

General Information

- **Official Name:** Republic of Rwanda
- **Capital:** Kigali
- **Population:** Approximately 13 million (as of 2023)
- **Official Languages:** Kinyarwanda, French, English, and Swahili
- **Currency:** Rwandan Franc (RWF)
- **Time Zone:** Central Africa Time (CAT), UTC +2
- **Electricity:** 230V, 50Hz (Type C and Type J plugs)
- **International Dialing Code:** +250
- **Climate:** Rwanda has a temperate tropical climate, with two main rainy seasons (March to May and October to December) and mild temperatures due to its high elevation. The average temperature ranges from 15°C to 25°C (59°F to 77°F).

Geography

- **Location:** Rwanda is a landlocked country located in East-Central Africa, bordered by Uganda to the north, Tanzania to the east, Burundi to the south, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the west.
- **Terrain:** Rwanda is known as the "Land of a Thousand Hills" due to its lush, hilly terrain. The country has numerous lakes, including Lake Kivu, and is largely mountainous, particularly in the western region.

Visa and Entry Requirements

- Rwanda offers **Visa on Arrival** and **E-Visa** for most nationalities. Some countries are exempt from needing a visa.
- Citizens of East African Community (EAC) countries and other select nations can enter Rwanda without a visa for varying durations.

Economy

- **GDP:** Rwanda's economy is primarily based on agriculture, with coffee and tea being key exports. In recent years, Rwanda has experienced strong economic growth driven by services, construction, and tourism.
- **Tourism:** Rwanda is famous for its wildlife, particularly the mountain gorillas in Volcanoes National Park. Other major attractions include Akagera National Park, Nyungwe Forest, and Lake Kivu.

Safety and Health

- Rwanda is considered one of the safest countries in Africa for travelers, with low crime rates and political stability.

- **Health:** It is recommended for visitors to get vaccinations for diseases like yellow fever, typhoid, and hepatitis A and B. Malaria is present in certain regions, so preventive measures should be taken.

Culture and People

- **Ethnic Groups:** Rwanda is home to three main ethnic groups: the Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa. The country has worked hard to promote unity and reconciliation after the 1994 genocide, where the Tutsi population was targeted.
- **Religion:** The majority of Rwandans are Christian (mainly Roman Catholic and Protestant), with a small percentage practicing Islam and indigenous religions.
- **Traditions:** Rwandans take pride in their cultural heritage, with traditional dance, music, and art being an integral part of the country's identity. Visitors can experience Rwandan culture through art performances, festivals, and local markets.

Travel and Transportation

- **Airports:** The primary international gateway to Rwanda is **Kigali International Airport** (KGL), with additional airports in cities like Rubavu and Kamembe for domestic flights.
- **Transportation:** Kigali has a reliable and efficient transport system with buses, taxis, and motorbike taxis (called "motos"). For long-distance travel, there are bus services to other cities and towns.

Important Landmarks and Attractions

1. **Volcanoes National Park:** Famous for mountain gorilla trekking.
2. **Akagera National Park:** Known for its savannah, wildlife, and lakes.
3. **Nyungwe Forest National Park:** A rainforest with diverse flora and fauna.
4. **Kigali Genocide Memorial:** A poignant site dedicated to remembering the victims of the 1994 genocide.
5. **Lake Kivu:** A picturesque freshwater lake offering relaxation and water-based activities.

Key Facts for Travelers

- **Currency:** Rwandan Franc (RWF). Major credit cards are widely accepted, especially in Kigali, but it is advised to carry some cash for use in more rural areas.
- **Tipping:** Tipping is appreciated, but not mandatory. 10% is a common tip in restaurants.
- **Dress Code:** Smart-casual attire is recommended. Modesty is appreciated, especially when visiting religious or cultural sites.

Government

- **Political System:** Rwanda is a presidential republic, with the president serving as both the head of state and government.

- **President:** As of 2023, the President of Rwanda is **Paul Kagame**, who has been in power since 2000.