

# edirisa canoe Trekking

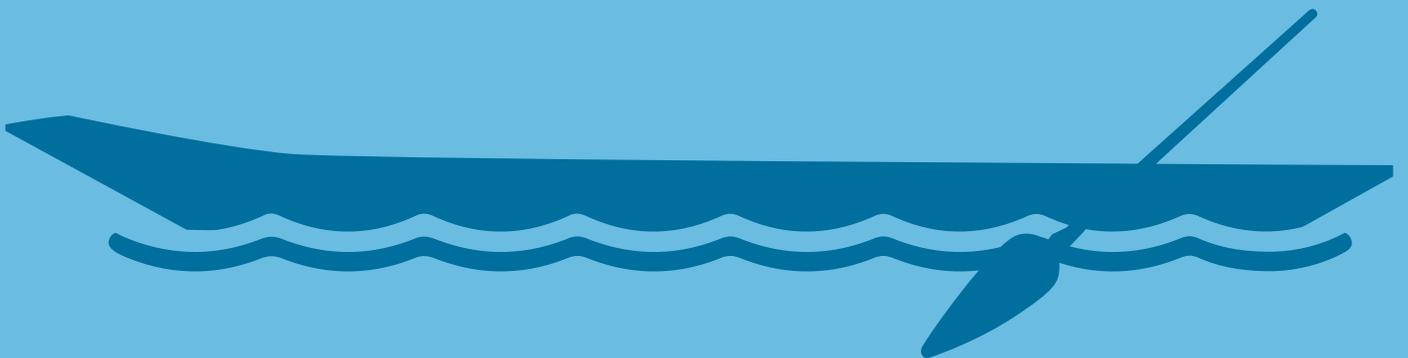
## Ecotourism Adventures in Southwestern Uganda

**"excellent tours"**

Lonely Planet

**"nonprofit organization  
running culturally sensitive trips"**

The Wall Street Journal



Celebrating 10 years of canoe treks



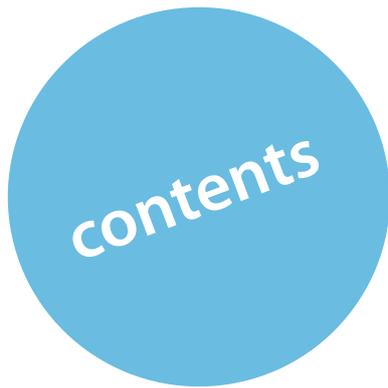
Festo Karwemera, the founder of the Bakiga Museum, Kabale Town; photo by Marcus Westberg



Lake Mutanda seen from its eastern side; photo by Blasio Byekwaso



Mountain gorilla tracking in Mgahinga Gorilla National Park; photo by Marcus Westberg



# contents

- 4 Trek area and routes
- 7 About Edirisa Canoe Trekking
- 9 About the Gorilla Highlands region
- 11 Trip advice
- 13 Kids and families
- 15 Trek upgrades
- 17 2-hour Bunyonyi canoeing
- 19 5-hour Bunyonyi trek
- 21 1-day Kabale Town - Lake Bunyonyi trek
- 23 1-day canoe trek on Lake Bunyonyi
- 25 2-day Lake Bunyonyi - Rushaga (Bwindi NP) trek
- 27 2-day canoe trek on Lake Bunyonyi
- 29 3-day canoe trek on Lake Bunyonyi
- 31 3-day Kabale Town - Kisoro Town trek
- 33 3-day Kabale Town - Mgahinga Gorilla National Park trek
- 37 5-day Kabale Town - Buhoma (Bwindi NP) trek
- 39 5-hour Kisoro Town - Mgahinga Gorilla National Park trek

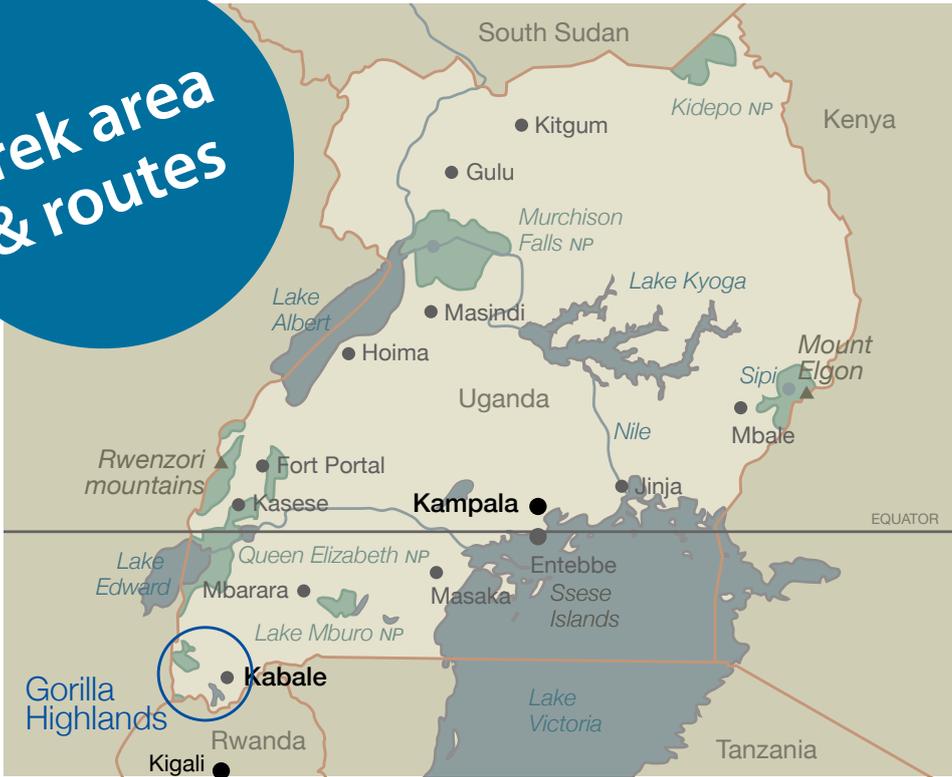
canoe trek = a trip involving a roughly equal amount of hiking and canoeing

