



DESTINATION & GENERAL TRAVEL ESSENTIALS: RWANDA 2015

(courtesy of the Travel Experts at GEI!)

Travel information

Visas

- Up-to-date visa information is available at www.migration.gov.rw. Unless there are changes on short notice, the following can be used as a general guideline:
- Nationals of Australia, Germany, Israel, New Zealand, South Africa, Sweden, the UK and the USA will be issued an entry visa valid for a period of up to 30 days and may pay the visa fee (USD 30) upon arrival at any Rwandan entry point without prior application.
- Nationals of the following countries may visit Rwanda without a visa for a period up to 90 days: Hong Kong, the Philippines, Mauritius, Singapore and the DRC.
- Nationals from any other country are required to obtain a visa in advance, which can be secured at any Rwandan diplomatic mission. Alternatively, you may apply for a single-entry visa online at www.migration.gov.rw/index.php?id=75. If approved, you will receive a PDF entry facility via email within 3 business days. You must print this file and take a hard copy with you to Rwanda where you can pay the USD 50 fee for a 30-day visa at the airport or any other point of entry. Please note that this



	<p>process is mandatory and you are likely to be refused entry into Rwanda if you do not carry a hard copy of the PDF file.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● For longer stays or multiple entries into the country, you must apply for an appropriate tourist visa. This can be done in advance at your nearest Rwandan consulate or after arrival at the Immigration office in Kigali where the process can take between 3 and 5 business days.
Passports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● You must have a passport that is valid for at least six months from the day you start your journey. We recommend you carry your passport on your person or in your hand luggage during your entire program. Do not pack your travel documents in your suitcase. ● Furthermore, many countries require you to have several (up to 6!!) consecutive empty visa passport pages for immigration endorsement. Please check the exact amount at the country's diplomatic mission or immigration department. The official endorsement pages (for amendments) in the back of most passports will not be accepted for immigration use. ● If you haven't already, please send us a scanned copy of your passport's picture page.
International Flights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Airports: The main journey program takes place in Kigali, Rwanda airport (KGL). If you are doing the main program, this is your flight destination. If you are doing the Rwandan volcanoes/ gorilla trek after the program, you will still fly in and out of Kigali. If you are doing the additional Tanzania safari, you can book your return flight out of Tanzania, from the Kilimanjaro International Airport (JRO), or we can help you book a flight back to Rwanda to return home (this flight is not included in program costs). ● GEI is not a travel agent, and we do not deal with international flight arrangements. Please also note that we are unable to assist with any issues that might arise before or during your flights or at a connecting airport,



	<p>including missed or delayed flights, problems with luggage limitations, refusals to transport you for any reason, last-minute visa issues and so on. Unless otherwise agreed upon beforehand, our services and responsibilities start upon arrival at your destination and end there. We will of course happily assist at the destination in case your luggage has been delayed or lost during the flight.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If you haven't already, please send us a copy of your flight itinerary as soon as possible.
Destination information	
Weather	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rainy seasons: mid-February to mid-June, mid-September to mid-December ● Average temperature: 24.6°C (76.3°F) – 27.6°C (81.7°F); hottest in August/September
Electricity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 230/240 volts at 50Hz ● Adapters/converters have to be brought as they are rarely available in hotels. Rwanda's electrical outlets consist of two round prongs.
Telephone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cell phones are widely used, and there are several networks to choose from. Make sure to check your international roaming plan to avoid exorbitant bills. Local SIM cards can also be procured on arrival for unlocked phones, and a "pay as you go" top up system works well. However, not all international cell phones work at the destination. Please contact your own service provider to learn more about international coverage and plans.
Exchange rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1 Euro ~ 790 Rwandan Francs (July 2015) ● 1 US Dollar ~ 725 Rwandan Francs (July 2015)



