



## CHEESEMANS' ECOLOGY SAFARIS

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### Mountain Gorilla Extension

#### *Gentle Giants of the Forest*

August 16 to 21, 2021



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 Kenya safari ([www.cheesemans.com/trips/kenya-aug2021](http://www.cheesemans.com/trips/kenya-aug2021)) from August 1 to 17, 2021.

**DAYS:** Adds 4 days to the main safari to total 21 days, including estimated travel time.

**GROUP SIZE:** 4 to 6.

**COST:** \$7,500 per person, double occupancy, not including airfare (except for one-way flight from Nairobi to Kigali), singles extra. See the *Costs* section on page 3.

Date	Description	Accommodation	Meals
Aug 16	Relax after the Kenya extension before departing for Rwanda.	Ole-Sereni Hotel, Nairobi	—
Aug 17	Fly from Nairobi to Kigali and then drive to the Virunga Mountains.	Mountain Gorilla View Lodge	B, L, D
Aug 18	Gorilla trek.		B, L, D
Aug 19	Gorilla trek and then return to Kigali.	Kigali Serena Hotel, Kigali	B, L, D
Aug 20	Kigali city tour and Genocide Memorial Centre visit before flying home.		B, L
Aug 21	Arrive home.		

## DETAILED ITINERARY

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### Aug 16 ~ Overnight in Nairobi

Spend the night in Nairobi, Kenya, at the end of the Kenya safari ([www.cheesemans.com/trips/kenya-aug2021](http://www.cheesemans.com/trips/kenya-aug2021)).

### Aug 17 ~ 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.

### Aug 18 ~ 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.

### **Aug 19 ~ 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.

### **Aug 20 ~ Explore Kigali and fly home**

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.

### **Aug 21 ~ 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	\$7,500
Single Supplement	\$300

Costs are per person, double occupancy, not including airfare (except for one-way flight from Nairobi to Kigali), singles extra. See *Included* and *Not Included* sections for more details.

If you are a single traveler, we will find a roommate for you, but if we cannot find you a roommate, we may charge you a single supplement. Single rooms cost extra and are subject to availability.

### **Payment Schedule**

<b>Payment</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Amount per Person</b>
Deposit	Due now to reserve your space	\$1,500
Final	Due with the Kenya trip	Remaining Balance

Payments are due based on the schedule above. All reservations require a deposit of \$1,500 per person (\$750 per permit) to pre-purchase the gorilla trekking permits.

## Cancellations

The cost of these permits are **non-refundable** and **non-transferrable**. No refunds are given after the Final Payment due date. 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.
- One-way flight from Nairobi to Kigali.
- Accommodations for the nights of August 16 through August 19.
- Meals from breakfast on August 17 through lunch on August 20.
- Airport transfers on August 17 and August 20.
- 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). 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.
- 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.
- We can arrange divergent airport transfers and extra hotel nights for an extra cost.
- Gratuities for guides and porters – tipping is always discretionary. The amount we suggest depends on the number of participants, and 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 Form.

## SIGN UP

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Please contact us first to check availability, reserve your space, and obtain a Reservation Form. To confirm your reservation, we require a deposit and signed form from each participant.

Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris

Email: [info@cheesemans.com](mailto:info@cheesemans.com)

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## OTHER DETAILS

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### Climate

The average high temperature in August at Volcano National Park and in Kigali is 77°F (25°C) and average lows are around 55°F (13°C). 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 Kenya safari. 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 Nairobi, Kenya (NBO) on August 2. Depart from Kigali, Rwanda (KGL) on the evening of August 20.

Flights we book for you: The one-way flight from Nairobi to Kigali is included in the trip cost.

### Terms and Conditions

Read our current Terms and Conditions at <https://cheesemans.com/terms-and-conditions>.

### Conservation

Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris is passionate about conserving the precious regions that we travel to and supports many conservation efforts. By visiting these areas, we contribute to sustainable conservation of these valuable wildlife habitats. We urge you to support conservation organizations that protect and restore natural habitats and write letters to tourism and government agencies to promote work in preserving wildlife.

We aim to make all our trips carbon neutral by splitting the cost of carbon offsetting with our participants. For your convenience, the optional donation amount for your half of the carbon offset will be indicated on your invoice. We source high quality offsets through CarbonTree Conservation Fund, a non-profit we helped found, supporting pioneering forest conservation in the Rio Bravo Reserve in Belize, a Nature Conservancy project ([www.nature.org/en-us/about-us/where-we-work/latin-america/belize/rio-bravo-conservation-area/](http://www.nature.org/en-us/about-us/where-we-work/latin-america/belize/rio-bravo-conservation-area/)).