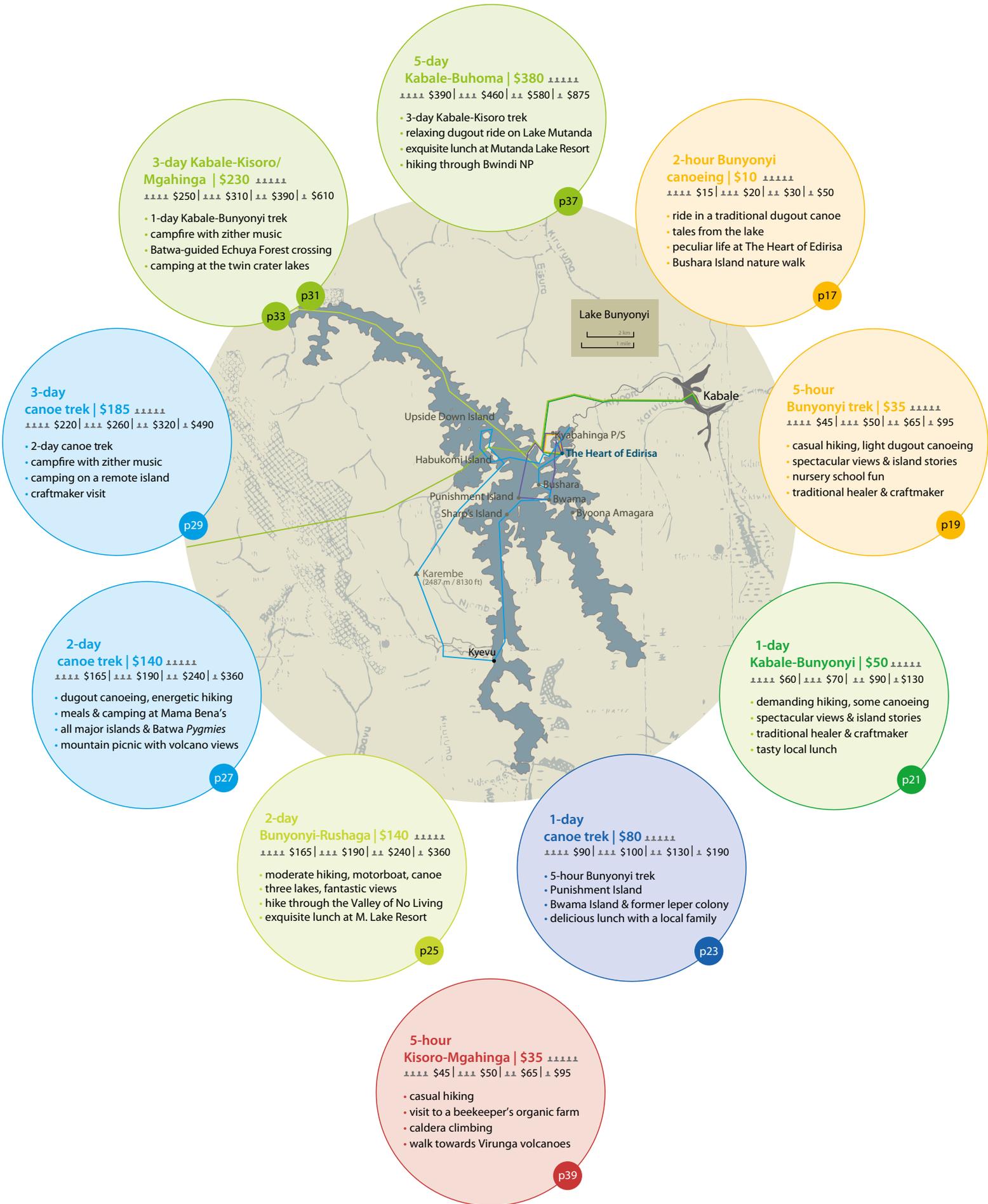
For detailed information please visit  
[www.canoetrekking.com](http://www.canoetrekking.com)

For reservations and more information  
please call  
+256 752 558 222

or send an email to  
[home@edirisa.org](mailto:home@edirisa.org)

**trek area & routes**





Our all-inclusive trek packages include meals, accommodation, guides and activities, as well as a tour of the Bakiga cultural museum. Trek directions can be reversed, routes and programs adjusted or merged. Payable in dollars, euros, pounds or Ugandan shillings.



Trekkers camping at Mama Bena's; photo by Marcus Westberg



On the way from Kabale to Kisoro; photo by Georg Schaumberger



Southwestern Uganda's beautiful terraces; photo by Blasio Byekwaso



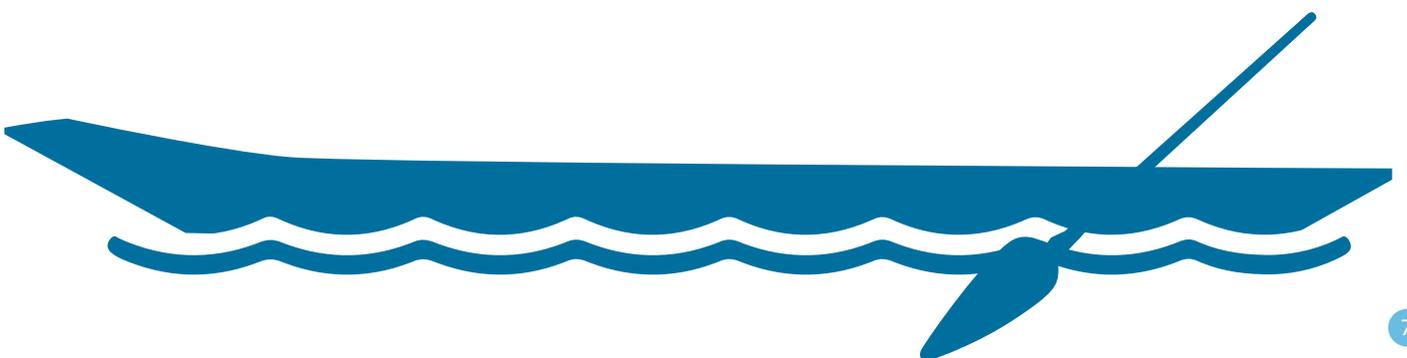
Edirisa (“window” in the local language) is a social enterprise that organises treks and other experiences in southwestern Uganda. Founded by a Slovenian journalist and development worker Miha Logar, Edirisa is also a rural multimedia powerhouse, promoting the region under the “Gorilla Highlands” brand.

We started running canoe treks around Lake Bunyonyi in 2005, as a way to orientate Edirisa volunteers who came to the area to work in the fields of education, multimedia and crafts. Soon other people asked if they could join, and canoe trekking became a widely known Bunyonyi activity with a simple premise: experience the lake as far away from touristy areas as humanly possible.

Our trips are a small-scale alternative to commercial tourism, for a traveller who wishes to treat the cultures and natural environment with special respect and learn something on the way. Our interest is culturally sensitive economic development of remote communities that have few other opportunities. We support numerous schools and cultural initiatives found on trek routes and make sure we are environmentally friendly.

In 2012 Edirisa expanded its reach to Kisoro Town and this marked the birth of Gorilla Highlands Trails, a regional system of guided trips.

By 2015 we have reached the point of taking you to four national park gates where you can do mountain gorilla tracking and many other interesting activities.

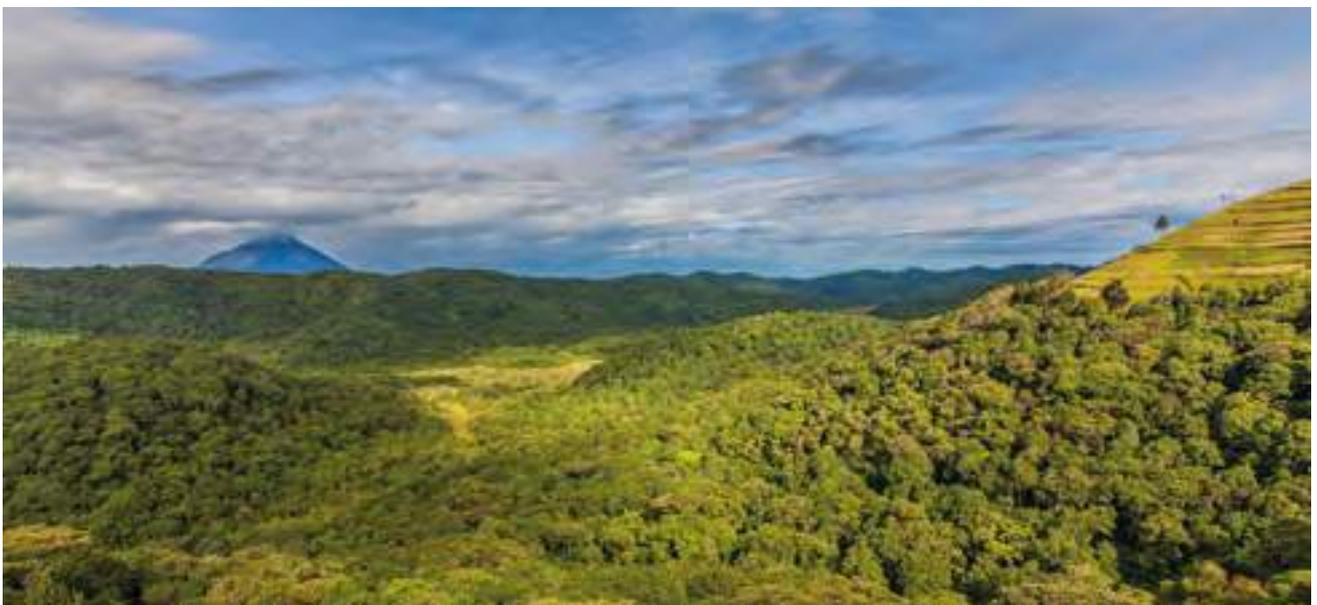




Lake Bunyonyi; photo by Marcus Westberg



Bwindi Impenetrable National Park; photo by Georg Schaumberger



Echuya Forest with Mgahinga in the background; photo by Marcus Westberg



The southwestern corner of Uganda is a land of plenty where the natural world assumes majestic proportions. Travellers from all over the world come to the Gorilla Highlands for the epiphany of staring into the eyes of our giant relatives. Yet the region offers much more: a landscape that opens your heart to adventure and vibrant cultures bubbling through the surface. These cultures belong to the Bantu (Bakiga/Bafumbira ethnic group) and to the original inhabitants of the forests, the Batwa “Pygmies”.