Money & payments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Credit cards are increasingly accepted at many restaurants and hotels, and you can also find many ATM machines to withdraw cash in local currency. Please note, however, that Visa is the credit card of preference! It is not possible to withdraw cash from ATMs using e.g. MasterCard or other credit cards. The only option to obtain cash with a MasterCard is the Card Services Department at Access Bank which offers a quick and easy process for cash advance withdrawals. Other credit cards (American Express etc) are not regularly used. ● Make sure to have your credit card PIN number with you. ● Inform your cardholder or bank of your international travel plans. Some will place a security flag or hold on your card when it is used in a different country or even city ● For those places that do not yet accept credit card payments (including crafts markets or stores and restaurants in more rural areas), make sure to bring enough cash for personal spending. USD, GBP, CAD and Euros are all accepted as means of exchange. If you bring USD, it is advisable to only have USD 50 and USD 100 bills (smaller amounts attract lower exchange rates) that have been printed during or after 2013 (older bills are frequently not accepted). Forex bureaus and banks are available in most major cities, and your guide can generally help with currency exchange throughout your trip. ● Bank or debit cards that allow you to withdraw money directly from your bank account at home are not accepted in the country at either banks or ATMs, so please do not rely on this option. It is usually best to be equipped with a mix of cash and a credit card (preferably Visa).
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Taxi cars are safe to use, generally available in most main areas of the major cities and relatively affordable (approximately USD 5-10 in most



	<p>neighborhoods, depending on the distance). To recognize them, look for white or white and yellow four-door Toyota cars.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Motorcycle taxis or “motos” are another form of transportation, and they are frequently used by locals and more adventurous visitors. We strongly discourage their use as they can be dangerous and are regularly involved in heavy accidents. If you do wish to use one, you do so at your own risk.
Do’s & don’ts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Handouts and donations: Please do not give anything to people you meet randomly – no sweets, cookies, empty water bottles, pens or even money – since this encourages a culture of begging and hassling. Our desire is to encourage a culture of entrepreneurship, service provision and targeted help rather than uncoordinated handouts. If you would like to make a donation (e.g. school toys, medicines, etc), please make arrangements with us prior to your program if at all possible. (Note: the Half Sky Women & Leadership journey will have a component on impact investing, and together we’ll provide learning that will help you give in a more sustainable way towards issues that matter most to you!) ● Environmental protection: Please note that Rwanda has prohibited the use of plastic bags. Make sure not to carry any plastic bags with you, including in your luggage. It is possible that authorities ask you to open your luggage upon arrival to search for plastic bags. More generally, we have a strong sustainability policy, and we encourage our guests to respect some basic rules. Upon arrival, your guide will provide you with a briefing. ● Photography: Please always ask your guide when it is appropriate to take photos beforehand. Never take photos during a meeting or session without prior permission and approval of all participants. In many cases, taking photos will be permissible and even welcomed (e.g. children tend to enjoy photos), with the exception of military personnel and government property as well as public buildings, including the airport. Please always do so in a



sensitive and dignifying way. Permission should also be sought from individuals.

- **Alcohol and drugs:** Reckless abuse of alcohol is not acceptable. We encourage the participants of our programs to see themselves as ambassadors of their own countries and institutions, and to respect Rwandan culture and community. Public drunkenness or consuming alcohol in inappropriate or illegal places is strictly forbidden. Illegal drugs (marijuana etc) are strictly monitored in Rwanda and come with heavy fines and prison sentences. GEI will not take any responsibility for any program participant who is found to be breaking Rwandan law while participating in one of our programs.
- **Social sensitivity:** Participants should never ask about an individual's ethnicity in Rwanda. Since the genocide of 1994, ethnic divisions are discouraged in both thought and discussion, and the national government has prioritized the promotion of the concept of "one Rwanda, one people". It is considered a deeply sensitive topic and should not be approached lightly by any outside visitors even with the best intentions, unless done so in a very broad and diplomatic sense when talking about peace and reconciliation efforts post-genocide. Any direct reference to specific ethnic groups should be avoided at all costs.

