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... travel in Rwanda

Educational Tour Programs - 2019/20 (request T009/0786)

Prepared for Nicole Randall of People to People International (06/06/2019)

Murakaza neza mu Rwanda! Welcome to Rwanda, the 'Land of a Thousand Hills and a Million Smiles' in the heart of Africa. Our visitors can look forward to a highly unusual and emotional journey to a largely unexplored part of Africa with a rich and frequently tragic history, exceptionally strong and proud people, and a permanent natural beauty that is totally unexpected and rarely matched. In his 1997 book *Rwanda – which way now?*, the Oxfam scholar David Waller wrote that "Rwanda comes as a shock to the senses". While he mainly referred to the country's natural impressions, this statement is true to almost every experience the visitor makes.

A visit to Rwanda is an excellent introduction to the entire African continent – particularly because of the country's very pleasant climate, the high levels of security and stability, the general friendliness of the people, and the ease of getting around and reaching all major attractions within a few hours. But beyond being a part of Africa, Rwanda is a small microcosm of its own. Due to its remoteness and hilly terrain, it was one of the last places to come in contact with the rest of the world. Rwandans are patriotic, proud and keeping to themselves which is why a very distinct culture was able to thrive. The current government's strong embrace of globalization and 'modern' values has led to a fascinating mix of old and new, of traditions and change. It is our responsibility, desire and pleasure to offer you deep and very personal insights into this unique environment that will challenge your old perceptions of Africa and the world.

We at NDA are proud to welcome you in Rwanda and grateful for the opportunity to plan this extraordinary visit. We are a Kigali-based social enterprise that works at the crossroads of tourism and sustainable development with a range of innovative concepts and partners. Our tourism activities are life-enriching for the participating visitors as well as the Rwandan hosts. We create culturally engaging, intellectually challenging and very intimate high-value experiences that offer unique insights, educate and provoke. We also provide numerous opportunities for meaningful empowerment, sustainable economic development, poverty reduction, reconciliation and enhanced cultural pride. That way, we make a meaningful difference that ensures that the *new dawn* is followed by a bright day.

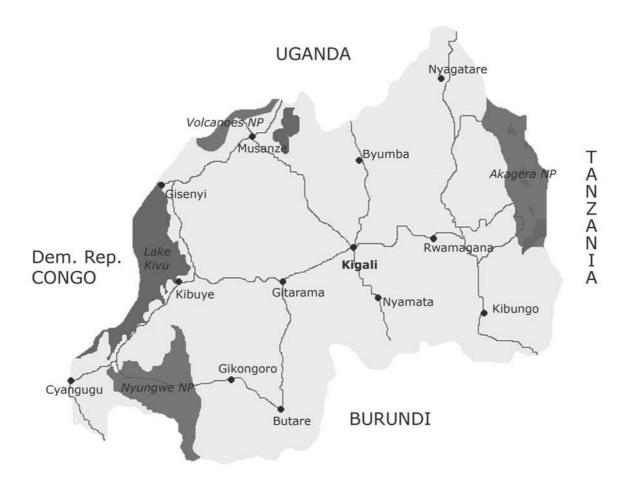
Our mission:

NDA's mission is to be Rwanda's leader in providing the most exceptional, innovative and professional services in tourism, destination and event management, and, in the process, creating meaningful opportunities for local partners and community development.

Our vision:

NDA's vision is that tourism in Rwanda is responsible and life-enriching for both the valued visitors and their local hosts.

Our travel philosophy



While we do not want our clients to miss out on Rwanda's many diverse prime tourism attractions such as the world-famous mountain gorillas, we strongly prioritize educational, experiential and enriching visits. Understanding the country, learning about its history, people, culture and daily problems, and personal actions and interactions become the center of interest of our programs.

We specialize on full-scale educational tour programs for organizations, specialized operators, academic institutions, corporations, international networks, faith-based groups, incentive travel clients and individuals, and the majority of our itineraries are fully tailor-made according to specific needs and desires.

To create your very personal educational tour program, we link activities related to your professional focus or special interest with intimate experiences with the local culture and people, with the country's established tourism attractions, and with a relaxing and exclusive high-end travel environment. In our team we have assembled a range of young local and international experts in a variety of fields, so that we guarantee intellectually challenging and truly enriching experiences. The result is a unique and entirely tailor-made approach to the country, and an in-depth and very personal look at the realities on the ground.