### **Bunyonyi**

Lake Bunyonyi is a young lake at 1,950m, formed 10,000 years ago when the river was dammed by a lava flow and the valley drowned. Bunyonyi is one of the safest lakes in Africa—it has no bilharzia, hippos or crocodiles. The lake is 25km long and 7km wide, has 29 islands and is 44m deep. Over 200 bird species have been recorded here.

### **Bwindi**

Bwindi Impenetrable National Park is a very old island of biodiversity, a lush rainforest set in a rugged landscape. It measures 331km<sup>2</sup> at an altitude between 1,160 and 2,607m. It harbours 28 species of amphibians and 28 reptiles, at least 200 butterfly species, 350 birds species and 120 mammal species. The 10 primates among them are mountain gorillas, the vulnerable mountain monkey, red tail monkey, blue monkey, black and white colobus, olive baboon, the chimpanzee and some secretive nocturnal species.

### **Mgahinga**

Uganda’s smallest national park (33.7km<sup>2</sup>) might well be its greatest because of the natural variety that comes with altitude range (up to 4,127 metres). Under three dormant volcanoes one can find mountain gorillas, golden monkeys, Batwa activities and more. Don’t miss the complete chapter on the park in the free PDF sample at [www.gorillahighlands.com/ebook](http://www.gorillahighlands.com/ebook).

### **Echuya**

Echuya Forest Reserve is an impressive montane rainforest where monkeys, squirrels and forest and bamboo bird species can occasionally be seen. It is about 7km long and 750m wide with altitudes from 2,270 to 2,570m. A swamp runs through the centre of it.

[www.gorillahighlands.com](http://www.gorillahighlands.com)



The award-winning **Gorilla Highlands Interactive eBook** is a travel guide to southwestern Uganda offering practical information unavailable anywhere else.

It is an astonishing combination of world-class photography, graphic design, illustration, audio, video and advice. Available on Apple's iBooks Store for \$14.99.

For more information visit [www.gorillahighlands.com/ebook](http://www.gorillahighlands.com/ebook)



Our region is much closer to the airport in Kigali (Rwanda) than to Entebbe (Uganda), therefore choose the former if you are flying here primarily for trekking. We can pick you up and organise the rest of your tour.

The weather in highland Uganda is typically a mixed bag — take warm sweaters and shorts, a raincoat and sun-block. Even though you can generally walk around in any shoes, soles with a good grip are advisable.

We will be in remote rural areas with no electricity so your own source of light is a good investment. For more privacy you are free to bring your own tent. A personal first aid kit may be handy.

You can swim safely in all lakes of southwestern Uganda, so pack your swimsuit for sure.

Because the families we visit do not have guest accommodation, we camp in spacious tents (we may need your help in putting them up and down). We arrange for comfortable foam mattresses to sleep on and blankets for additional cover. Your own sleeping bag is optional but advisable. (Accommodation upgrades to lodges/hotels are possible during most treks.)

During the trips we do not economise on food. You are likely to be impressed by the quality of local cooking, the richness of our breakfasts and picnics and the excellent cuisine of the restaurants we visit.

We provide mineral water, loads of it.

While our trips are all-inclusive, you may want to bring some shillings with you for local crafts, extra drinks and other personal needs.

Porters are not really needed during our Lake Bunyonyi canoe treks (most of your luggage travels by boat) but they are available and recommended for the multi-day Gorilla Highlands Trails trips.

We use big and stable dugout canoes. There has never been a case of a boat tipping over.





Paddling back from Tom's Homestay; photo by Miha Logar



Second day of the 3-day canoe trek; photo by Sven Hamich



Exploration on Lake Bunyonyi; photo by Ajda Trefalt



We love children. Our team gets excited every time a family books a trip and the news of “little visitors” spreads across our land like wildfire.

We operate in remote areas where international guests are rare and non-local kids simply striking. A visiting family will generate smiles and wonder and be the news of the week for the villages on our way.

If you need help with carrying your child, our staff will easily find a local person to be hired for this job.

We impose no age limits and assume parents know their kids’ abilities and interests best. With the exception of the Echuya Forest crossing, all our trips can work for any age, fit grandparents included.

Child-size life jackets are available, of course, and discounts for families are a given. The usual formula is two children for the price of one adult but it works on a case-by-case basis.

Our itineraries are flexible and can be changed or combined based on your wishes and needs.





The Home of Edirisa ([www.edirisa.org/home](http://www.edirisa.org/home)) is a colourful hostel built around a cultural museum in Kabale Town; photo by Andrea Stultiens



The Heart of Edirisa ([www.edirisa.org/heart](http://www.edirisa.org/heart)) is a basic place with a tremendous view on the shore of Lake Bunyonyi; photo by Miha Logar



Tom's Homestay ([www.edirisa.org/homestay](http://www.edirisa.org/homestay)) offers a rich cultural program while camping on a remote Bunyonyi island; photo by Marcus Westberg



Camping in villages and using pit latrines isn't for everyone. If you want special comfort/luxury (at often surprising prices) we suggest the following accommodation upgrades and end-of-trek solutions most compatible with our itineraries:

#### Buhoma

- **Buhoma Lodge** ([www.ugandaexclusivecamps.com/buhoma-lodge](http://www.ugandaexclusivecamps.com/buhoma-lodge))
- **Mahogany Springs Luxury Lodge** ([www.mahoganysprings.com](http://www.mahoganysprings.com))

#### Kabale

- **Cepha's Inn** ([www.cephasinn.com](http://www.cephasinn.com))

#### Kisoro

- **Travellers Rest Hotel**  
([www.gorillatours.com/accommodations/travellers-rest](http://www.gorillatours.com/accommodations/travellers-rest))

#### Lake Bunyonyi

- **BirdNest Lodge Resort, eastern shore** ([www.birdnestatbunyonyi.com](http://www.birdnestatbunyonyi.com))
- **Nature's Prime Island, eastern side** ([www.naturesprimeisland.com](http://www.naturesprimeisland.com))
- **Heritage Lodge, Habuvaro Island, western side**  
([www.heritagelodgesuganda.com/heritage\\_habuvaroisland.html](http://www.heritagelodgesuganda.com/heritage_habuvaroisland.html))

#### Lake Mutanda

- **Chameleon Hill Lodge, northern shore** ([www.chameleonhill.com](http://www.chameleonhill.com))
- **Hotel Mucha, eastern shore** ([hotel-mucha.com/hotel](http://hotel-mucha.com/hotel))
- **Mutanda Lake Resort, northern shore** ([www.mutandalakeresort.com](http://www.mutandalakeresort.com))

#### Mgahinga Gorilla National Park

- **Mount Gahinga Lodge**  
([www.volcanoessafaris.com/lodges/mount-gahinga-lodge](http://www.volcanoessafaris.com/lodges/mount-gahinga-lodge))

#### Nkuringo

- **Clouds Mountain Gorilla Lodge**  
([www.wildplacesafrica.com/our-lodges-camps/clouds](http://www.wildplacesafrica.com/our-lodges-camps/clouds))
- **Nkuringo Gorilla Camp** ([www.gorillacamp.com](http://www.gorillacamp.com))

#### Rushaga

- **Gorilla Safari Lodge** ([www.gorillasafarilodge.com](http://www.gorillasafarilodge.com))

For more information on these places and many other options available please have a look at [www.gorillahighlands.com/ebook](http://www.gorillahighlands.com/ebook) (\$14.99) or [www.gorillahighlands.com/pocketguide](http://www.gorillahighlands.com/pocketguide) (free).

