

Experience Uganda May 2014 - \$2900

Finalish Itinerary – Subject to the Unknown

Day 0: Tuesday, April 22

Arrival. While there is no programming scheduled, lodging and meals in-country are included beginning with dinner on this day, so feel free to eat at the hotel restaurant and charge it to your room.

Day 1: Wednesday, April 23

Morning:

Sleep in (if you can – between the jet lag and the hadada ibises, you might be up early!), have breakfast, and then we will have an orientation to the trip starting at 11:00 am. We will introduce ourselves, talk about our hopes and goals for the trip, address logistics and cover some basic but useful cultural understandings and greetings.

Afternoon/Evening:

After our orientation we will have lunch together and then a few hours to rest before we leave for a performance of the Ndere Dancers – a cultural dance troupe that performs the traditional dances and songs from the different regions of Uganda. It is “dinner theater” style, so we will eat local food as we enjoy the performance.



Dress code: Women: Capris are fine for this day. Men: Long pants.

Day 2: Thursday, April 24

Wear sunscreen and bring water!



Morning:

We will start this day at the BeadforLife office to experience a Bead Sale, which is when the members bring their beaded jewelry to sell to BeadforLife. The morning always starts out with singing and dancing - an experience that you will never forget! You will spend time interacting with the women and observing the buying process. This is a great opportunity to ask the Beaders any questions you have for them about their lives. We will also get an orientation to the different program areas and how they all tie together to form a holistic approach to poverty eradication.

Afternoon:

After lunch with the staff we will be joined by members of the BeadforLife Membership and Entrepreneurial Teams to do home and business visits in some of the communities where they have selected members. Some of these women will have just started in the program, and some will have completed or nearly completed it. You will get a good understanding of the conditions the women are living in before earning money through rolling beads or starting businesses, and also what the membership team looks for in choosing people for membership.

Dress code: Women: Long skirts Men: Long pants

Day 3: Friday, April 25

Morning and Afternoon:

After breakfast we will head north to the town of Lira, in the heart of the area that was affected by the rebellion of the Lord's Resistance Army. The north is now an exciting and beautiful place, filled with the energy of rebuilding communities and the economy. It is always dangerous to try to predict driving times in Uganda, but plan on at least a five-hour drive on this day. We will break it up with a stop at the spectacular Karuma Falls where we will have a picnic lunch.

Dress code: Women: Capris are fine for this day Men: Long pants

Day 4: Saturday, April 26

Morning and Afternoon:

We will leave Lira early in the morning (**7am!!!**) and drive farther north to the BeadforLife office in Otuke District. This area is incredibly remote, and rarely visited by foreigners or, for that matter, other Ugandans! We will receive a quick orientation to the programs happening in the area, and then will have the opportunity to visit several shea nut gatherers as well as one of the ox-plow cooperatives.

Dress code: Women: Long skirts Men: Long pants



Day 5: Sunday, April 27



Morning and Afternoon:

We're off to Murchison Falls National Park! We will enter the park through the north entrance in Purongo, which used to be a camp for people displaced by the war. We will spend the afternoon doing a game drive down to the delta where the River Nile enters Lake Albert. The game drive will last about 4 hours. We'll plan to check into our lodge in time for sundowners overlooking the river before dinner.

Dress code: Women and Men: Casual. Enjoy this opportunity to wear shorts!

Day 6: Monday, April 28

Morning:

We'll be getting up early this morning for a 6:30 am game drive. This is the best time to have a shot at seeing lions returning from the night's hunt, so we want to make sure we get out there as early as possible! You can never be sure what animals you will see, but some of the notable species in the park are: elephant, hippo, giraffe, lion, leopard, warthog, Uganda kob, hartebeest, oribi, crocodile, and TONS of birds! We will have lunch back at our lodge.

Afternoon:

2:30pm Boat Launch to Murchison Falls

This boat trip takes about 2-3 hours and travels up the Nile to a view of the base of Murchison Falls. We won't know which boat we are on until we get there, but most of the boats have restrooms and sell beverages. You will pass through rafts of hippos and crocodiles, and will be amazed by the abundant bird life along the shores. This ride also tends to be very relaxing after days of bumpy driving on roads.



Day 7: Tuesday, April 29



Morning:

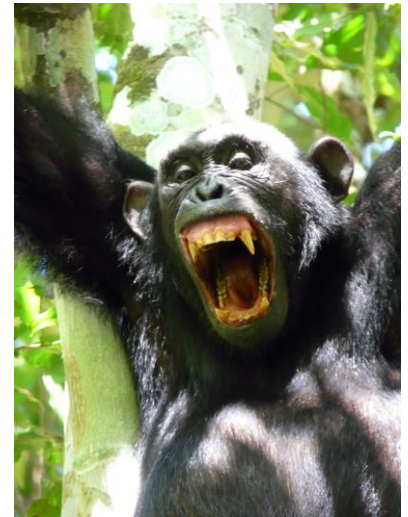
After checking out of our lodge, we will proceed to the top of Murchison Falls, where the 100-yard-wide Nile River blasts through a 7-yard-wide cleft in the rocks. The power of this waterfall is mesmerizing. This is the spot where Churchill coined the phrase “The Pearl of Africa” as a description of Uganda, and is the waterfall that the head of the Royal Geographic Society in the late 1800s called “the most exciting thing that happens to the Nile in its 4,000 mile journey.”

Afternoon:

After the falls, we will drive to Kaniyo-Pabidi, an ecotourism site in the forest for lunch. After lunch we will split the group. One half will go chimpanzee tracking. Make sure you wear good, closed-toed walking shoes for this. The hike can sometimes take three hours depending on where the chimps are. And, they are wild animals, so you never know if you will see them. Whether or not you get to see the chimps, it is amazing to spend time hiking through a lush tropical forest with a knowledgeable guide.

The other half of the group will do a village walk with the Boomu Women’s Group just outside the boundary of the park. This award-winning program is creating income opportunities for women in addition to educating visitors about their lives and culture.

We will spend this night in Kaniyo-Pabidi, re-living those old summer camp days sleeping in bunk beds and listening to the haunting sound of the tree hyrax. Well, OK, most of us didn’t have tree hyraxes at our summer camps, but you WILL get to sleep in bunk beds this night!



Dress code: Closed-toed shoes. The rest of the dress code is weather-dependent.

Day 8: Wednesday, April 30

Morning:

If you did the chimp tracking yesterday, you will do the village walk this morning and vice versa.

Afternoon:

We will drive back to Kampala in time for a late dinner.

Dress code: Morning: Closed-toed shoes. The rest of the dress code is weather-dependent.

Afternoon: Women capris, men long pants

Day 9: Thursday, May 1

Morning:

Take the morning off to rest and catch up on your journal.



Afternoon:

We will have an early (11:30am) lunch, then go to the M-Lisada Orphanage, a program for street kids who are learning performance skills to support themselves and the facility. We will be paying for their lunch this day and will help serve it. They often do a small performance for us as well. These kids will melt your heart!

Our official final dinner is this evening.

Dress code: Women: Capris are fine for this day. Men: Long pants.

Day 10: Friday, May 2

We will do some souvenir shopping in the morning, and then play the rest of the day by ear. Lunch this day is the last meal included in the trip, but for those of you with late departures, we will make sure your day is well-spent and that you make it to the airport on time!

****If you have flights later in the weekend, or if you want to do an extension to see the mountain gorillas or anything else, I am happy to make suggestions and connect you with people who can do the arrangements for you.*