We look at tourism in holistic ways and offer you a range of further activities to engage with the destination and its people. Among others, we are developing opportunities for humanitarian work experiences as well as professional volunteerism. And far beyond philanthropic endeavors, we explore concepts of micro-enterprise development and support, micro-finance and private sector investments with a poverty-reducing focus that we encourage our clients to get involved in. Whether you are an interested individual, a group of friends or likeminded, or even a large corporation, we will gladly help you discover the options for your very personal ideas, your group's goals or your corporate social responsibility strategies to support Rwanda and Rwandans. Contact us to learn more.

In the following, we will offer you a few example ideas for special interest tours as well as professional focus programs.

Special interest travel

Our programs for special interest delegations aim at introducing the visitor to one or several distinct themes. This is achieved through a variety of visits to institutions and projects, meetings with individuals and groups from the grassroots level to the top decision-makers, a mix of a few theoretical presentations and many practical experiences on the ground, and time for discussions and reflections. All of this is combined with intimate experiences with the local culture and people, with the country's established tourism attractions, and with a relaxing and exclusive travel environment.

Example itinerary for a development-related educational tour (13 days): * along the lines of Amartya Sen's concept of "development as freedom"

Day 1: Kigali (introduction)

- Historical exploration of Kigali (including landmarks from pre-colonial until post-genocide times)
- Very personal introduction to life in Rwanda by members of the Nyamirambo Women's Center
- Evening presentation on general development concepts and an introduction to the tour program

Day 2: Kigali - Gitarama - Kigali (economic freedoms & social opportunities)

- Transfer to the headquarters of Food for the Hungry International, introduction to their SME support programs
- Visit of several income-generating projects of Food for the Hungry International
- Visit of Urukundo Home for Children, a model children's village with a variety of social community services

Day 3: Kigali (economic freedoms & political freedoms)

- Introduction to the services of CAPMER, the public support center for SMEs
- Discussion with professors and students at the Center for Entrepreneurship Development
- Evening presentation by a Senator on the political arena and democratic processes

Day 4: Kigali - Rwinkwavu - Akagera NP (social opportunities & ecological security)

- Transfer to Rwinkwavu Hospital in the east to learn about a model community health approach
- Afternoon safari in Akagera National Park
- Discussion with staff of Akagera National Park on ecological security in and around the park

Day 5: Akagera NP - Humure - Akagera NP (ecological security & protective security)

- Morning safari in Akagera National Park
- Visit of Humure village to learn about the special challenges of refugee populations

Day 6: Akagera NP - Ndera - Kigali (social opportunities & transparency guarantees)

- Visit to Les Enfants de Dieu in Ndera, a street children project modeled after the Rwandan government
- Afternoon at leisure
- Evening presentation by a representative of the Ombudsman on success stories in the fight against corruption

Day 7: Kigali (political freedoms & protective security)

- Visit to the Kigali Memorial Center, tour and introduction to reconciliation measures
- Visit to the Ministry of Defense for an introduction to Rwanda's current security challenges
- Networking cocktail with invited guests from a range of institutions and organizations

Day 8: Kigali - Ruhengeri - Gisenyi (economic freedoms)

- Transfer to the Ruhengeri headquarters of Urwego / Opportunity International Microfinance Bank
- Attendance of a trust bank meeting and visit to a micro credit client
- Transfer to Gisenyi

Day 9: Gisenyi (social opportunities & economic freedoms)

- Morning presentation on the plight of the Batwa and visit to a community to learn about pottery and dance
- Leisure time at the beach or pool
- Evening presentation on the success of high quality community-based tourism in Rwanda

Day 10: Gisenyi (economic freedoms & ecological security)

- Boat excursion on the lake to learn about coffee, Rwanda's number one export product
- Leisure time at the beach or pool
- Evening presentation by a representative of the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International on gorilla conservation

Day 11: Gisenyi (ecological security)

- Gorilla trekking in Volcanoes National Park
- Transfer to Kigali

Day 12: Kigali - Bugesera - Kigali (conclusion)

- Excursion to the Rwandan Millennium Village in Bugesera to learn about holistic development interventions
- Final discussions

Day 13: Farewell

- Optional visits to crafts markets for souvenir shopping and, possibly, further social projects
- Transfer to the airport and farewell

Special interest travel

Further program ideas

Arts & crafts

Rwanda's culture is extremely rich when it comes to arts and crafts. A tour around the country will introduce a range of local and regional skills, some of which continue to be exploited while others are on the verge of being forgotten.