Website addresses are provided to give you an idea of what is on offer; you can leave booking to us and are likely to get a better deal.



Our treks provide many young people with meaningful employment; photo by Georg Schaumberger



We are big promoters of the often-overlooked but fantastic Mgahinga Gorilla National Park; photo of Marcus Westberg by Jessica Magenwirth



From Tom's Homestay into the storm; photo by Marcus Westberg

## 2-hour Bunyonyi canoeing

### highlights

- ride in a traditional dugout canoe
- tales from the lake
- peculiar life at The Heart of Edirisa
- Bushara Island nature walk

### any time between 7am and 5pm

- depart by canoe from a lakeside resort of your choice
- visit The Heart of Edirisa, a picturesque site that mixes simple life with advanced technology, the birthplace of the Gorilla Highlands initiative
- dugout canoeing to Bushara, a notable island covered with a eucalyptus forest that nowadays accommodates travellers but was once home to doctors working at the Bwama leprosy colony
- nature walk around the island, with interesting vegetation and birdsong in the air
- enjoy a glass of fresh passion juice at the lovely circular restaurant at the top of the island
- get a clear view of Akampene, the "Punishment Island", and hear its story, completing our series of tales from Lake Bunyonyi
- return to your resort

starting point:  
Lake Bunyonyi  
area:  
Lake Bunyonyi east coast +  
Bushara Island

### price

5 people or more: USD 10 per person  
4 people: USD 15 pp  
3 people: USD 20 pp  
2 people: USD 30 pp  
1 person: USD 50

The price includes guiding, canoeing and a glass of juice, plus a tour of our Bakiga cultural museum at The Home of Edirisa in Kabale Town at any time of your choice. It does not include transport to Lake Bunyonyi.

### Recommendations

If you have more time, the trip can last for another hour and allow you more time at The Heart and on Bushara - at no extra cost.



Don't miss the museum freebie in Kabale; photo by Marcus Westberg



Way out of the Bufuka bay towards Bushara; photo by Wu Jun Yi



You can begin your canoeing very early if you wish; photo by Marcus Westberg

## 5-hour Bunyonyi trek

### highlights

- spectacular views & island stories
- nursery school fun
- traditional healer & craftmaker

### morning or afternoon

- **9:00am** or **2:00pm** departure from The Heart of Edirisa (half an hour earlier from Kabale Town or a lakeside resort of your choice)
- dugout canoe ride to the Kyabahinga peninsula
- visit to Edirisa Nursery school with pupils' cute singing and dancing presentation (weekday morning treks only)
- taste of local beer, obushera
- hike to the top of the peninsula (30 minutes)
- session with a traditional healer who will share his secrets of tropical highland flora
- visit to the African Explorer Cultural Village with stories about the history and beliefs of the Bakiga people
- stop for a postcard photo over Bunyonyi with almost all of its 29 islands
- crafts with Mrs Anna who will show us the tricks of her trade
- **2:00pm** or **7:00pm**: dugout canoe ride back to the resort; optional transport back to Kabale Town

starting point:  
Kabale Town or Lake Bunyonyi  
area:  
Lake Bunyonyi east coast  
distance:  
6.5km total;  
1.5km canoeing, 5km hiking  
difficulty level:  
casual

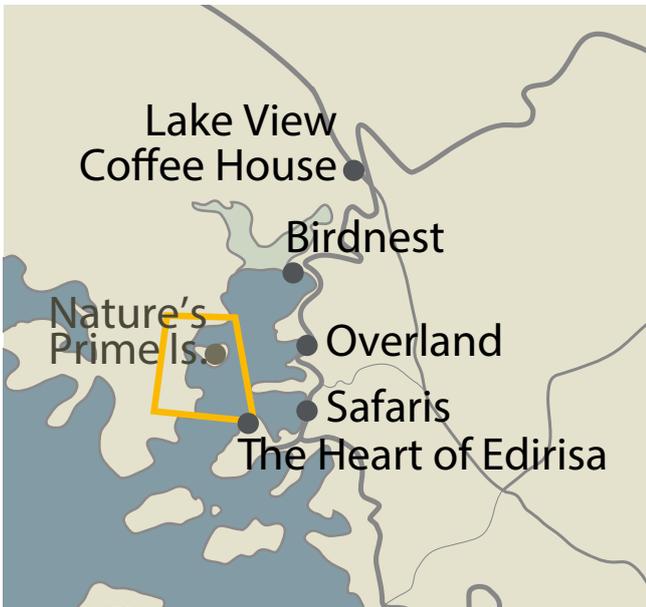
### price

5 people or more: USD 35 per person  
4 people: USD 45 pp  
3 people: USD 50 pp  
2 people: USD 65 pp  
1 person: USD 95

The price includes (transport to and from the lake, guiding, a snack, all activities and contributions) plus a tour of our Bakiga cultural museum at The Home of Edirisa in Kabale Town, at any time of your choice.

### Recommendations

Combine with Tom's Homestay ([www.edirisa.org/homestay](http://www.edirisa.org/homestay)) for a special night on the lake.



Traditional healer; photo by Irati Alonso Calafell



Edirisa Nursery School joy; photo by Ash Dumford



Island stories; photo by Georg Schaumberger

## 1-day Kabale- Bunyonyi trek

### highlights

- attractive shortcuts to the lake
- spectacular views & island stories
- traditional healer & craftmaker
- tasty local lunch

### morning

- **7:00am** breakfast at The Home of Edirisa, Kabale Town
- **8:00am** 2-3 hour hike covering 11km to the Bunyonyi area, mostly uphill and steep (an attractive shortcut only known to locals)
- session with a traditional healer who will share his secrets of tropical highland flora

### afternoon

- visit to the African Explorer Cultural Village with stories about the history and beliefs of the Bakiga people
- stop for a postcard photo over Bunyonyi with almost all of its 29 islands
- **2:00pm** tasty local meal (beans, sweet and Irish potatoes, ground nuts and dodo - local spinach) at Mrs Anna's, a craftmaker who will also show us the tricks of her trade
- **3:30pm** descent to the lake shore and a dugout canoe ride to The Heart of Edirisa

starting point:  
Kabale Town  
area:  
Kabale Town - Lake Bunyonyi  
east coast  
distance:  
15km total;  
13.5km hiking, 1.5km canoeing  
difficulty level:  
demanding

### price

5 people or more: USD 50 per person  
4 people: USD 60 pp  
3 people: USD 70 pp  
2 people: USD 90 pp  
1 person: USD 130

The price includes everything during the day (guiding, breakfast, lunch, drink, water and all activities and contributions) plus a tour of our Bakiga cultural museum at any time of your choice, 1 night at the dorm at The Home of Edirisa in Kabale and 1 night at The Heart of Edirisa at Bunyonyi. It does not include transport from Bunyonyi to Kabale.

### Recommendations

Combine with Tom's Homestay ([www.edirisa.org/homestay](http://www.edirisa.org/homestay)) for a special island adventure.

Consider hiring a porter if you have substantial luggage.

