

Best Time to Visit Rwanda

When to Visit Rwanda

As with most countries in southern and eastern Africa, [Rwanda](#) conforms to the seasonal weather patterns defined by the presence of rainfall. However, despite there being very distinct wet and dry periods, Rwanda can be visited all year round.

Sure, wildlife spotting and gorilla trekking are easier during the dry months, but there's a lot of fun to be had in the rainy seasons too. Wildlife in Rwanda isn't migratory like it often is in places like Kenya and Tanzania, which means animals are present throughout the year. Plus, the gorillas are always around which means trekking to encounter these gentle giants isn't limited to any particular month.

If you want to combine your trek or safari with some time relaxing or trying out the water sports at [Lake Kivu](#), then come between June and September, or from December to February to make the most of the sunny conditions.

No matter what month you visit Rwanda, there's always something exciting to experience.

Rwanda's Wet and Dry Seasons

There are two **dry seasons** in Rwanda – **June to September**, and **December to February**. These months are considered the optimum time of year for travelling around the country, as well as enjoying wildlife safaris in Akagera and gorilla trekking in Volcanoes National Park. Prices and visitor numbers do of course reflect the popularity of these seasons, so if you intend to visit at this time, do make sure you book your holiday well in advance. Especially if you'd like to see the gorillas.

March through to May is the long **wet season**, with further rain arriving in **October and November**. Everyone likes a bit of sun, but don't dismiss travelling during the rainy seasons without considering the benefits. Lodging prices are often considerably cheaper, and there will be fewer other tourists around – not that Rwanda ever gets crowded like its east African counterparts!

Best Time to Go Gorilla Trekking in Rwanda

Gorillas can be seen throughout the year in [Volcanoes National Park](#), although trekking conditions are a lot more favourable during the dry season when trails are less slippery. **June to August** are usually the driest months of the year, closely followed by December to January, so these are the best times to go gorilla trekking in Rwanda. Do book well in advance to secure your slot as there are a limited number of permits allocated each day.

Trekking can still be enjoyed during the wet seasons as the weather doesn't affect your chances of seeing the mountain gorillas. Yet do bear in mind the rainforest-clad slopes will be muddy underfoot. This can make the going quite difficult, particularly if you're having to hike a fair distance uphill to see your gorilla group. If you're up for some fun, and don't mind getting a bit soggy in the pursuit of adventure, then travelling at this time has its advantages. There will be fewer tourists around, and accommodation prices will fall significantly.

Conversely, the best time to go **Chimpanzee trekking** in Rwanda's [Nyungwe Forest National Park](#) is actually during the wet season between **October and May**. The chimps are easier to find when it's wet because unlike in drier times, they don't need to venture very far for food. Chimpanzee trekking is far more energetic than the gorilla hikes, because these playful primates move so much faster

through the forest. Which is why it's a good thing if they're roaming closer to home, making sightings so much easier. Birdlife is flourishing during this period too, although to see other primates it's better to explore when it isn't raining quite so much.

When to go on Safari in Rwanda

Wildlife viewing in [Akagera](#) and Nyungwe National Parks is undoubtedly easier during the dry months between **June and September**, when animals gather around permanent water sources like rivers and waterholes. The vegetation is sparser during these months, making the inhabitants more visible. December and February are pretty good times to travel as well, before the rain sets in during March.

However, safaris in Rwanda can be rewarding at any time of year and although wildlife might be more elusive during the rainy seasons, it's still there! Having to work a little harder for your sightings just makes the final event even more satisfying.

Months at a Glance

January – Rwanda's shorter dry season is a chance to enjoy safaris and gorilla trekking before the rains set in again.

February – The end of the dry period is a great time to travel, taking advantage of excellent weather and fewer other visitors.

March – The long rains arrive, although travel is still possible, and enjoyable, throughout the country.

April – April is a great time to go chimpanzee trekking in Nyungwe - just remember to pack your waterproofs.

May – This is the peak of the wet season, with conditions on the ground becoming a little trickier in the parks and on volcano slopes.

June – Drier conditions on the ground announce the start of the prime gorilla trekking season and safaris in Akagera. Conditions over at Lake Kivu are idyllic over the next few months.

July – The height of the main dry season is also the country's busiest time, so make sure you book lodging and permits well ahead of your visit.

August – Gorilla trekking is still in full swing in Volcanoes National Park, and safaris in Akagera continue to be superb.

September – It's mainly dry this month, with a few showers that won't disrupt your plans too much. September is also when the annual gorilla naming ceremony takes place for all the new-borns.

October – The next couple of months welcome back the rains, bringing new life to the parks with lush vegetation springing up making this a beautiful time to travel.

November – Heavy downpours nourish the landscapes, but they don't last long, often leaving blue sunny skies in their wake. Photographers love the changing light at this time of year.

December – The ground is drying out once again, making this a great month for gorilla trekking and safaris, as well as outdoor activities around the rest of the county.