Highlights:

- Imigongo cow dung paintings
- Batwa clay pottery
- Architecture traditional round houses, the royal palace, modern developments
- Weaving of agaseke peace baskets or ikibo tray baskets
- Banana leaf art and furniture
- Water hyacinth art and furniture
- Sculpturing at the National Museum
- Knitting projects for Western high-end designers

Pre-colonial history

Little researched, Rwanda's very rich pre-colonial history offers numerous opportunities to explore cultures, traditions and knowledge that, unless urgently documented, might disappear soon.

Highlights:

- Rwanda's comprehensive cosmo-vision with a threetiered structure of the universe
- The north-eastern landing pad of the Gods
- Mt. Kigali the ancient "heart capital" of Rwanda since the time of King Cyirima I Rugwa in the early 14th century
- The poetry of King Yuhi III Mazimpaka
- The death stone of Chief Kamegeri at the time of King Mibambwe II Gisanura in the 17th century
- Numerous landmarks associated with King Ruganzu Mutabazi Ndoori

Bird watching

With the highest number of endemic bird species in the whole of East Africa, Rwanda is becoming a prime destination for ornithologists. No less than one third of all African bird species can be found in the country.

Highlights:

- Almost 700 different bird species
- The highest concentration of bird species of anywhere in Africa
- 44 regional endemic species
- 4 pure endemic species
- Akagera National Park: 525 species, 4 endemics, including the shoebill
- Volcanoes National Park: 90 species, 13 endemics
- Nyungwe National Park: 283 species, 27 endemics

Religion

Religion has always played a prominent role in Rwandan society. Today, the comprehensive traditional beliefs have lost most of their importance, and Christian and Muslim faiths have taken over.

Highlights:

- Traditional belief systems with a comprehensive cosmo-vision and a three-tiered structure of the universe
- The work of the early missionaries in the 19th/20th centuries
- The role of the faiths during the genocide
- Modern missionary work and the emergence of popular Protestantism
- Faith-based institutions and their humanitarian work

Coffee & tea

The country's leading export products, Rwandan coffee and tea have recently gained a lot of fame for their high quality. Coffee from the Kivu region, in particular, is winning awards as the best East African coffee, and global coffee shops like Starbucks feature special Rwandan blends.

Highlights:

- Introduction to coffee and tea production from crop to
- Educational tour of various regions of Rwanda in order to learn about different types of coffee and tea, and their very special tastes
- Introduction to fair trade mechanisms and their pitfalls
- Opportunities to participate in coffee and tea picking

Conservation

Every prime ecotourism destination needs to focus strongly on conservation issues. This is particularly the case in a country that hosts some of the most sought-after species in the world, like the mountain gorillas.

Highlights:

- Public conservation efforts by the Office of Tourism and National Parks
- Revenue sharing mechanisms for the national parks
- Private conservation efforts in Volcanoes National Parks (Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International, International Gorilla Conservation Program, Mountain Gorilla Veterinary Project etc)
- Private conservation efforts in Nyungwe National Park (Wildlife Conservation Society etc)
- Community conservation efforts

Professional focus travel

Our educational tour programs for professional focus delegations aim at introducing the visitor to the success stories and challenges of a professional field in Rwanda. Our delegates visit a variety of institutions and projects, meet with individuals and groups from the grassroots level to the top decision-makers, and generally look at both theory and practice. Of course, no visit is complete without intimate experiences with the local culture and people, a few of the country's established tourism attractions, and a relaxing and exclusive travel environment.

Example itinerary for a health-related educational tour (12 days):

Day 1: Kigali

- Historical exploration of Kigali (including landmarks from pre-colonial until post-genocide times)
- Very personal introduction to life in Rwanda by members of the Nyamirambo Women's Center
- Evening presentation on public health systems by a representative of the Ministry of Health or a leading NGO

Day 2: Kigali - Rwinkwavu - Akagera National Park

- Meeting with a representative of TRACNet to learn about the President's Emergency Program for AIDS Relief
- Transfer to Rwinkwavu Hospital in the east to learn about Partners in Health and the Clinton Foundation

Day 3: Akagera National Park - Humure - Akagera National Park

- Safari in Akagera National Park
- Visit of Humure village to learn about the special challenges of health care in this refugee community