**Please note:** hours listed are approximate and depend on people's walking speed, weather and other factors



Mrs Anna's skills; photo by Ash Dumford



Stoic cow at Kyabahinga; photo by Georg Schaumberger



One of many hilltop views; photo by Marcus Westberg

## highlights

- spectacular views & island stories
- nursery school fun
- traditional healer & craftmaker
- Akampene or Punishment Island
- Bwama Island & former leper colony
- delicious lunch with a local family
- hearty final meal at The Heart

## morning

- **7:30am** breakfast at The Home of Edirisa, Kabale Town or at 8:00am at The Heart of Edirisa, Lake Bunyonyi
- **8:30am** drive from The Home to The Heart of Edirisa
- **9:00am** dugout canoe ride to the Kyabahinga peninsula
- visit to Edirisa Nursery school with pupils' cute singing and dancing presentation
- taste of local beer, obushera
- hike to the top of the peninsula (30 minutes)
- **11:00am** session with a traditional healer who will share his secrets of tropical highland flora
- visit to the African Explorer Cultural Village with stories about the history and beliefs of the Bakiga people
- stop for a postcard photo over Bunyonyi with almost all of its 29 islands

## afternoon

- **1:00pm** tasty local meal (beans, sweet and Irish potatoes, ground nuts and dodo - local spinach) at Mrs Anna's, a craftmaker who will also show us the tricks of her trade
- **2:30pm** canoe tour around Akampene or Punishment Island where, historically, unmarried pregnant girls were left to die
- tour of Bwama Island, a former leper colony, with a secondary school and a regional medical centre often run by Slovenian medical students and doctors
- nature walk at Lake Bunyonyi Eco Resort, Kyahugye, an island with impalas, water bucks, zebras

1-day  
canoe  
trek

starting point:  
Kabale Town or Lake Bunyonyi  
area:  
Lake Bunyonyi east coast +  
major islands  
distance:  
13km total;  
6.5km canoeing, 6.5km hiking  
difficulty level:  
casual

## evening

- **6:00pm** hearty buffet dinner at The Heart of Edirisa, including the lake specialty - crayfish
- **7:00pm** return to Kabale Town

## price

5 people or more: USD 80 per person  
4 people: USD 90 pp  
3 people: USD 100 pp  
2 people: USD 130 pp  
1 person: USD 190

The price includes everything during the day (transport to and from the lake, guiding, three meals, water, juice and all activities and contributions), plus a tour of our Bakiga cultural museum and 2 nights at the dorm at The Home in Kabale or The Heart at Bunyonyi.

## Recommendations

Combine with Tom's Homestay ([www.edirisa.org/homestay](http://www.edirisa.org/homestay)) for a special island adventure.

**Please note:** hours listed are approximate and depend on people's walking speed, weather and other factors



Punishment Island; photo by Marcus Westberg



Craft bonanza; photo by Edirisa



Edirisa Nursery School joy; photo by Ash Dumford

## highlights

- three lakes, fantastic views
- most untouched areas
- hike through the Valley of No Living
- Batwa “Pygmies”
- exquisite lunch at Mutanda Lake Resort

## day 1 morning

Lake Bunyonyi - Valley of No Living

- **8:00am** breakfast at The Heart of Edirisa, Lake Bunyonyi
- **9:00am** motorboat departure from The Heart
- **10:15am** landing at Muko Campsite, coffee/tea
- **11:00am** walking starts

## day 1 afternoon

Valley of No Living - Kateretere Trading Centre

- **2:00pm** picnic lunch near the stream at the bottom of the Valley of No Living that separates the districts of Kabale and Kisoro
- **3:00pm** 1-hour steep climb out of the valley, followed by a flatter section
- **5:00pm** arrival at the Kateretere health centre, pitching of tents
- **6:00pm** local dinner

## day 2 morning

Kateretere Trading Centre - Lake Mutanda

- **7:00am** breakfast and packing
- **8:00am** departure from the health centre
- **9:00am** visit to the Biraara Batwa “Pygmy” community
- **10:00am** descent towards Lake Mulehe, then up the hill towards Lake Mutanda

2-day  
Lake Bunyonyi  
- Rushaga  
trek

starting point:  
Lake Bunyonyi or Rushaga  
area:  
Lake Bunyonyi - the Valley of No Living -  
Lake Mulehe - Lake Mutanda - Rushaga  
distance:  
58km total;  
15 km motorboat ride; 43 km hiking  
difficulty level:  
moderate if starting from Bunyonyi,  
demanding if from Rushaga

## day 2 afternoon

- **1:00pm** exquisite lunch at Mutanda Lake Resort
- **2:00pm** hiking towards Rubuguri Town starts
- **4:00pm** climb towards a ridge overlooking Bwindi Impenetrable National Park

## day 2 evening

- **6:00pm** arrival to Rushaga

## price

5 people or more: USD 140 per person  
4 people: USD 165 pp  
3 people: USD 190 pp  
2 people: USD 240 pp  
1 person: USD 360

The price includes everything during the trek (guiding, boats, activities, tented accommodation, meals and snacks, drinks), plus a tour of the Bakiga cultural museum and 1 night at The Heart of Edirisa, Lake Bunyonyi. It does not include transport back from Rushaga or accommodation there (but we can arrange that for you).

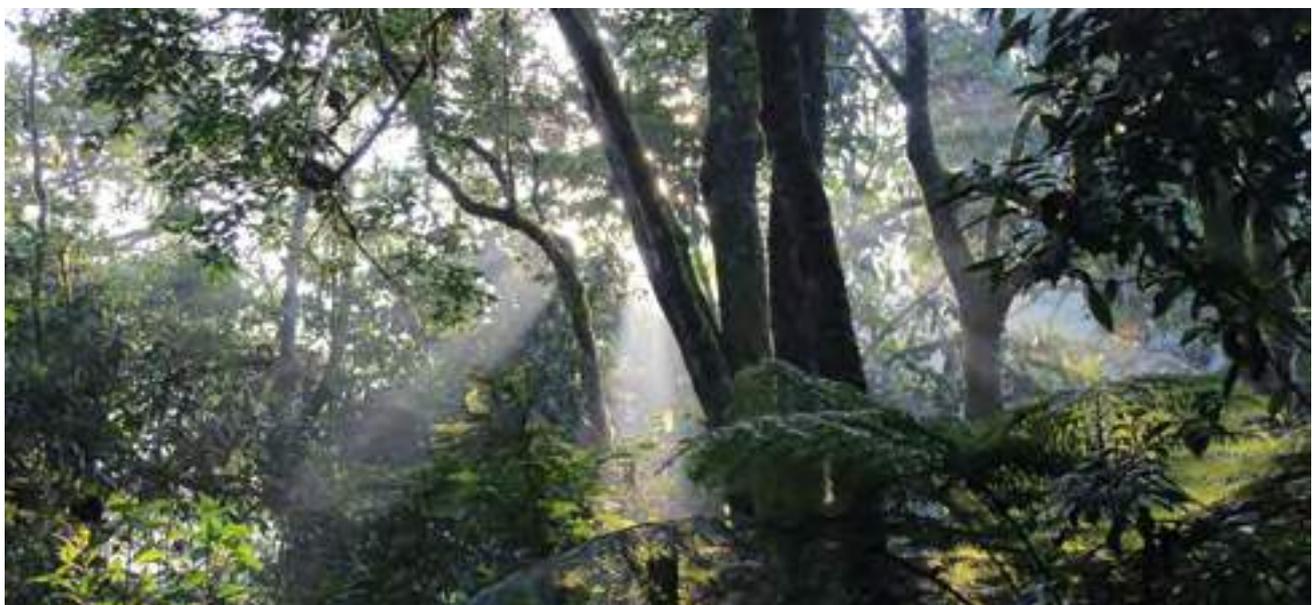
**Please note:** hours listed are approximate and depend on people's walking speed, weather and other factors



Above the Valley of No Living; photo by Dejan Praper



Lake Mutanda with the Virunga volcanoes and Mutanda Lake Resort; photo by Wim Kok



