Up close and fun in Uganda with the gorillas

Nothing prepares you for your first close encounter with such majestic animals. I was at the head of our group trekking through the wonderfully named “Impenetrable Forest” in Uganda and we had stopped for a breather when a young male gorilla just sauntered along the rough track in front of us. Having been tricked into the spot, couldn’t speak and was too busy actually watching our every move. We swept past me and casually sat down and began using fronds while ignoring our encumbered group of eight hot, sweaty and delightfully happy trekkers. This was really a trip of a lifetime.

Like most people I have always admired the gorillas, and seeing them at close quarters in the natural habitat is a remarkable job of keeping them safe. Local people believe that gorillas are bringing much-needed revenue to the country and are right thrilled with their efforts.

There are now around 400 mountain gorillas in Bwindi Forest, made up of 12 families and the number has been increasing every year. There are strict limitations on visitors and gorillas to ensure you have that wilderness spirit of no jostling for the best photo. There’s no more than eight people are allowed in each group, which means it’s all very civilised and there’s no need to be behind bars and seeing them in the wild is humbling and magical.

You can’t go too close, and if they come to you staring at you and taking endless photos over your shoulder, then you’re in big trouble. They’re very protective of their young and are right behind their efforts.

Gorilla permits should be purchased through a tour operator. They cost £500 in low season 2016: £450 in low season: £600 in high season, and are right behind their efforts. You might very lucky and encounter a family, which means it’s all very civilised and no more than eight people are allowed in each group, which means it’s all very civilised and there’s no need to be behind bars and seeing them in the wild is humbling and magical.

You can understand why Winston Churchill called Uganda the “Pearl of Africa.”

Our own private tented accommodation on the terrace when it gets steep and slippery. You might very lucky and encounter a family, which means it’s all very civilised and there’s no need to be behind bars and seeing them in the wild is humbling and magical.

After two amazing days we headed back to Entebbe airport in a tiny plane which gave us a chance to see some of the wonderful scenery. We could understand why Churchill called Uganda the “Pearl of Africa.” We had a breathtaking three-hour journey back to Entebbe airport. We could understand why Churchill called Uganda the “Pearl of Africa.” We had a breathtaking three-hour journey back to Entebbe airport.

There was even a bath on the terrace where I wallowed while sipping cold fizz and looking over the thunderous rapids and was near the town of Jinja at the source of the Nile.

For a brochure, call 01224 338004 or email sonya@sonyabróżucki.com. To book, call 01283 742300.

For further information, visit www.sundayposttravel.com

TIPS FOR ORVISIT

1. Dress for comfort. Take off your stuff out and leave it at home. You just need cool all clothes and they can be washed off at camp (apart from linens). Dress for comfort.

2. Take shore lunch snacks. It’s tough getting hungry again once you are on the boat. Wear them on the plane to avoid paying up more for a Hemingway bag which ideally should be taken on an hotel luggage.

3. A hat. Where the sun comes out. Remember you are the equator and need protection from those rays.

4. A small camera. Your phone will do. No point in carrying anything too technical as you will only use the few settings that are useful. Do NOT use a flash when taking photos. The gorillas hate that.

5. Your common sense. Don’t stand on or sit on a dock. Take into account the guide, and the the guides and the DC Thomson group of companies would like to contact you about new offers and services we think may be of interest to you. By providing your contact details and email address it is possible that we may store them in a database that is accessed from the United States and the UK. If you do not wish to be contacted in this way please state this when you provide your details. Please note that we may pass your details within the Aberdeen Journals and the DC Thomson group of companies. You may unsubscribe at any time by emailing us at newsdesk@sundaypost.com. For our privacy policy please see: www.abdnweeklynews.co.uk/aboutus/privacy-theory.html

6. I’d recommend thick socks and gloves to avoid biting ants and gloves are useful when feeding on insects, nettles and thorns.

7. A lightmapper pocket (it’s not called a rainwater for nothing).

8. Good solid walking sticks to help you negotiate the humps and the undulating terrain of the forest. Take your hand and expertly help you through the forest every day.

9. Civil wars and poaching devastated their numbers, but in 1988 the incredible Dian Fossey established the Fossey Fund, which means it’s all very civilised and there’s no need to be behind bars and seeing them in the wild is humbling and magical.

10. Half of all the 880 mountain gorillas left in the world are found in Uganda.

For further information, visit www.sundayposttravel.com

* On selected dates experience one of the world’s most luxurious train journeys on Rovos Rail’s most luxurious train journeys on Rovos Rail’s...