Health & hygiene

Vaccination
s

- Yellow fever vaccination is required. You may be asked for an international health certificate upon arrival in the country, so please ensure that you carry this certification with you, as well as your general vaccination record.
- Other vaccinations, such as hepatitis A/B, typhoid, meningococcal meningitis and rabies, as well as tetanus, diphtheria and polio may be advisable depending on your program.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Since we are not medical authorities, please consult your personal doctor at least 8 weeks before departure and act on his or her recommendation.
Malaria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Malaria is very rare in Kigali but remains a health issue in other parts of Rwanda, so you may wish to consult your doctor at least 4 weeks before the program about the most appropriate anti-malarial drug for you. In addition, try to prevent mosquito bites between dusk and dawn by using DEET-based insect-repellent and a bed net.
Hospitals & clinics in Kigali	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● King Faisal Hospital (Kacyiru, Kigali): 0252-582421, 0252-585397, 0252-582469 Ambulance: 0788-690438 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm), 0788-530351 (all other times) ● Polyclinique du Plateau (Nyarugenge, Kigali): 0252-578767, 0252-572125
General fitness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It is important that you are in reasonably good health. There are many activities in the program that require a fair amount of walking. Delegates who require assistance may not be able to fully participate or access some sites. Please note that the motor coaches and the vast majority of sites, buildings and restaurants on the itinerary are not wheelchair accessible. Please consult with us in advance if you feel this may be an issue for you.
Travel health insurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Appropriate health insurance and insurance for return transport to your home country are recommended. Remember to carry your insurance card and policy details with you. If you haven't already, please send us a scanned copy of the insurance.
Travel planning	
Suggested packing list	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In your handbag/money belt: Wallet, personal identification, passport, air tickets, luggage key, emergency phone numbers



- In your carry-on: Light jacket, personal journal/pen, Kleenex tissue pack, toiletries for flight (in 100ml containers, total not exceeding 1l), personal medicines, photocopy of passport and tickets, all electronic equipment (including cameras, video recorders, laptops etc)
- In checked luggage: Clothes (see below), comfortable walking shoes, toiletries (including a high factor sunscreen), insect repellent, travel raincoat, sun hat, extra batteries for camera or camera charger, alarm clock
- Please check applicable baggage allowance policies with your airline(s) prior to packing and departure, also for any domestic flights.

Clothes

- Light clothing for the warm days and mild evenings and heavier clothing including solid walking shoes especially for excursions in the national parks are appropriate. Generally, it is a good idea to bring clothes that can be layered. A hat and sunglasses provide protection against the sun. A waterproof jacket may come in handy in the mountains or during the rainy season. Many of the places visited are rural and the ground is usually uneven and muddy if it has been raining. It is important to wear sensible footwear for these visits.
 - Rwandans take pride in their appearance, and most people in business and government are smartly attired. Long microfiber pants or skirts and shirts or blouses are appropriate for most casual program days. However, if you participate in business or government meetings or a formal conference, business clothes (dress pants, blazers, professional skirts, dress shoes etc) will be required. We recommend that you pack at least one complete professional outfit for such meetings. Please note particularly that short pants or skirts are inappropriate for most meetings and should also be avoided when traveling outside of Kigali in order to respect the local culture. Any safari-style wear, running shoes or flip flops are not appropriate for
-



	<p>professional meetings. Please dress and behave as you would if you were meeting business or government officials from your own country.</p>
Hotel facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The hotels offered have been selected according to your delegation's desired standards and budget. Please familiarize yourself with available facilities in advance on your hotel's website in order to be aware of facilities on offer. Most hotels offer free wireless internet at least in public areas; however, be forewarned that connection speeds can be slow. Please use hotel safes for all your valuables. If private safes are unavailable in your room, ask for a general hotel safe.
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The vehicles chosen for your program are comfortable, among the best in the country. But please do not expect them to have a standard found in Western countries. Motor coaches, for example, do not have toilet facilities on board. While we always try to limit the time that you spend on the vehicles, some distances may require several hours of driving. Please study the itinerary in detail and prepare yourself accordingly.
Bathroom facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are a variety of restrooms that you will need to deal with. Regular western style toilets are available at the hotels and most restaurants. The second form is what is known as a bucket flush where there is a toilet but no running water so a bucket of water is provided to pour into the toilet. The third type is a pit toilet where there is nothing but a hole in the ground and two bricks to locate your feet. The last option is the bush. Please bring your own tissues and hand sanitizer along, as frequent use of this is the best defense against common bugs.
Gratuities	<p>Unless expressly excluded, tips for drivers, porters and restaurant staff associated with our programs have been included in your program cost and will be paid from the program office. You need not give these persons gratuities</p>



unless you choose to recognize their excellent service with a voluntary supplementary tip (which is always appreciated, of course).