

Karongi Destination

TOURIST MAP

RWANDA



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Karongi Destination Tourist Map

Karongi District is a popular destination for local and international visitors as it is the most quickly accessible resort town from Kigali. The capital of Karongi is Rubengera, but the district also contains Kibuye, the provincial capital and a major Rwandan lakeside resort.



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Kibuye

Is one of the prettiest of the lakeside towns lying halfway between Rubavu and Rusizi, on the shores of Lake Kivu, one of the largest inland bodies of water. Kibuye is known as a beach resort, with many islands and crystal clear water with rocky beaches to enjoy.

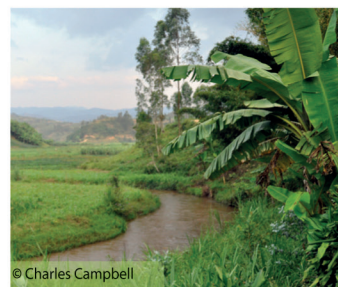
Although the beaches are not sandy, they are ideal for swimming. Kibuye is a one of the best places to go for a relaxing time away.

The main attractions are Lake Kivu, especially for watersport activities and boating to the many small volcanic islands on the lake. There are several community based tours such as visits to the tea and coffee plantations and the Genocide Memorial sites.

A Museum of Environment is being built and a Golf Resort and Marina are planned future developments for this area.

This diversity of climate allows the Karongi district to enjoy many different types of farming adapted to each climatic zone.

The economy of the area is based on the production tea and coffee as well as beans, rice, bananas, cassava, and potatoes while tourism to the area is being encouraged with the development of a number of good hotels and activities in the area.



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Karongi Islands and Peninsulas

There are 16 Islands in the Karongi District, 5 around Kibuye

The Nyakarwa peninsula, a small peninsula on Lake Kivu with good birding opportunities. The footpath is easy to locate and starts just behind the Western Province's office, in Bwishura sector. It's a lovely recreational walk along a footpath beside the lake.

The Kibye footpath is currently being developed to become the major tourism attraction in the district. This site offers a diversity of activities such as; lakeside walking, swimming, birding, camping, attractions for children and picnic site with barbecue facilities.

Munini Island or Napoleon's Island, said to be shaped like Napoleon's hat is home to a colony of fruit bats and supports a large number of birds.

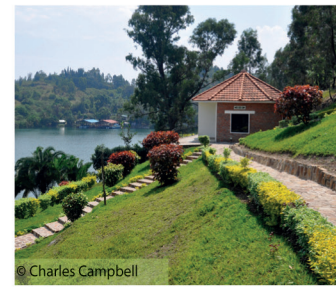
The Amahoro Island, privately owned, and surrounded by several Islands. The Amahoro Island is amongst 16 Karongi district islands and is being developed as a tourism attraction. It offers camping facilities, a bar restaurant, swimming and an Islands boat tour boat. It is well situated for birding and water sport activities.

Mpembe Peninsula Footpath is a 4 km nature walk. The Peninsula is accessible by boat from Kibuye. Although privately owned, it's a tourism site which offers camping facilities and it is also a good birding area.

Mpembe Island is accessible by boat from Kibuye, to this beautiful Lake Kivu Island which connects by a bridge to the Mpembe Peninsula.

Bwishura sector

The Hotel Centre Bethanie, is Appreciated by many tourists for its affordable price, this Christian owned guest house has a beautiful location overlooking the lake.



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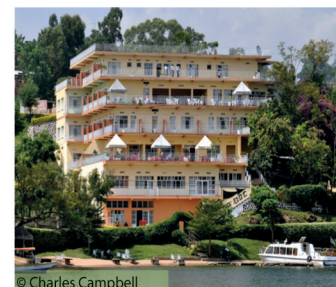
The Moriah Hill Resort is run by priests and situated on the shore of Lake Kivu. The Moriah Hill Resort is well known for it's good food and scenic Lake view. It offers accommodation and watersports such as swimming, canoeing and a speed boat tour of the Lake.

Golf Eden Rock Hotel, located in the heart of Kibuye while still being on the shore of Lake Kivu. It has a spectacular view of the bay.

Other Hotels in the area include the Holiday Hotel, Home Saint Jean, Gisovu Tea Plantation Guest House, Kibuye Lodge and more.

