach the group, the lead guide will grunt as he edges forward to announce your arrival so as not to startle the gorillas. The silverback is usually lazily lying in thick vegetation and watching while one or more females are often close by and unperturbed by your presence. We hope you'll have the wonderful opportunity to watch the young gorillas play fighting, climbing trees, and wrestling, making the hour pass by very quickly.

After gorilla trekking, depending on the time of day, you may be taken sightseeing before returning to the lodge.

### **Mar 1 ~ Gorilla trekking**

Your grand gorilla finale will dawn today. You'll drive to the park headquarters to meet your park guides to trek to your gorilla group. After you spend your hour immersed with the gorillas and watching their behavior, you will return to Kigali.

### **Mar 2 ~ Explore Kigali and flights homeward**

Take a city tour in Kigali and visit the Genocide Memorial Centre that explains Rwanda's promise for the future: "Such atrocities will never happen again." After your visit and depending on your flight schedule, either go back to the hotel for a dayroom (not included) or transfer to the Kigali airport and fly to Nairobi to connect with flights homeward.

### **Mar 3 ~ Arrive home**

## **COSTS (ALL COSTS ARE IN US DOLLARS)**

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### **Cost**

<b>Type</b>	<b>Cost per Person</b>
Extension cost, double occupancy	\$6,850
Single Supplement	\$550

Costs are per person, double occupancy, not including airfare (except flights from Nairobi to Kigali on February 28), singles extra. See *Included* and *Not Included* sections for more details.

All reservations require a non-refundable deposit of \$3,000 per person to pre-purchase the gorilla trekking permits. The remaining balance will be added to your main safari balance. The payment schedule and cancellation policy are the same as for the main safari. See main safari itinerary for complete terms and conditions at [www.cheesemans.com/trips/tanzania-feb2020](http://www.cheesemans.com/trips/tanzania-feb2020).

### **Payment Schedule**

<b>Payment</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Amount per Person</b>
Deposit	Due now to reserve your space	\$3,000
Final	Due with the Tanzania safari	Remaining Balance

## Cancellations

\* **Important Note:** The pre-purchased gorilla trekking permit deposit cost of \$1,500 is **non-refundable** and **non-transferrable**. A limited number of permits are issued per day for the different gorilla families. You will be in a group of eight people along with two guides and gorilla trackers. Your permit will allow you one hour with the habituated gorilla family you visit each day.

## Included

- All leaders, transport, and park entry fees, for all activities unless described as optional.
- Flight from Nairobi to Kigali on February 28.
- Accommodations for the nights of February 27 through March 1.
- Meals from breakfast on February 28 through lunch on March 2. Breakfast and lunch on February 27 are included in the cost of the Kenya extension.
- Airport transfers on February 28 and March 2.
- Bottled water in the vehicles and during treks.
- Walking sticks.
- Two **non-refundable** and **non-transferrable** gorilla trekking permits at \$1,500 each (total of \$3,000 per person).
- English-speaking guides, park rangers, and trackers.
- Trip Materials – information about flights, packing, entry and departure requirements, airport transfers, gratuities, etc.
- Short Term AMREF Flying Doctor medical emergency evacuation insurance. This does not include hospital or treatment costs. For more information see [www.cheesemans.com/travel-insurance](http://www.cheesemans.com/travel-insurance).

## Not included

- All airfare (except flights listed as included), airport and departure taxes, and excess baggage fees.
- Passport and visa fees.
- Dinner on February 27.
- We can arrange divergent airport transfers and extra hotel nights for an extra cost.
- Gratuities for guides and porters: Tipping is, of course, discretionary, and the amount we suggest depends on the number of participants. We will give you detailed information with your Trip Materials.
- Trip cancellation insurance. For more information see [www.cheesemans.com/travel-insurance](http://www.cheesemans.com/travel-insurance).
- Items of a personal nature such as laundry, telephone calls, medical costs or hospitalization, room service, alcoholic and other beverages, items not on the regular menu, etc. If you have special dietary needs, please indicate them on your Reservation/Release Form.

## OTHER DETAILS

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### Climate

It is the dry season with less daily rainfall, but showers are possible. The temperatures range around 70°F (21°C) during the day and 60°F (16°C) at night. The altitudinal range creates climatic variations, so expect rain and mist in the upland forests while the sun shines at the base of Volcano National Park.

**Fitness Level**

Gorilla tracking can be arduous, so be prepared and equipped accordingly. Expect a one to three hour hike each way to see gorillas in dry or muddy conditions over coarse terrain. Walking sticks are provided and porters are available for hire. The high elevation may also affect hikers. The base of the park sits at 7,500ft above sea level (2,300m) and rises to 13,500ft (4,100m).

**Transportation**

You'll travel in 4x4 Toyota Land Cruisers similar to those on your Tanzania and Kenya safaris. It takes about 2.5 hours to drive from Kigali to the Virunga Massif, which hosts Volcanoes National Park.

**Flights**

Airfare, except flights listed as included, is not included in trip costs. Detailed logistical and contact information for our recommended flight-ticketing agent are included in the Trip Materials we will send you.

Flights you (or a travel agent) book: Arrive in Kilimanjaro International Airport (JRO) near Arusha, Tanzania, in time for an overnight on February 6. For most, this means departing from home on February 5. Depart from Kigali on the evening of March 2.

Flights we book for you: One-way flight between Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (NBO) in Nairobi and Kigali International Airport (KGL) on February 28. The cost of this booking is included in the tour cost.