Rushaga in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park; photo by Andreas Windischhofer

## highlights

- meals & tents at the family of Mama Bena
- all major islands
- Batwa "Pygmies"
- mountain picnic with volcano views
- hearty final meal at The Heart of Edirisa

## day 1 morning

Bufuka Village - Bwama Island

- **8:00am** breakfast at The Home of Edirisa, Kabale Town (or at 8:30am The Heart of Edirisa, Lake Bunyonyi)
- **9:00am** a drive from The Home to The Heart of Edirisa
- **10:00am** dugout canoe ride to Bushara Island with a walk through its eucalyptus forest full of birds followed by refreshing passion juice
- **11:00am** short paddle to Bwama Island, a former leper colony, a tour of its secondary school and medical centre

## day 1 afternoon

Bwama Island - Mama Bena's

- canoe ride past Akampene or Punishment Island (where traditionally pregnant unmarried girls were left to die), to Sharps' Island, the botanical garden home of the founder of the Bwama leper colony
- **1:00pm** picnic lunch with plentiful fruits and chapatis
- **2:30pm** beginning of a canoe section ending at Mama Bena's, with a swimming break on the way
- **5:00pm** climb to the top of the peninsula for a wonderful view, while tents are being pitched by the team near a beautiful grass-thatched home
- **8:00pm** exceptional local dinner (meat, beans, sweet and Irish potatoes, ground nuts and dodo - local spinach)
- **9:00pm** campfire stories

2-day  
canoe  
trek

starting point:  
Kabale Town or Lake Bunyonyi  
area:  
Lake Bunyonyi west coast +  
major islands  
distance:  
31km total;  
17km canoeing, 14km hiking  
difficulty level:  
energetic

## day 2 morning

Mama Bena's - Karembe Hill

- **7:00am** breakfast followed by a quick canoe crossing to the Kyevu market
- **8:00am** start of a whole-day trek, at first flat, towards the Rwanda border
- **10:00am** visit to a settlement of Batwa "Pygmies" with archery and dancing
- **11:00am** one-hour intense climb

## day 2 afternoon

Karembe Hill - Nature's Prime Island

- **1:30pm** picnic lunch at the top of the hill (2,487m) with volcano and Echuya Forest views
- **2:30pm** hiking with a stop for superb local dancers and a makeshift craft shop set up especially for us
- **4:30pm** lake shore reached
- **6:00pm** hearty buffet dinner at The Heart of Edirisa, including the lake specialty - crayfish
- **7:00pm** return to Kabale by car



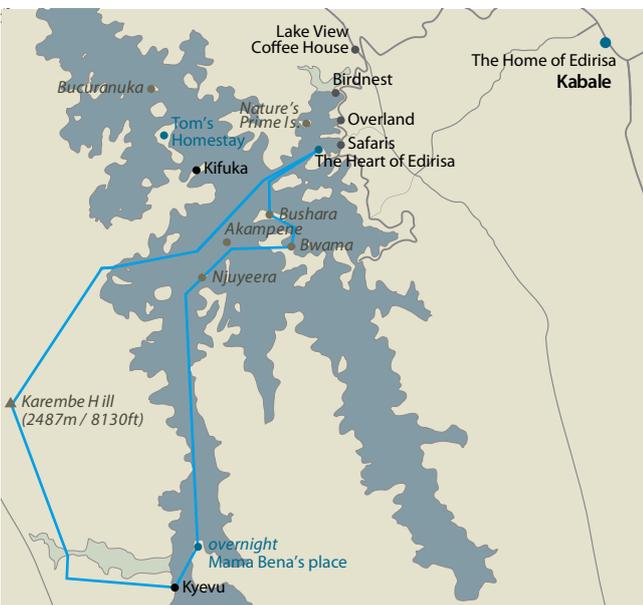
Mama Bena's family; photo by Marcus Westberg



Mama Bena's remarkable mother; photo by Marcus Westberg



View from Mama Bena's peninsula; photo by Barbara Kelher



## price

- 5 people or more: USD 140 per person
- 4 people: USD 165 pp
- 3 people: USD 190 pp
- 2 people: USD 240 pp
- 1 person: USD 360

The price includes everything during the canoe trek (transport to and from the lake, guiding, activities, tented accommodation, meals, snacks and drinks), plus a tour of our Bakiga cultural museum and 2 nights at the dorm at The Home of Edirisa in Kabale Town or The Heart of Edirisa at Lake Bunyonyi.

**Please note:** hours listed are approximate and depend on people's walking speed, weather and other factors

## highlights

- meals & tents at the family of Mama Bena
- all major islands
- Batwa "Pygmies"
- mountain picnic with volcano views
- camping & cultural program at Tom's on a remote island
- craft making lesson
- hearty final meal at The Heart of Edirisa

## day 1

Bufuka Village - Mama Bena's

(identical to the 2-day canoe trek)

## day 2

Mama Bena's - Tom's Homestay

(identical to the 2-day canoe trek until 4:30pm)

- **4:30am** trekking continues to the tip of the Kifuka peninsula
- **5:30pm** short canoe ride to Habukomi Island
- **6:00pm** Tom's Homestay program commences: camping at a family compound on a remote island, local dinner enriched by crayfish, traditional enanga music

## day 3 morning

Tom's Homestay - Kyabahinga Peninsula

- **9:00am** breakfast with chapatis and local honey followed by a walk around the island guided by Tom
- **10:30am** canoe tour around Habukomi Island passing Upside Down Island where its improbable witchcraft legend is explained
- **11:30am** a short hike up Kyabahinga peninsula where Mrs Anna will teach us how to make crafts

3-day  
canoe  
trek

starting point:  
Kabale Town or Lake Bunyonyi

area:  
Lake Bunyonyi west coast +  
east coast + major islands

distance:  
38km total;  
20km canoeing, 18km hiking

difficulty level:  
energetic

## day 3 afternoon

Kyabahinga Peninsula - Bufuka Village

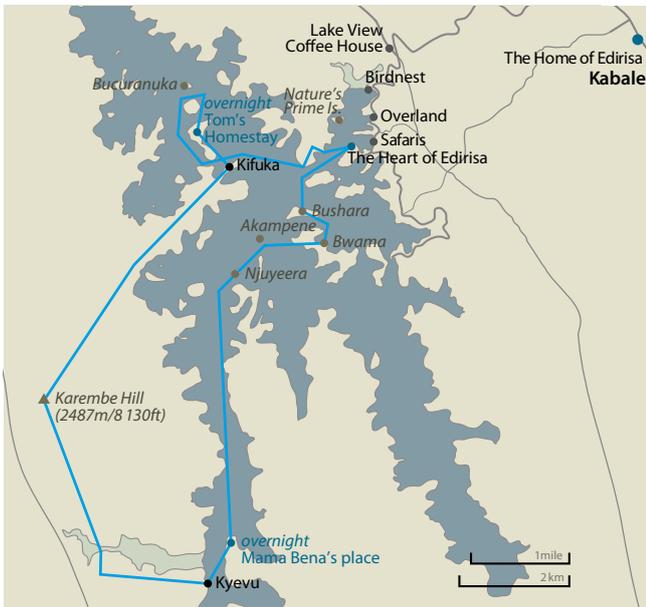
- **12:30pm** short paddle to The Heart for a hearty buffet lunch, including the lake specialty - crayfish
- **2:00pm** return to Kabale by car

## price

5 people or more: USD 185 per person  
4 people: USD 220 pp  
3 people: USD 260 pp  
2 people: USD 320 pp  
1 person: USD 490

The price includes everything during the canoe trek (transport to and from the lake, guiding, activities, tented accommodation, meals, snacks and drinks), plus a tour of our Bakiga cultural museum and 2 nights at the dorm at The Home of Edirisa in Kabale Town or The Heart of Edirisa at Lake Bunyonyi..