Day 4: Akagera National Park - Ndera - Kigali

- Transfer to the Neuro-Psychiatric Hospital at Ndera to learn about challenges of mental health care
- Visit to Les Enfants de Dieu, a fascinating street children project modeled after the Rwandan government

Day 5: Kigali

- Visit to the Kigali Memorial Center, tour and introduction to reconciliation measures
- Visit to King Faisal Hospital and introduction to Rwanda's leading medical facility
- Networking cocktail with invited guests from a range of institutions and organizations

Day 6: Kigali - Gitarama - Kigal

- Visit to the Kigali Health Institute and meeting with professors and students
- Visit of Urukundo Home for Children in Gitarama to learn about a family and community nursing approach

Day 7: Kigali - Bugesera - Kigali

- Excursion to the Rwandan Millennium Village in Bugesera to learn about successful development interventions

Day 8: Kigali - Shingiro - Gisenyi

- Transfer to Shingiro Health Center, run by the Comprehensive Community Health Initiatives & Programs
- Transfer to Gisenyi at Lake Kivu

Day 9: Gisenyi

- Morning presentation on the plight of the Batwa and visit to a community to learn about pottery and dance
- Visit to a traditional healer
- Leisure time at the beach or pool

Day 10: Gisenyi

- Boat excursion on the lake to learn about coffee growing 'from crop to cup'
- Leisure time at the beach or pool
- Evening presentation on gorilla conservation

Day 11: Gisenyi - Volcanoes National Park - Kigali

- Gorilla trekking in Volcanoes National Park
- Transfer to Kigali

Day 12: Kigali

- Optional visits to crafts markets for souvenir shopping and, possibly, further social projects (depending on time)
- Transfer to the airport and farewell

Professional focus travel

Further program ideas

Education

Rwanda's progress in education has been lauded as exemplary in the African context. But despite a range of successful programs, many challenges remain.

Professional highlights:

- Model private schools (Sonrise School, Ruhengeri)
- Challenges of large public schools (Ecole d'Art, Nyundo)
- Successful development interventions in education (Millennium Village)
- Challenges of an unregistered community-driven school with very limited resources (Kinamba)
- Meeting with professors and students at the Kigali Institute of Education
- Educational challenges of street children (Les Enfants de Dieu)
- Home tutoring models at Urukundo Home for Children

Law

Introduction to Rwanda's unique traditional legal institutions such as the famous gacaca courts, and overview of the challenges that a young and emerging legal system faces

Professional highlights:

- Introduction to the gacaca courts and participation in a gacaca trial (National Service of Gacaca Jurisdictions)
- Grassroots support to local legal institutions and organizations (RCN Justice et Démocratie)
- Meeting with professors and students of law at the National University of Rwanda
- Participation in legal counseling at a Legal Aid Clinic
- Peace building and conflict management work (National Unity and Reconciliation Commission)
- Grassroots legal assistance to women (Haguruka)
- Introduction to the work of the Human Rights Commission

Social work

An overview of the diverse fields of social work in Rwanda, including initiatives dealing with children, women, marginalized groups, refugees, reconciliation and poverty reduction.

Professional highlights:

- Urukundo Home for Children Rwanda has the highest percentage of orphans anywhere in the world
- Ingando the civic education program of the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission
- Rights training at Women for Women International
- Meeting with professors and students of social work at the National University of Rwanda
- Les Enfants de Dieu a fascinating street children project modeled after the Rwandan government
- Community mobilization in the Millennium Village
- Life of refugees in the inhospitable east of Rwanda
- Challenges of marginalized groups the Batwa

After the 1994 genocide and ongoing civil war, the great majority of Rwandans were and are still traumatized. Mental health care, however, has never become a priority field and still lacks even the basics.

Professional highlights:

- Mental health practice at the Neuro-Psychiatric Hospital in Ndera
- The psycho-social project of Handicap International
- Meeting with professors and students at the Department of Mental Health (Kigali Health Institute)
- Specific challenges for genocide survivors (Kigali Memorial Center), widows (Veuvaction) and orphans (Urukundo Home for Children)
- Mental health as part of the wider public health system (Millennium Village)
- Traditional medicine and witch doctors

Physiotherapy

Rwanda has about 150 trained physiotherapists, and physiotherapy plays a successful role in all major health facilities as well as a few small community projects. In 2009, the Kigali Health Institute will graduate its first class of bachelors.

