

ABOUT UGANDA

HISTORY

Uganda, popularly known as the ‘*The Pearl of Africa*’ is located in East Africa and lies astride the equator. It is a land-locked country bordered by Kenya in the East, Tanzania in the South, Rwanda in the Southwest, Democratic Republic of Congo in the West and Sudan in the North. The southern part of the country includes a substantial portion of Lake Victoria, shared with Kenya and Tanzania, situating the country in the African Great Lakes region. Uganda also lies within the Nile basin, and has a varied but generally equatorial climate. Uganda takes its name from the Buganda kingdom, which encompasses a large portion of the south of the country including the capital Kampala.

GENERAL FACTS

Time Zone	GTM+3
Currency	Uganda Shilling (UGX)
Exchange Rate	USD 1= 2,700 UGX
Official Languages	English & Swahili
Electricity	220 – 240 V AC, Three pin plug
Religion	Predominantly Christian
Mobile Operators	MTN, Airtel, Uganda Telecom, Orange, Smile, Sure, K2 Telecom
International Dialling Code	+256 plus code number, followed by 6 digit local number
Fire and Police	999 and 112
Visa	Valid passport and visa (acquired at point of entry)

POPULATION

The current estimated population of Uganda is 35 million. Uganda has a very young population, with a median age of 15 years. Uganda is home to many different ethnic groups, none of whom forms a majority of the population. The population of Uganda consists of: Baganda 16.9%, Banyakole 9.5%, Basoga 8.4%, Bakiga 6.9%, Iteso 6.4%, Langi 6.1%, Acholi 4.7%, Bagisu 4.6%, Lugbara 4.2%, Banyoro 2.7%, other 29.6%

There are around 20,000 White residents in Uganda. Most Whites are Europeans from The United Kingdom. Other White residents come from the United States.

GOVERNMENT

The President of Uganda, currently Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, is both head of state and head of government. The President appoints a Vice-President, currently Edward Ssekandi, and a prime minister, currently Ruhakana Rugunda, who aid him in governing. The parliament is formed by the National Assembly, which has 332 members. 104 of these members are nominated by interest groups, including women and the army. The remaining members are elected for five-year terms during general elections.^[22]

Uganda is divided into districts, spread across four administrative regions: Northern, Eastern, Central (Kingdom of Buganda) and Western. The districts are subdivided into counties. Parallel with the state administration, five traditional Bantu kingdoms have remained, enjoying some degrees of mainly cultural autonomy.

HOSPITALITY & CULTURE

Ugandans are known for their hospitality and friendliness towards each other and visitors alike. However, it is advisable to be cautious when dealing with strangers. Police officers are very helpful and are easily identified by their uniforms. Like everywhere in the world valuables should always be safeguarded or left in the hotel safe box. If you do not know where to obtain a certain service or you are not sure always contact the Hotel Information Desk.

Uganda has a very strong cultural heritage. Many regions in Uganda have kingdoms including Buganda, Busoga, Bunyoro and Toro. Ugandans are remarkably hospitable and hail from a diversity of rich cultures and lifestyles. Culture and traditions are also expressed through a wide range of arts and crafts.

CLIMATE

Uganda enjoys a tropical climate, with abundant sunshine all year round. Uganda's temperatures are moderate throughout the year. In Kampala, near Lake Victoria, average daily temperatures range from 18° to 28° C (65° to 83° F) in January and from 17° to 25° C (62° to 77° F) in July. The climate is tropical; generally rainy with two dry seasons (December to February, June to August). It is semiarid East Sudanian savanna in north near Sudan.

GEOGRAPHY

Uganda, twice the size of Pennsylvania, is in East Africa. It is bordered on the west by Congo, on the north by the Sudan, on the east by Kenya, and on the south by Tanzania and Rwanda. The country, which lies across the equator, is divided into three main areas—swampy lowlands, a fertile plateau with wooded hills, and a desert region. Lake Victoria forms part of the southern border. Despite being on the equator Uganda is more temperate than the surrounding areas due to its altitude. The country is mostly plateau with a rim of mountains. This has made it more suitable to agriculture and less prone to tropical diseases than other nations in the region.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Anti-malaria tablets are recommended throughout Uganda. Visit your local travel clinic to determine which type is best for you. Even if you are taking anti-malarials, you should still wear insect repellent, long-sleeved shirts, and closed shoes. All accommodation in high risk areas will have mosquito nets so be sure to use them.

Bring all prescription medications with you as they may not be readily available in Uganda. Be sure to purchase travel insurance before you begin your trip, including medical evacuation in case of an emergency. All visitors require vaccination against yellow fever.