**Please note:** hours listed are approximate and depend on people's walking speed, weather and other factors



Cooking at Mama Bena's; photo by Ash Dumford



Somewhere in the middle of Lake Bunyonyi; photo by Barbara Kelher



Camping at Tom's Homestay; photo by Georg Schaumberger



Chapatis on Sharp's Island; photo by Marcus Westberg

## highlights

- attractive shortcuts to Lake Bunyonyi
- spectacular views & island stories
- traditional healer & craftmaker
- tasty local lunch
- camping on a remote island
- Batwa-guided Echuya Forest crossing

## day 1 morning

Kabale Town - Kyabahinga Peninsula

- **7:00am** breakfast at The Home of Edirisa, Kabale Town
- **8:00am** 2-3 hour hike covering 11km to the Bunyonyi area, mostly uphill and steep, (an attractive shortcut only known to locals)
- session with a traditional healer who will share his secrets of tropical highland flora

## day 1 afternoon

Kyabahinga Peninsula - Tom's Homestay

- visit to the African Explorer Cultural Village with stories about the history and beliefs of the Bakiga people
- stop for a postcard photo over Bunyonyi with almost all of its 29 islands
- **2:00pm** tasty local meal (beans, sweet and Irish potatoes, ground nuts and dodo - local spinach) at Mrs Anna's, a craftmaker who will also show us the tricks of her trade
- **3:30pm** descent to the lake shore and a dugout canoe ride to Habukomi Island
- **4:30pm** Tom's Homestay program commences: camping at a family compound on a remote island, local dinner enriched by crayfish, traditional enanga music

## 3-day Kabale- Kisoro trek

starting point:  
Kabale Town or Kisoro Town

area:  
Kabale - Lake Bunyonyi -  
Echuya Forest - Lake Kayumbu - Kisoro

distance:  
58km total;  
6km canoeing, 52km hiking

difficulty level:  
demanding

## day 2 morning

Tom's Homestay - Echuya Forest

- **6:30am** breakfast at Tom's Homestay
- **7:00am** dugout canoe ride to the west coast of Bunyonyi
- **8:00am** hike to the hilltop overlooking Echuya Forest Reserve
- **12:00am** start of 2 hour Echuya nature trail guided by a Batwa "Pygmy" leader Kanusu, including swamp crossing (gum boots provided)

## day 2 afternoon

Echuya Forest - Lake Kayumbu

- **2:00pm** picnic lunch with spectacular volcano views
- **3:00pm** downhill hike to Lake Kayumbu
- **5:30pm** relax and camp at a church compound on the lake shore, with local dinner served by the lay leader's family (beans, cabbage, matooke, dodo, sweet and Irish potatoes, and ground nuts sauce).



Tom Kare mire explaining the history of his Habukomi Island; photo by by Marcus Westberg



Echuya Forest Reserve is known for bamboo; photo by Samo Acko



## day 3 morning

Lake Kayumbu - Kisoro

- **8:00am** breakfast on the shore of Lake Kayumbu
- **9:00am** crossing Lake Kayumbu by canoe
- **9:20am** hike towards Kisoro Town begins

## day 3 afternoon

- **12:30pm** great lunch at Coffee Pot

## price

5 people or more: USD 230 per person  
 4 people: USD 250 pp, 3 people: USD 310 pp  
 2 people: USD 390 pp, 1 person: USD 610

The price includes everything during the trek (guiding, activities, tented accommodation, meals, snacks and water), plus a tour of our Bakiga cultural museum and 1 night at the dorm at The Home of Edirisa in Kabale Town. It does not include transport from Kisoro to Kabale or accommodation in Kisoro (but we can arrange that for you).

## Recommendations

Consider a one-day climb to one of the Virunga Volcanoes as your next Kisoro activity.

**Please note:** hours listed are approximate and depend on people's walking speed, weather and other factors

## highlights

- attractive shortcuts to Lake Bunyonyi
- spectacular views & island stories
- traditional healer & craftmaker
- tasty local lunch
- camping on a remote island
- Batwa-guided Echuya Forest crossing
- caldera picnic

## day 1 morning

### Kabale Town - Kyabahinga Peninsula

- **7:00am** breakfast at The Home of Edirisa, Kabale Town
- **8:00am** 2-3 hour hike covering 11km to the Bunyonyi area, mostly uphill and steep, (an attractive shortcut only known to locals)
- session with a traditional healer who will share his secrets of tropical highland flora

## day 1 afternoon

### Kyabahinga Peninsula - Tom's Homestay

- visit to the African Explorer Cultural Village with stories about the history and beliefs of the Bakiga people
- stop for a postcard photo over Bunyonyi with almost all of its 29 islands
- **2:00pm** tasty local meal (beans, sweet and Irish potatoes, ground nuts and dodo - local spinach) at Mrs Anna's, a craftmaker who will also show us the tricks of her trade
- **3:30pm** descent to the lake shore and a dugout canoe ride to Habukomi Island
- **4:30pm** Tom's Homestay program commences: camping at a family compound on a remote island, local dinner enriched by crayfish, traditional enanga music

## 3-day Kabale- Mgahinga trek

starting point:  
Kabale Town, Lake Bunyonyi  
or Mgahinga

area:  
Kabale - Lake Bunyonyi - Echuya Forest -  
Lake Kayumbu - Cyanika - Mgahinga

distance:  
64 km total;  
6 km canoeing; 58 km hiking

difficulty level:  
demanding

## day 2 morning

### Tom's Homestay - Echuya Forest

- **6:30am** breakfast at Tom's Homestay
- **7:00am** dugout canoe ride to the west coast of Bunyonyi
- **8:00am** hike to the hilltop overlooking Echuya Forest Reserve
- **12:00am** start of 2 hour Echuya nature trail guided by a Batwa "Pygmy" leader Kanusu, including swamp crossing (gum boots provided)

## day 2 afternoon

### Echuya Forest - Lake Kayumbu

- **2:00pm** picnic lunch with spectacular volcano views
- **3:00pm** downhill hike to Lake Kayumbu
- **5:30pm** relax and camp at a church compound on the lake shore, with local dinner served by the lay leader's family (beans, cabbage, matooke, dodo, sweet and Irish potatoes, and ground nuts sauce).



Mt. Muhavura seen from Lake Chahafi; photo by Georg Schaumberger



Hiking on the edge of MGNP; photo by Blasio Byekawaso

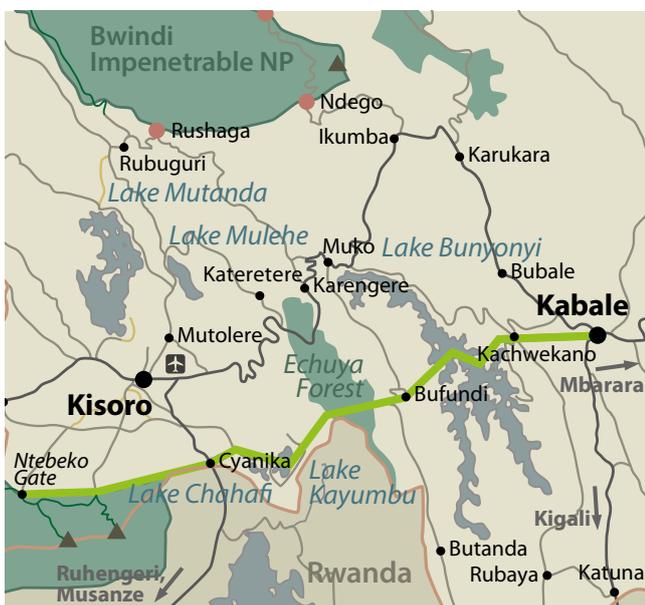
## day 3 morning

Lake Kayumbu - Mgahinga Gorilla National Park

- 7:00am breakfast on the shore of Lake Kayumbu
- 8:00am crossing Lake Kayumbu by canoe
- 8:20am walk towards Cyanika starts
- 11:30am the No Man's Land border experience

## day 3 afternoon

- 1:00pm caldera picnic lunch at Muremure
- 2:00pm walk on the edge of the national park
- 6:00pm dinner at Amajambere Iwacu Community Camp



## price

5 people or more: USD 230 per person  
 4 people: USD 250 pp, 3 people: USD 310 pp  
 2 people: USD 390 pp, 1 person: USD 610

The price includes everything during the trek (guiding, activities, tented accommodation, meals, snacks and water), plus a tour of our Bakiga cultural museum and 1 night at the dorm at The Home of Edirisa in Kabale Town. It does not include transport from Mgahinga or accommodation there (but we can arrange that for you).