Mubuga sector

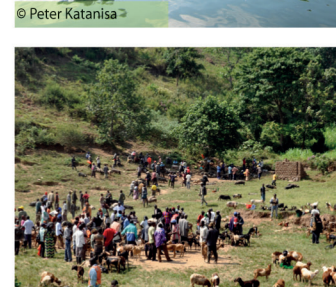
The Karora Eco Lodge, a privately owned, Eco Lodge constructed entirely with local and environmentally friendly materials. The lodge offers swimming, birding and Lake Kivu Boat tour opportunities.



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Banana and livestock Market Coming in on boats from the Democratic Republic of Congo is a booming trade where bananas amongst other fruits and vegetables as well as livestock such as goats, are sold. This open-air market is a community gathering.

Boat Trips

The Lake Kivu Bluebird Boats, are easily recognisable wooden transport boats. Colourfully painted blue and white. Boats carry from 10 to 15 people and offers an affordable price for a Lake Kivu Island Boat Tour. This cooperative is looking to develop as a income generating tourism attraction.



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Lake Kivu

Shared between Rwanda and the DRC lies within the Great Rift Valley, and the Albertine Rift Eco-Region. The Lake covers an area of 2 700km² and lies 1 460m above sea level. It is 89km long, 48km wide, with an average depth of 220m and a maximum of 485m. It flows into the Ruzizi River which feeds Lake Tanganyika.

Congo-Nile Trail

A magnificent scenic 202km route stretching along the shores of Lake Kivu in the Western Province from Rubavu district through Rutsiro, Karongi, Nyamasheke to Rusizi districts.

This spectacular route is known as the **Congo-Nile Trail takes 8-days by foot, 5-days by mountain bike and 3-days by vehicle**. This route combines a number of tourism attractions along the way, as it curves along the shores of the Lake. Some of the targeted attractions along the trail include coffee and tea experiences, several isles and bays on Lake Kivu as well as camping sites on top of Mugonero Hill in Karongi district as well as a number of community tourism initiatives.

Also, planned for development as a major stop for tourists is the **Congo-Nile Divide Watershed** in Rutsiro district - a high point where the Nile Basin separates from the Congo Basin. This site offers a magnificent view of Lake Kivu positioned in the Western Rift Valley mountain range.

This initiative is being developed by RDB in collaboration with United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) and SNV Rwanda. It is being marketed to tourists in a bid encourage local communities to fight poverty by developing tourism initiatives while at the same time allowing the country to diversify from Gorilla tourism.

Please be advised that the route is only suitable for patient 4x4 drivers as the maximum speed, due to the eroded road condition is 25km per hour. The road is currently being upgraded, but in the meantime, drive slowly, safely and enjoy the magnificent views and sites along the way!

Karongi



Rwanda is a landlocked country in Central Africa. Also known as "the land of a thousand hills". Rwanda has 5 volcanoes, 23 lakes and numerous rivers, some forming the source of the River Nile. The country lies 75 miles South of the equator in the Tropic of Capricorn, 880 miles "as the crow flies" west of the Indian Ocean and 1,250 miles east of the Atlantic Ocean – literally in the heart of Africa. Rwanda with a land area of 26,338 km², is bordered by Uganda to the North, Tanzania to the East, Burundi to the South, and the Democratic Republic of Congo to the West.



Three resort towns Rubavu, Karongi and Rusizi sit along the littoral of Lake Kivu at the western edge of the country, they are connected by Munezero, a luxury tourist boat that operates between the towns. This area is very hilly with mountains from where many streams flow, leading one way to the Congo River System and to the Nile on the other. Kibuye, the prettiest of the lakeside towns and the favourite beach of Rwandans, offering watersports and visits to the several small islands and community based tours to the tea plantation.



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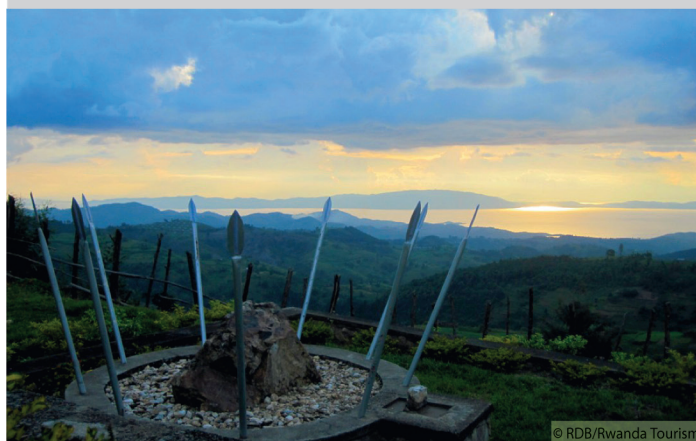
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Rwankuba sector