On Ebola

A report by the Ministry of Health Uganda (31/07/2014) confirmed that there had not been cases of Ebola in Uganda. The Minister of Health reaffirmed that no cases has been reported in the country since the outbreak was declared in West Africa, and that the National Taskforce on Epidemics and Disease Surveillance was on alert to watch out on any Ebola alerts throughout the country.

Since July, 2014, the Ministry of Health has undertaken the following measures to prevent the spread of Ebola in Uganda.

1. We have heightened surveillance in all districts. All districts have been directed to be vigilant and look out for suspected cases and alerts for immediate action. Additionally, all districts with border posts have been asked to intensify disease surveillance especially for people with a travel history to the affected countries.
2. We have intensified screening at Entebbe International Airport. We have set up a health desk to conduct this screening. The exercise targets all people with recent travel of 21 days in any affected countries. The isolation unit at Entebbe and the airport medical centre have been equipped.
3. We have adequate medical and health supplies in all Regional Referral Hospitals
4. The National Medical Stores (NMS) has stocked the necessary medical and health supplies ready for dispatch to any affected region.
5. A team of experts has already been dispatched to Buvuma Island to ascertain the entry points and give guidance on Ebola control measures
6. The Ministry of Health has assembled a team of experts to be on standby to be deployed in areas where suspected cases are reported.

TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION

Visitors can get airport taxi or hotel courtesy buses on arrival and departure to Entebbe Airport. For public transport commuter mini buses and taxis (special hire) are the main means of public transport in Kampala. There are both buses and mini buses for inter-city services. Distances are relatively short and road surfaces good.

If your cell phone is compatible, you may be able to purchase an inexpensive SIM card, widely available throughout the country. The international dialing code for Uganda is +256 see more at <http://www.ugandawildlife.org/visitor-guide-2/travel-essentials/travel-faqs>

For more information on preferred accommodation, restaurants, entertainment and shopping please contact the International Relations Unit at the Uganda Communications Commission.

RELIGION

Uganda is religiously diverse nation with Christianity and Islam being the most widely professed religions. According to 2002 census, 85.4% of the population is Christian, while 12.1% of the population adheres to Islam (mainly Sunni). The Northern and West Nile regions are dominated by Roman Catholics and Iganga District in the east of Uganda has the highest percentage of Muslims.

Good Friday, Easter Monday, Eid al-Fitr, Eid al-Adha, and Christmas are recognized national holidays.

GETTING TO UGANDA

The main entry point for flights into Uganda is *Entebbe International Airport* (EBB) located near the town Entebbe, about 46km/29mi from the capital, Kampala. Uganda is a relatively compact country and further transportation within the country is usually done by vehicle. In most cases your local tour operator will collect you from the airport or hotel and will arrange further transportation as part of your safari-package.

The Uganda tourist visa is easily obtained at points of entry such as Entebbe International Airport or any of the border points. The visa is USD 50 for a single entry and USD 100 for a multiple entry (6-12 months). As visa requirements change frequently, please check with the Ugandan Embassy in your country before departure for updates.

The East African Tourist Visa is now available, and you can visit Kenya, Uganda and Rwanda on a single USD 100, 90 day visa. Nationals from the East Africa Community (EAC) and COMESA (Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa) are exempt from visa required into Uganda. COMESA countries are Angola, Burundi, Comoros, Eritrea, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Madagascar, Rwanda, Seychelles, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Other Countries exempt from Visa requires to Uganda are: Antigua, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Fiji, Gambia, Grenada, Jamaica, Lesotho, Malta, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Tonga, Vanuatu, Italy (only Diplomatic Passports) and Cyprus.

HEALTH AND VACCINATIONS

Anti-malaria tablets are recommended throughout Uganda. Visit your local travel clinic to determine which type is best for you. Even if you are taking anti-malarials, you should still wear insect repellent, long-sleeved shirts, and closed shoes. All accommodation in high risk areas will have mosquito nests so be sure to use them.

Bring all prescription medications with you as they may not be readily available in Uganda. Be sure to purchase travel insurance before you begin your trip, including medical evacuation in case of an emergency.

All visitors require vaccination against yellow fever.

HOTELS

1. Munyonyo Commonwealth Resort (**Conference Venue**)
P. O. BOX 3673, Kampala
TEL: +256 417 716 000/200
E-Mail: info@munyonyocommonwealth.com
Accommodation: Deluxe \$100
2. Victoria Travel Hotel

Tel: +256 701573606/781239917
Email: victoriatravelhotel@yahoo.co.uk
Accommodation: Deluxe \$65
Standard \$ 50
Single \$ 35

3. Sir Jose Hotel
Tel: +256 414 667008/712393489
Email: sirjosehotel@hotmail.com
Accommodation: Deluxe \$70
Single \$ 35