

# AFRICA GUIDEBOOK



**FAMILY** CULTIVATE. EDUCATE. ELEVATE.  
**HUMANITARIAN**

# CONGRATULATIONS



We are excited to have you as a participant in our Family Humanitarian expeditions! You will have the unique opportunity to work alongside your family in meaningful service while having once-in-a-lifetime spiritual and cultural experiences and making friendships and memories that last a lifetime. Are you ready to BE THE CHANGE by serving the global community and by enhancing the lives of others as well as your own? These expeditions truly have the ability to change your life forever! This handbook should help you prepare for the amazing, life-changing adventure you are about to take and to offer some valuable guidelines.

**Family Humanitarian expeditions combine the following for an unforgettable experience:**

- 1) Humanitarian Service
- 2) Cultural Experiences
- 3) Relationship Building

When you balance meaningful service with a fun, eye-opening cultural experience and then top it off with deep, lifelong relationships, you have the adventure of a lifetime!



# HUMANITARIAN PROJECTS



Our expeditions provide opportunities for meaningful service which is of immense value to others. The problems of the global community are complex, and there is no magic bullet to immediately get rid of poverty. With that said, at Family Humanitarian, we plan our expeditions to include 2-5 hands on projects as well as a number of workshops where training and knowledge transfer take place. These projects have been suggested by local community leaders because of the needs in their area.

## Projects can include:

- Clean water projects for villages
- Orphanage projects
- Agriculture and garden projects
- School projects (building structures, computer labs, training, etc.)
- Vision clinics
- Community Education

Regardless of the specific project, we will be teaching skills, building confidence, mentoring, aiding in community projects and engaging in manual labor. Service, as you know, changes and alters lives and entire communities for the better. But the best part is that service will also change you!

# CULTURAL EXPERIENCES



Each expedition includes a cultural experience that is unique to the country. Kenya offers world-class Safari's and opportunities to visit with Masai warriors while Uganda has the headwaters of the Nile for white-water rafting trips, jungles for gorilla tracking adventures, and opportunities for Safari as well. Both countries have unique tribal villages to visit, traditions to learn, singing and dancing to participate in and crafts to purchase.

We will immerse ourselves into the culture for an amazing experience. Our guides are locals that will be with us the entire time. Often we are introduced to their families and taken to their villages. We aren't just "tourists". We are considered "friends of the family". You will never forget the many stories over dinner that you will hear as you learn more about the culture on an intimate and personal level.



# RELATIONSHIPS/SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES



The work we do as families and as a team is meant to be a celebration of people. Part of the experience is to celebrate the beauty, diversity, and individuality of the African people – collectively and individually. As you listen to their stories, you will come to LOVE them. They each struggle in a different way through their unique hardships and uncertainties. Take the time to SEE THEM! They are each different and uniquely beautiful. Like us, they also experience happiness and sadness as well as ups and downs. We will embrace and love them because just like us, they are God’s Children. You will become lifelong friends to many children, families and communities.

Similarly, you will build and strengthen relationships within your family and with your fellow expeditioners. The expedition provides many opportunities to work shoulder to shoulder and to share heart-felt and spiritual experiences. Sometimes the best part of the day is during our evening devotional/sharing time when you have the opportunity to reflect on the day and realize the miracles you have witnessed and the spirit you have felt. It’s only natural that your family bonds will strengthen and that the friendships you make on the trip will deepen and forge lifetime connections. The relationships you form and strengthen with family, with fellow expeditioners and with the beautiful people of Africa will be one of the most rewarding parts of the expedition.

# EMBRACING YOUR EXPEDITION



Culture shock is real! Plan to step out of your comfort zone and step into “Going Global.” Just plan on the unexpected...often! Understand that some things just can’t be planned for and that flexibility is key. Practice telling yourself that whatever happens, “it’s all part of the experience.”

Humanitarian expeditions in some of the world’s poorest countries is as challenging as it is rewarding, but there are things that need to be considered and balanced. The following section is designed to help you enjoy the journey more and embrace the unknown and unexpected. Although you may not have to embrace all of the following – Be Prepared! This is not meant to scare you – Simply have fun and enjoy the ride!

## EMBRACING ALTERNATIVE HYGEINE

Cold showers, bucket showers/baths, and roadside “squatting” may or may not be a part of your expedition. But if they are – they will add priceless value to your “go-global” portfolio. A great memory to any developing country wouldn’t be complete without at least one hilarious tale of slipping, sliding, or miss-shooting. Embrace it rather than resist it. Trust us – these are the stories your kids and grandkids can’t wait to hear! Squatter Toilet Triumphs: Squat as low as you can to hit the target and to avoid balance mishaps (and pray your thigh muscles will hold you!) Not all of our expeditions are this drastic in regards to hygiene, but consider yourself warned 😊 Bottom line ... Enjoy it and learn to appreciate local culture. You’ll have plenty of shiny clean porcelain seats to sit on when you get home.

