

# Rwanda Travel Tips

## Money and currency:

- The **Rwandan franc** (FRW or RWF) is the principal currency although US dollars and EUR are widely accepted. Notes are in denominations of RWF 500, 1,000, 2000, and 5000, while coins are RWF 1, 5, 10, 20, 50 and 100.
- It is recommended to travel with US dollars or Euros as most banks and Forex Bureaus do not accept traveler's cheques in exchange for cash.
- Only banks, Forex Bureaus, hotels and lodges are authorized dealers as recommended by the company to change money. US\$ bills produced before 2006 are not accepted, while small bills (5, 10, 20) will fetch a lower exchange rate.
- Credit cards are usually accepted at major hotels, souvenirs shops and shopping malls in Rwanda (Except local markets).
- Kenya, Tanzania/Uganda currency is not accepted here, but can be exchanged only in local banks and Forex Bureaus. Visitors may import an unlimited amount of foreign exchange.
- It is advisable to pay your extra bills and check out the night before you depart from a hotel or lodge to avoid long delays in the morning.

**Language:** Kinyarwanda is the National language, while French and English and Swahili are official languages. English and French are professionally spoken throughout the country.

**Gorilla Permits:** Gorilla Permits are the single most demanded item in Rwanda. Availability of chimpanzee permits is low. Purchase of Gorilla Permits and chimpanzee permits needs to be arranged well in advance through your local tour operator.

Park officers have exclusive competence for the assignment of the group to visit.

Observation time: 1 hour maximum with the gorillas (excluding walking time to access the place where the gorillas will be). Depending on the group visited and the season, the walk can take between 1 and 3 hours to reach the gorilla family (so up to 6 hours and more round trip).

## General Clothing:

- Safaris are informal and casual dress in comfortable lightweight cottons is appropriate. But rain coat are needed in rain seasons
- Hiking backpack to carry your personal belongings during the trip.
- A gourd, a hat, a pair of sunglasses, a pair of binoculars, are advisable for protection against the sun
- Laundry can be done at most lodges, but please make sure you hand in you laundry requirement at least a day before departure.  
**Note:** express laundry facilities might not be available in all hotels/lodges.
- Light comfortable shoes such as sneakers or lightweight hiking boots are recommended
- Be prepared for cool evenings at higher altitudes of Virunga Mountains and Nyungwe, where you may need a sweater and trousers/jeans.

**Tiping:** is discretionary and appreciated. Cash is usually preferred. As a rough guide, tip professional guides and drivers +/- \$10 per day, trekking porters +/- \$5, at your appreciation.