Professional highlights:

- Physiotherapy at Rwanda's leading private hospital (King Faisal Hospital in Kigali)
- Meeting with professors and students of the
- Department of Physiotherapy (Kigali Health Institute)
 Imkuru Nziza a pediatric rehabilitation facility in Kigali
- Meeting with representatives of the Rwanda Physiotherapy Association
- Community-based neurological rehabilitation facility
- Physiotherapy in public district hospitals

Head start - Early childhood education

There are very few opportunities in Rwanda for families who desire to offer early childhood education to their children. A few private and also community-driven projects, however, have become very successful.

Professional highlights:

- Private urban kindergartens in Kigali
- Kinamba Nursery Project a community-driven early childhood initiative
- Early childhood education in the Millennium Village a successful development intervention
- Home tutoring for the youngest children at the Urukundo Home for Children
- Meeting with professors and students at the Kigali Institute of Education
- Specific challenges of street children (Les Enfants de Dieu)

Project excursions

To further proactively support the creation of life-enriching experiences for guests as well as hosts, we have decided to engage ourselves in the development of new and innovative tourism projects in collaboration with a range of local partners and communities. As a general rule, these projects aim not only at offering an intimate and very personal educational experience to the visitor, but also at providing the local hosts with invaluable opportunities to take part in and benefit from tourism activities. The projects can be visited as an excursion from Kigali or Gisenyi, or they can be incorporated into your longer educational travel program.

Exclusive NDA projects

Millennium Village Tour

The day trip to the Rwandan Millennium Village in Mayange is a unique excursion that introduces the country's development challenges and the successful interventions of the world's most famous development initiative, the UN Millennium Villages Project. The community members themselves present their experiences with the interventions, focusing, among others, on agriculture, education, health care, infrastructure and micro-enterprise development. On a rotating basis, over 200 members of the newly founded Rwanda Nziza Tourism Cooperative are directly involved. Additionally, several funds for education, health and community development ensure that the entire community benefits.

Dancing Pots' - an introduction to Batwa life and culture

Get to know the lives of Rwanda's first inhabitants, the Batwa. This very small minority of roughly 25,000 traditionally lived in forests and led lives as hunters and gatherers. Not much has changed in their perceptions of life but their environment has changed dramatically. With enormous population pressure, most forests had to make way for human settlements, and the few remaining patches of forest are completely closed for any human activity. Some Batwa now make a living with their traditional skills as potters and performing artists, but many others merely survive as beggars. In a half-day excursion from Gisenyi, experience the Batwa's hospitality by learning about their pottery skills as well as witnessing their amazing dance and music.

Akagera Refugee Community Visit

When they were thrown out of Tanzania from one day to another in 2007, the Rwandan government offered some communities of Rwandan returnees to settle in the inhospitable areas south of Akagera National Park. We are working with the villagers of Humure in Ndego to offer unique insights into the harsh lives of refugees whose only choice is to start anew in one of the driest parts of the country where very few things grow and regular invasions of game animals pose a threat to fields, houses and even lives. Get to know a vibrant community that makes the best out of the adverse circumstances, has started a range of micro-enterprise projects that can be visited, and has a variety of fascinating stories to tell. You may even wish to combine your educational visit with some practical work with the villagers.

From Crop to Cup' - the Kivu Coffee Experience

Our Kivu Coffee Experience introduces the coffee growth process 'from crop to cup'. You will start in Gisenyi with a boat trip to Nyamirundi Island to visit the plantation of a local coffee cooperative. The volcanic soils of the island give the coffee a full bodied, yet non-acidic flavor, and some of the best coffee in the world is grown in this area. The coffee cooperative, Ingoboka, has a total of over 2,000 members, all of whom own small coffee farms on the shores of the lake and its surroundings. From the island, the journey will continue to the nearby washing station where you can enjoy an introduction to the washing process that involves over 20 sophisticated steps. In the end, you can roast your own coffee on an open fire and have a personal coffee tasting experience.

This Is Africa' - a charming introduction to multicultural Nyamirambo

Nyamirambo is a bustling multi-cultural commercial suburb of Kigali that offers visitors a typical African flair. Comparable with South Africa's 'Township Tours', our unique 'This Is Africa' experience brings you right into the heart of the colors, noises and smells of Africa. We are working with the young and charming women of the Nyamirambo Women's Center (NWC) to take your hand and guide you through their home area. Among others, you will experience the Muslim quarter with its Arab influences, the market, the West African tailors, the hair salons, the recording studio with its local rap music, the butcher, the health center and the primary school. Your hosts will also invite you to one of their homes where you will learn how to cook a Rwandan meal, and share lunch over intriguing conversations.