## EMBRACING THE JOURNEY (ROADS)

Roads...those kinds we have in the USA...well you aren't going to see many of them in Africa. Instead, brace yourself for bumps – potholes, speed bumps, and an occasional one on the head as you are catapulted through the ceiling as we move from place to place. To ease the “journey” a little, always carry water and some small snacks like nuts or granola bars (in case the trip takes longer than expected – which is likely). Always carry wet wipes and make friends with the other passengers. We do our best to provide the highest quality and safest transportation in private vans, but at times, transportation may take some getting used to.

## EMBRACING THE “CUISINE”

Did you know that in some countries in Africa, utensils are optional (or in other words, you might not get them!) And even funnier is that sometimes you won't know exactly what you're eating!

As part of our expeditions, we will generally be providing all meals through good quality and safe restaurants or private cooks. (We will request silverware!) Typically food includes toast, eggs and fruit for breakfast and meat, rice/potatoes and a mystery veggie for dinner.

Street food can be some of the best food you will ever have, but it can also be the worst. A parasite in your street food will keep you on the squatter for 24 hours – so probably don't do it! Consider words like “gross” or “disgusting” and replace them with non-offensive words like “different” and “unique.”

Remember that a culture is highly defined by its food and people are proud of their cuisine - Please always show love and appreciation. If you're given something, know that it was a huge sacrifice for them to make and offer it to you – accept it with humility and gratitude and just say an extra prayer for them as well as its health benefits.

## EMBRACING COMMUNICATION/LANGUAGE

Charades anyone? Most Africans know English, but some don't. No worries – we will have a translator nearby or you can do your best by pointing, acting out, or using a calculator to show how much you're willing to pay when shopping. By the way, don't be embarrassed about this – just learn to laugh at yourself and remain calm and happy even if communication is difficult. We will teach you muzungus (white people) a few songs and phrases on the trip – but it wouldn't hurt to look up a few key Swahili phrases like “Where's the bathroom?”

## EMBRACING A “NO GIFTING POLICY”

As you know in a developing country (avoid using the term “3<sup>rd</sup> world country”), there is extreme poverty. Because of this, you can expect to be approached by beggars who will ask for money. You, as a Westerner, present a temporary solution to their problem – MONEY! The general rule is to quickly, politely, and respectfully move away and not give money. Why? As hard as this is (especially when it is a small child or mother with a child in her arms), you must remember that if you do decide to give your money you are teaching incorrect principles. You are teaching that it is okay to ask for handouts. Your money will go farther if you use it for the planned expedition projects that can truly make a difference in the lives of those in the community. We firmly believe in teaching a man to fish and in empowering and creating independence rather than giving him a fish which ultimately leads to dependence. As your expedition leaders, we have spent a lot of time researching projects that support SUSTAINABLE humanitarianism and support local communities without encouraging the begging/dependence culture. The very best thing we can do for these beautiful people is to teach them and to give them opportunities to help themselves and their communities.

## EMBRACING BARTERING

You will have opportunities on your expedition to purchase goods from local merchants. First rule – no matter what price they offer, always be respectful and courteous! If you choose to barter, please ask the local expedition leaders what you might expect to pay asking for a range in pricing. Fair or not, as a foreigner, you will always be expected to pay more than a local but that doesn't mean you can't get a bargain through bartering. On the other hand, don't be afraid to say no if you really aren't interested. Just firmly state you are not interested and walk away. Because we will be shopping in poor areas, keep in mind that you don't need to barter so low that they aren't making any money. The goal is to pay a price that is fair to everyone! It's a good thing to support local economies by buying their products. We will be taking you to a few vendors who are socially conscious. We highly encourage you to purchase from these vendors to be sure that the product wasn't made in a sweat shop that exploits children or women.

## EMBRACING BEING PATIENT

Nope – you're not in Kansas anymore! Nothing in Africa happens without a painfully long wait (UGH!) When you realize there's absolutely nothing you can do about it, you can embrace it by visiting with your fellow travel mates, read a book, people-watch, or take a few extra photos. It's all a part of the experience – and you'll come home with more patience – a great quality to have!



# HEALTH

## VACCINATIONS & IMMUNIZATIONS

This advice is not meant to replace a consultation with your personal physician or doctor. This is simply a guide to help you understand the requirements and recommendations as listed by the Center for Disease Control. Please visit your physician or learn more by visiting the Center for Disease Control's website: [www.cdec.gov/travel](http://www.cdec.gov/travel).

