

# Rubavu Destination

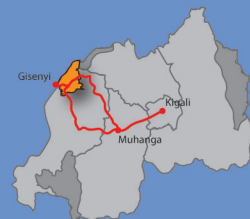
TOURIST MAP

RWANDA



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## Rubavu



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 km<sup>2</sup>, 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. Gisenyi, in Rubavu District is the most developed of the three and lays less than an hour's drive from Volcanoes National Park. It is set on a sandy beach lined with swaying palms, modern and colonial-era hotels that exude an atmosphere of tropical languor. Tourists can enjoy the main beach; local cuisine and freshly caught fish. Munezero, a luxury tourist boat can be boarded in Gisenyi to guide tourists along Lake Kivu's shores.

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## Rubavu Destination

Tourist Map



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### Gisenyi Sector

Gisenyi is the capital of the Rubavu District. It's the fifth largest town in Rwanda and is located in the Western Province, of the country and borders the north shore of Lake Kivu at the foot of the Virunga mountains which offers visitors attractive mountain scenery and an enjoyable all year round moderate climate.

The city lies 60km to the west of Musanze and the Volcanos National Park, and 110kms north of Karongi. It is a 160km journey to Kigali on good roads.

Gisenyi is divided into a busier upper part of town which is backdropped by the Virunga volcanoes, and the lower part of town which is quieter, with established architecture, banks, government buildings and hotels fringing the lake shore with it's palm lined sandy beaches.



© RDB/Rwanda Tourism



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**Rubona hill**, a little harbour town, 6km from the Gisenyi town centre, attracts those looking for lake transport.

The **Paradise Malahide** an eco lodge bar and restaurant, located on the Lake Kivu shore, is an excellent place for sundowners or an overnight stay. The site is easily accessible by car from the main Gisenyi – Bralirwa road.



Paradise Malahide © Peter Katanisa

**Bralirwa**, also known in French as **Brasseries et Limoneries du Rwanda**. Internationally recognised and the largest brewery and beverage company in Rwanda. It produces several local beers like Primus and Mützig, as well as international brands like as Amstel, Guinness and a range of soft drinks.



© Charles Campbell

### Nyamyumba Sector

**COOPAV Bralirwa Go Fishing Experience**, an eco tourism activities and opportunity to enjoy a traditional night time fishing experience with a local fishermen's cooperative called COOPAV. Look for them around Bralirwa, in the Gisenyi bay, 8kms from the town centre.

**The Nyamyumba Hot springs** is thought to have multiple medicinal and curative virtues. The Hot springs can be found about 7km from the town centre on the way to Kigufi. This site is a great place to unwind and take a swim.

**The Residence of Bishop Bigirumwami** was originally constructed in 1947 by Belgians and later renovated by Bigirumwami, the first African Catholic bishop. The beautiful residence has a scenic view of Lake Kivu. Accommodation and camping facilities are provided by the guest house La Maison St Benoit of Kigufi, which is managed by Catholic sisters.

**1918 First World War graves**, 2kms from Gisenyi city centre is a burial site of the Belgian soldiers who died during the First World War. This site could be of great historical value if renovated. You can reach it along the main Kigali-Rubavu road.

**Methane Gas to Electricity Plant**, The worlds first plant was developed in Rwanda from 2005, the station started producing power in 2008. The Plant is considered a tourist attraction due to its ecological value. There is also has a rig which can be seen in the distance on Lake Kivu.

Fifty-five billion cubic metres of dissolved methane gas has recently been found at a depth of 300 meters. It is estimated that 300km<sup>3</sup> of carbon dioxide and 60km<sup>3</sup> of methane lie within the Lake.



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### The Dancing pots

The pottery project known as 'Dancing pots' of the indigenous Batwa tribe was the first certified Fair Trade business in Rwanda. Today about 33,000 Batwa remain in Rwanda, representing 0.4 percent of the population.

They are particularly renowned for their skills as potters, dancers and musicians.

The **Dancing Pots project** is a unique opportunity for visitors to learn about and interact with this community.



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### Busasamana Sector

**The Busasamana cave**, a 1km long cave links to a system of several other caves: the Kanzeze, Mudende and Busasamana sectors, which in turn lead to the Mugongo, the Bweza and the Kabari caves.