Imigongo' - a traditional cow dung painting workshop

Nestled in the village of Nyakarimbi near Kibungo lies Rwanda's most distinctive art form - the Imigongo paintings. Made up of cow dung, minerals, medicinal plants and water, the paintings were initiated by Kakira, the son of the King of Gasaka in Kibungo during the 18th century. These geometric designs were originally incorporated into the walls of clay huts as 'magical decorations' created by combining earth, water, fire and the medicinal power of plants. In collaboration with our partner, the local cooperative Kakira, we offer the opportunity to participate in an Imigongo Workshop where interested visitors can learn the unique skills to create their own cow-dung paintings. You will realize that making Imigongo is no easy task and requires activities ranging from locating and acquiring the basic materials to mastering the geometric designs.

Travel notes

Visa & passport:

A free 90-day visa will be granted to citizens from the USA, the UK, Germany, Sweden, Canada, Hong Kong, South Africa, Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Mauritius.

Other visitors are required to purchase a visa for approximately US\$ 60 upon arrival at Kigali airport.

Passports must be valid at least 6 months beyond the date you plan to leave Rwanda.

Time:

GMT + 2 hours

Weather:

Rainy seasons: mid-February to mid-June, mid-September to mid-December Dry seasons: mid-June to mid-September, mid-December to mid-February

Average temperature: 24.6°C (76.3°F) - 27.6°C (81.7°F); hottest in August and September

Electricity:

230/240 volts at 50Hz

Adapters/converters have to be brought as they are not readily available in all hotels.

Telephone:

International country code: +250

Vaccinations:

Yellow fever vaccination is required. You may be asked for an international health certificate at the border.

Other vaccinations, such as hepatitis A/B, typhoid, meningococcal meningitis and rabies, as well as tetanus, diphteria and polio are advisable but will depend on the design and duration of your trip.

Visit your doctor at least 8 weeks before departure to arrange necessary vaccinations.

Malaria prevention:

It is highly recommended to take a prophylactic drug (seek professional advice to find the drug most appropriate for you) and prevent mosquito bites between dusk and dawn by using DEET-based insect-repellent and a bed net.

Money:

Bring enough cash for personal spending as credit cards and traveler's checks are not widely accepted. Both US\$ and Euro are fine, but it is advisable to carry amounts of 50 or 100, and bills should not be older than 2003. Smaller or older bills will be accepted - but at a lower exchange rate. NDA personnel can generally help with currency exchange throughout your trip. Forex bureaus and banks are available in Kigali and other major cities.

Clothes

Light clothing for the warm days and mild evenings and heavier clothing including solid walking shoes for Volcanoes and Nyungwe National Parks are appropriate. A hat and sunglasses provide protection against the sun. A waterproof jacket may come in handy in the moist mountains or during the rainy seasons.

Security situation:

Rwanda is widely known as one of the safest and most stable countries in Africa. Rwanda is currently ranked the 8the safest country in the world. While you should take the usual precautions for petty theft and pickpockets, more serious crimes are very rare. It is generally safe - also for single women - to walk in the streets of Kigali and other major cities. Traveling in the rural areas is also unproblematic, even though you might want to avoid the direct borderland to the Democratic Republic of Congo. Furthermore, it is always advisable to consult your country's travel advisory, even though we desire to point out that there are far-reaching differences and not every country has equally positive descriptions of Rwanda's security situation. A money belt or secure handbag is recommended to keep your money, passport and other important items safe. Avoid bringing expensive jewelry and other valuables. Hotels do not always provide safes.

The police can be reached at 112 or 08311117.

Recommended literature about Rwanda:

Briggs & Booth (2006) Rwanda: The Bradt Travel Guide

Dallaire (2005) Shake hands with the devil: The failure of humanity in Rwanda

Gourevitch (1999) We wish to inform you that tomorrow we will be killed with our families

Ilibagiza (2007) Left to tell: discovering God amidst the Rwandan holocaust

Kinzer (2008) A thousand hills: Rwanda's rebirth and the man who dreamed it

Rucyahana & Riordan (2007) The bishop of Rwanda

Alison Des Forges (2011) Defeat is the only bad news

Gérard Prunier (1997) The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide

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