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Bisesero Memorial

Situated about 30 km from the lakeside town of Kibuye, on a hill with breathtaking views of the lake, stands the Bisesero Genocide Memorial, which was once a community church. This memorial site serves as a reminder of more than 11 000 Tutsis who assembled here to protect themselves from the massacre. Many managed to fight back and survive for a while, while others escaped. This hill, has been renamed, the 'Hill of Resistance' in memory of the Tutsis. There are nine buildings on the site, each of which represents one of the communes that formerly made up the province of Kibuye.

L'Esperance Orphanage/ Children Village Kigarama



© RDB/Rwanda Tourism

Children Village Kigarama, an orphanage run by the German NGO, L'Esperance Children's Aid International. Opened in 1995, the orphanage accommodates the basic needs of the children including food, clothing, shelter and education.

Gitesi Sector

Gitesi Sector memorial, built in 2007, took more than a decade to construct because most of the Tutsi of this area died during the genocide, leaving the bodies with fewer living advocates. Now, a relatively well maintained memorial site, a barbed wire fence protects the mass grave, with its flat stone surface, and a white marker with the inscriptions "Twarabakundaga" / "We Love You", "Turababura" / "We Lost You", "Nitiuzabagirana" / "We Won't Forget You".

Kibuye Power plant

The first ever Methane Gas to Electricity experience was developed in Rwanda from 2005 in the town of Gisenyi, the station started producing power in November 2008. Now considered a tourist attraction because of its uniqueness and ecological value contributing to energy saving.

Kibuye Power plant is currently producing more than 4% of the country's electricity supply. The success of this project has brought together local and foreign investors. Hundreds of millions of dollars are going to be poured into new methane plants along the lakeshore. Soon more than one in 14 homes, which is the current count, will have access to electricity.

Rubengera sector

Urutare rwa Ndaba (Ndaba waterfalls)

A magnificent waterfall found along the Muhanga-Kigali road approximately 20 km from Kibuye.

This 100m high waterfall is a popular tourist attraction and may be developed as a mountain sport adventure area in the near future.



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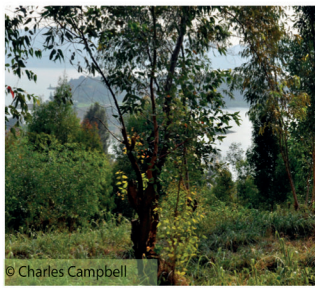
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The Kadasomwa River Bridge

Found 4 km from the Karongi district Rubengera sector office, on the Congo Nile Trail Route. This bridge plays a great role of connecting the two districts of the Karongi and Nyamasheke.

Ikigabiro

Ikigabiro is a tree that signals a Royal site. Located on the road to Rubavu, this site indicates the famous King Rwabugiri's residence. Rwabugiri was the last independent Rwandan King, who reigned over the Rwandan kingdom from 1853 to 1895.



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Gisovu tea plantation



© Aofre Hegerty

Gisovu tea plantation, in **Twumba sector** produces high quality tea and the Gisovu tea route is a unique tourism attraction. The plantation lies at altitudes between 2,000 and 2,500m and covers a total area of 820 ha. Just 45Kms from Karongi and easily accessible offering magnificent scenic views from the side walk track.

The site offers camping facilities and accommodation for a few people.

Nyungwe National Park



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The **Nyungwe National Park** lies within five districts; Rusizi, Nyamasheke, Nyamagabe, Nyaruguru and Karongi. Hikes can be arranged from the Gisovu Tea Plantation, if you book in advance with a guide Uwinka Visitor Centre.

The **Nyungwe National Park** is home to 310 bird species, 13 primate species, including Chimpanzee and more than 1068 plant types, of these 140 are orchids.

Mukura Forest



© Marcell Claassen

Mukura forest, just east of Kibuye, on the Muhanga-Kigali road, is a protected reserve.

It's home to many endemic and threatened bird and animal species. This mountain and forest reserve has an altitude range of 2 500 to 3 000 m and covers about 1 200 km². It's one of the biggest forests in Rwanda after Nyungwe, Akagera, Volcanoes National Parks and Gishwati Reserve.



Stone Chat © RDB/Rwanda Tourism