The caves are 8 kms from the main Rubavu- Musanze road, near the Busasamana Catholic parish.



© Charles Campbell

### Nyakiriba sector

**Ikikombe cya Bunyongwe**, is a natural crater which is deeper than 200m. It is a historical site and also known as Urwina Rwa Ngunda. Ngunda is said to have been a giant man who could cultivate the land by using many hoes at the same time. All the hills and mountains in Rwanda are attributed to his work.

The site is accessible from Mahoko town centre on the main Rubavu-Musanze road.

### Congo Nile Trail



© Charles Campbell

A magnificent scenic 227km 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 10-days by foot, 5-days by mountain bike and 3-days by 4x4 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 the Rubona Hill and BRALIRWA Bay in Rubavu district, 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!



Campsite at Banda Village© USAID Nyungwe Nziza

### Kanzeze sector

**Ibere rya Bigogwe**, a rock resembling a woman's breast with spectacular views of the valley is 200m from the main Rubavu-Musanze road. The area is also ideal for biking and hiking.

**School of Art of Nyundo**, For years, this was the only school in Rwanda teaching art. The school partners with *Painting a New World*, who display and sell students' creative works of art. Art is a powerful economic tool that can generate a sustainable source of income that helps break the cycle of poverty.

**Kiaka cooperative**, a working carpentry shop, located 15km from Rubavu, in Kanama, on the road to Musanze. Watch the craftsman in action in their workshop. The **Cooperative des Artisans de Kanama** showcases furniture, basketwork, pottery, carving and other handicrafts.



© Charles Campbell



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### The Pfunda tea route experience

The country produces some of the world's best teas, like those from Pfunda Tea Estate and Factory.

The estate lies below the Virunga volcano and the rich volcanic soil makes contributes to a higher quality tea.

The tea route experience is a unique eco tourism attraction because of its involvement with the local community. The estate is situated 9 kms from Gisenyi city centre on the road towards Musanze.



© Charles Campbell

### Ingoboka Coffee Cooperative

With 8 million coffee trees in Rwanda, coffee is an institution. Arabica and Maraba coffee two of Rwanda's biggest exports. 'Rwanda Bourbon Coffee' is a favourite, used by Starbucks.

The Bourbon beans are grown by the *Ingoboka Farmer's Association* on volcanic soils, at high altitudes of 1 450 and 1 800m. This widely sought after bean has a good body and a classic clean taste.

Join a tour 'from crop to cup' to experience each step of the coffee making process. See how each coffee plant is hand-raised and cared for by the farmer on the plantation and visit the nearby Gashishi Washing Station where the coffee is processed.



© RDB/Rwanda Tourism



© RDB/Rwanda Tourism

### Mudende sector

#### Rose Carr's Farm

Mrs. Rosamond Halsey Carr was the first American citizen to settle in Rwanda, in 1949. She managed a flower plantation, bought it and never left. During her time she witnessed Rwandan Independence, was a friend of Dr Dian Fossey and fled for some months during the genocide. When she returned home she turned the farm into Orphanage **Imbabazi of Mudende**, which takes care of and shelters displaced children and genocide orphans. The orphanage is called Imbabazi, which in Kinyarwanda means "a place where you will receive all the love and care a mother would give." It's a beautiful place with a rich history, educational opportunities and caving activities. There is also place to camp. The site is easily accessible from Rubavu by taking the Musanze road for about 20km to Kabari Junction. Take the road to Mugongo to your left for 8km.



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#### Mugongo caves

The Mugongo caves are great for caving and camping facilities are on offer in the vicinity.

Most of the caves in Rwanda are developed from Cenozoic volcanic rocks formed several million years ago.

Mugongo Cave is located close to Mrs. Carr's property, a few metres from the Mudende sector office.



© Charles Campbell

### Gishwati Forest

A protected reserve east of Gisenyi Town. You can reach the forest from the road between Rubavu and Karongi. Large tea estates occupy the central and northern parts of the reserve. Bring your hiking gear to explore the forest at your leisure. This forest is excellent for bird watching!



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Ruvenzori Tanager © RDB/Rwanda Tourism