**Routine Vaccinations:** Please be sure that you are up to date on your routine vaccinations. These vaccines are necessary for protection from diseases that are still common in many parts of the world even though they rarely occur in the United States or other developed countries. If you are not sure which vaccinations are routine, look at the schedule on the Center for Disease Control's website. Though not required, you may want to consider getting a Hepatitis A shot as well as the Hepatitis B series for those running the medical clinics.

**The Yellow Fever vaccination will be required (and you will need to show proof of your vaccination by carrying a valid yellow fever inoculation card at all times).** You will also need to take some form of malaria prevention pills. The most common choices are Doxycycline and Malarone – you can get these from your doctor or travel clinic and discuss which would be your best option.

**Other Highly Recommended Medications to talk to your doctor about and bring with you:**

- Cipro (antibiotic for traveler's diarrhea)
- Zofran (for nausea associated with a stomach bug and great for motion sickness)
- Ambien
- Malaria Prophylaxis

**You may also want to bring:**

- Imodium (highly recommended for everyone)
- Ibuprofen/Tylenol
- Over the counter sleep aid

## HEALTH INSURANCE

We require all expeditioners to purchase a minimum of \$25,000 of Medical Evacuation Insurance. You may want to check with your health insurance provider to see if your existing plan already covers this. You can find a list of suggested companies for travel insurance by using the following link: <http://familyhumanitarian.org/expeditions/what-to-expect/>. Regular trip insurance is also HIGHLY recommended.

# PREPARING FOR YOUR TRIP



## TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

Please make sure you have submitted the following documents per the instructions you received:

- 1) Waiver
- 2) Medical form
- 3) Copies of passports (make sure they are valid for at least six months from the end of your trip abroad and that they have enough pages left for your VISA)
- 4) Copy of flight itinerary
- 5) Proof of at least \$25,000 of medical evacuation insurance
- 6) Notarized “Authorization for minor to travel” for any minor who is traveling alone or with only one parent.

Forms can be found at: <http://familyhumanitarian.org/registration/registration-instructions/>. You will also want to carry a copy of your passport with you as it will help expedite matters if yours is lost or stolen. Additionally, you will need to carry the original “authorization for minor to travel” with you when you travel.

## VISA

In addition to the above travel documents, you will be required to have a VISA. The VISA is considered a personal expense (as is your passport) – you will be required to pay for it because it is not part of your “expedition fee.” For VISA purposes you are a tourist and will apply for a tourist VISA. **Please make sure to apply for your VISA at least 1 month prior to departure.**

You can begin applying for your VISA by using this link: <https://visas.immigration.go.ug/> Make sure to select Visa as the Permit Type and East Africa Tourist Visa as the Category. Applying for an East Africa Tourist Visa will permit you to enter both Uganda and Kenya.



# PACKING LIST



The average summer-time high in both Kenya and Uganda is around 86 degrees, but with the humidity, it often feels warmer. Rain is very possible. Skirts/capris/pants are best for women and shorts/pants both work for men. Participants have found that packing everything in large Ziploc-style bags makes it easier to find socks and shirts during the expedition, but also keeps clothes clean and smelling nice. Bringing a bag for dirty clothes throughout the expedition is also recommended. One golden piece of advice: Keep a clean change of clothes inside a bag during the entire expedition so that there is a fresh outfit to wear upon your return to the city for departure.

Other than your personal toiletries and clothing, the following are items we feel are must haves:

- Quick-dry clothing – because of the humidity, cotton does not dry very well. Any athletic, quick-dry, wicking type clothing will be most comfortable.
- Hand Sanitizer – you will use this frequently throughout the day every day
- Water Bottle – most of our bottled water supply will come from 5 gallon tanks used to refill personal water bottles (see recommended gear page)
- Insect Repellent – 40% Deet is best
- Medications – see medications page
- Head Lamp
- Sleep Aid and/or Ear Plugs (see recommended gear page) – trust me, you will thank us for this advice!
- Flip Flops or Keens, etc. for shower
- Sunscreen
- Rain coat or poncho
- Toilet paper/Kleenex for restroom use away from camp
- Back pack to carry with you to villages on a daily basis
- Snacks – you will definitely want to bring some snacks and comfort food with you!!
- Anything you can use to engage local village children – they love nail polish, bubbles, coloring books, balls, jump ropes, games, etc. This will be one of the most memorable parts of the expedition for most of you!!
- Power Adapter – it will convert the wall plug to accept US plugs for charging phones, etc.
- Power Converter – if you are bringing a computer, you will also need a converter to convert the electrical current going to your device. This is technically also what you would need for hair dryers or curling irons – we have found, however, that most hair dryers and curling irons will overload the converter and it is best to purchase a dual voltage curling iron/hair dryer if you wish to use one.
- Personal Items – Scriptures, Journal, etc.
- Sunday clothing – optional

**\*If there is anything else you need to bring specific to your expedition, it will be listed in your expedition packet.**