**Please note:** hours listed are approximate and depend on people's walking speed, weather and other factors



Bufuka bay with Nature's Prime Island; photo by Marcus Westberg



Trees in Echuya Forest; photo by Marcus Westberg



We made it, hooray; photo by Georg Schaumberger



Climbing Mt Sabinyo is a highly recommended additional activity in Mgahinga Gorilla National Park; photo by Marcus Westberg



Canoeing on Lake Mutanda; photo by Georg Schaumberger



Bwindi waterfalls with Georg Schaumberger; personal archive

## highlights

- attractive shortcuts to Lake Bunyonyi
- spectacular views & island stories
- traditional healer & craftmaker
- camping on a remote island
- Batwa-guided Echuya Forest crossing
- relaxing dugout ride on Lake Mutanda
- hiking through the rainforest of Bwindi NP
- great local and restaurant meals

## day 1

Kabale - Tom's Homestay

(identical to the 3-day Kabale-Kisoro trek)

## day 2

Tom's Homestay - Lake Kayumbu

(identical to the 3-day Kabale-Kisoro trek)

## day 3 morning

Lake Kayumbu - Kisoro

(identical to the 3-day Kabale-Kisoro trek)

## day 3 afternoon

Kisoro - Lake Mutanda

- **12:30am** great lunch at Coffee Pot and any town-related needs
- **3:00pm** walking departure towards Lake Mutanda
- **4:30pm** short boat ride to Mutanda Island Lodge on a small island in the south of the lake where pregnant unmarried girls were traditionally left as a punishment
- **5:00pm** pitching our tents, relaxation, tasty buffet dinner

## 5-day Kabale- Buhoma trek

starting point:  
Kabale Town, Lake Bunyonyi  
or Buhoma

area:

Kabale - Lake Bunyonyi - Echuya Forest  
- Lake Kayumbu - Lake Chahafi - Kisoro -  
Lake Mutanda - Nkuringo - Bwindi NP

distance:

96km total;

14km canoeing, 82km hiking

difficulty level:  
demanding

## day 4 morning

Lake Mutanda

- **8:00am** island breakfast
- **9:00am** canoe tour of Lake Mutanda, focused on its colourful history
- **12:00pm** excellent lunch at Chameleon Hill Lodge on the northern edge of Mutanda

## day 4 afternoon

Lake Mutanda - Nkuringo Village

- **1:30pm** hike towards Nkuringo, with views of the Virunga volcanoes and the vastness of Bwindi Impenetrable National Park
- **5:30pm** tasty dinner and night at Albertine Campsite, a community hostel



Leaving Bunyonyi behind; photo by Marcus Westberg

## day 5 morning

Nkuringo Village - Bwindi NP

- **8:00am** departure after breakfast, with packed lunch in our backpacks
- walking down the steep slope to Kashasha River, already within the rainforest of Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, accompanied by a ranger
- **12:00pm** lunch at a gorgeous river junction that comes after narrow a trekking path with interesting bridges and natural obstacles



Bwindi stream; photo by Georg Schaumberger

## day 5 afternoon

Bwindi NP - Buhoma Village

- **1:00pm** arrival to the wide and flat forest road
- **2:00pm** arrival to the touristy village of Buhoma

## price

5 people or more: USD 380 per person  
 4 people: USD 390 pp, 3 people: USD 460 pp  
 2 people: USD 580 pp, 1 person: USD 875

The price includes everything during the trek (guiding, activities, accommodation, meals, snacks and water), plus a tour of our Bakiga cultural museum and 1 night at the dorm at The Home of Edirisa in Kabale Town. It does not include Bwindi park fees, transport from Buhoma to Kabale or accommodation in Buhoma (can be pricey - but we can find the best option for you).

## Recommendations

Devote an extra hour on the Bwindi path to an optional stop at the triple waterfalls.

**Please note:** hours listed are approximate and depend on people's walking speed, weather and other factors



## 5-hour Kisoro-Mgahinga trek

### highlights

- walk towards the majestic Virunga volcanoes
- visit to a beekeeper's organic farm
- caldera climbing

### morning or afternoon

- **8:00am** or **1:00pm** departure from your Kisoro hotel or Coffee Pot in the centre of the town (or from Mgahinga for the reversed trekking option)
- hike through the flat, volcanic rural areas south of Kisoro Town
- climb the Sagitwe caldera
- walk past the first settlement of the church missionaries at Mabungo Hill to the organic farmer with bee keeping, an orchard and zero grazing farm
- tour of the farm and a light meal
- trek through the Irish potato farms towards Ntebeko, the Mgahinga Gorilla National Park headquarters

starting point:  
Kisoro Town or  
Ntebeko (Mgahinga)  
area:  
between Kisoro Town and  
Mgahinga Gorilla National Park  
distance:  
15km; hiking only  
difficulty level:  
casual

### price

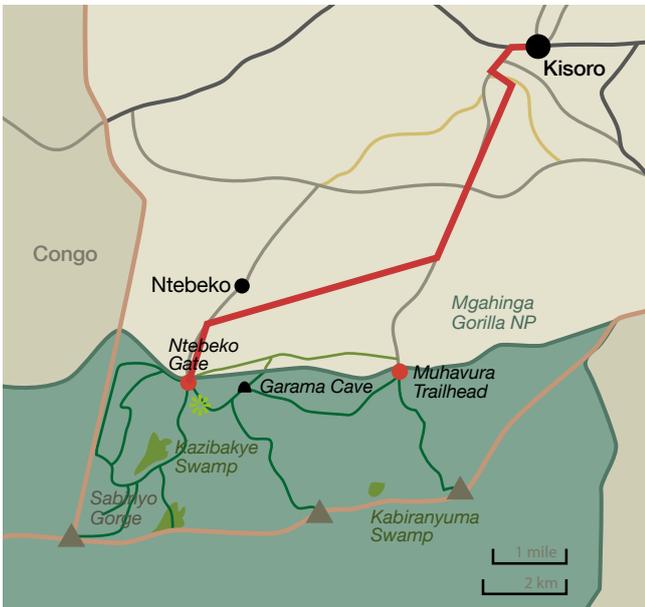
5 people or more: USD 35 per person  
4 people: USD 45 pp  
3 people: USD 50 pp  
2 people: USD 65 pp  
1 person: USD 95

The price includes guiding, a snack, all activities and contributions, plus a tour of the Bakiga cultural museum at The Home of Edirisa in Kabale Town at any time of your choice. It does not include transport back to Kisoro/Ntebeko.

### Recommendations

Download the free PDF sample of the award-winning Gorilla Highlands Interactive eBook from [www.gorillahighlands.com/ebook](http://www.gorillahighlands.com/ebook); it includes a full chapter on Mgahinga that will help you maximise your time in the park.

**Please note:** hours listed are approximate and depend on people's walking speed, weather and other factors



Views of calderas and Lake Mutanda; photo by Blasio Byekwaso



Kisoro Town with Mgahinga Gorilla National Park in the background; photo by Blasio Byekwaso



This is the only part of the Gorilla Highlands with abundant wheat; photo by Irati Alonso Calafell