9-Day Rwenzori Central Circuit: Stanley, Speke and Baker

Uganda



DURATION	COUNTRY	STARTING FROM
9 days, 8 nights	**Uganda**	**USD 2,900 per person**

TOUR SUMMARY

This 9-day, 8-night trek follows the Central Circuit in the Rwenzori Mountains, the Mountains of the Moon on the Uganda and DR Congo border, and adds three peaks: Mt Speke, Margherita Peak on Mt Stanley at 5,109 m, and Mt Baker at 4,843 m.

You start at Nyakalengija, camp at Nyabitaba, John Matte, Bujuku, Elena and Kitandara, climb Speke on day 4, Margherita on day 6 and Baker on day 7, then descend through Guy Yeoman to Nyakalengija.

ITINERARY

Day 1

NYAKALENGIJA (1615m asl.) – NYABITABA CAMP (2651m asl.)

The central circuit starts at the Rwenzori Mountaineering Services offices at Nyakalengija. You need to arrive in the morning to allow ample time to rent equipment and meet your guides and porters. The trail begins by passing through farmland to the park boundary beyond which it follows a thick forest along the Mubuku River, crossing its Mahoma River tributary before starting a long, steep climb up onto a massive ridge to reach Nyabitaba hut. During this part of the trip you may hear chimpanzee and see black and white colobus, blue monkey and the brilliantly coloured Rwenzori turraco.

The hike takes an average of 6 -7 hours.

Day 2

NYABITABA – JOHN MATTE CAMP (3505m asl.)

From Nyabitaba follow the trail that drops down through the forest to the Kurt Shafer Bridge, just below the confluence of the Mubuku and Bujuku rivers. Passing through the bamboo forest, traverse through a long and exhausting stretch of slippery moss-covered rock. From the Nyamuleju rock shelter, Mount Stanley and Mount Speke can be seen before passing into the zone of the giant heather, lobelia and groundsel. Finally reach John Matte Hut after passing through the tiring bog, for dinner and overnight at the hut.

The hike takes an average of 7 - 8 hours.

Day 3

JOHN MATTE - BUJUKU CAMP (3962m asl.)

From John Matte Hut the trail drops down to cross the Bujuku River and enters Lower Bigo Bog, the home of giant lobelias. Jumping from tussock to tussock, the bog is finally crossed but rarely without the feet sampling some of the freezing ooze below. The upper Bigo bog gives way to Bujuku Lake, with views of Mt Baker to the South and Mt Stanley to the West. Bujuku Hut, well located in the shadow of Mount Baker and Mount Speke, is set in a narrow valley below Stuhlmann Pass. This camp is good for acclimatization for clients attempting the summits of peaks Mount Stanley and Mount Speke. Dinner and overnight at Bujuku hut.

The hike takes an average of 4 – 5 hours.

Day 4

BUJUKU – MT. SPEKE – BUJUKU

Early in the morning start the hike through stullmans pass (4192m asl.) and spectacular views of Virunga National park of DR Congo to Victorio Emanuele peak.

The ascend to the peak takes 4 – 5 hours.

Prepare to descend back to Bujuku camp from Victorio Emanuele with views of Bujuku valley and Bujuku lake, Margherita and Albert peaks on Mount Stanley, and Mount Baker for an overnight at Bujuku Camp.

The descend takes an average of 3 – 4hours.

Day 5

BUJUKU - ELENA CAMP (4541m asl.)

Leaving Bujuku, the trail takes you through more bog, while climbing the steep slopes west of the lake and through the magical and forest of Groundsel Gully. Turn to your right up to Elena Hut and Mount Stanley on a steep trail over large boulders, while the trail on your left leads to Scott-Elliot Pass and down to Kitandara Lakes the trail on he left leads those who are not climbing Margherita Peak to Kitandara Hut. Those climbing the peak will have their Dinner and overnight at the coolly and Icy Elena Hut.

The hike takes an average of 5 – 6 hours.

Day 6

ELENA HUT - MARGHERITA PEAK (5109m asl.) – KITANDARA CAMP (4430m asl.)

Very early in the morning, you attempt climbing the highest peak, Margherita of Mount Stanley. To reach the summit of Margherita, the climb takes about 4 -5 hours depending on the weather conditions and the pace of climbing this mountain. This tough walk takes you over three glaciers, slippery rock, ice and very exposed areas which are open on many sides. Climbing on to the glaciers, cross the Stanley Plateau and proceed with the ascent. Acclimatized to fog, altitude sickness and coolly weather, scramble up to the summit of Margherita the highest peak of the Rwenzori. The descend from Margherita peak back to Elena Hut will take you about 2 – 3hours.

After your lunch at Elena hut, descend to the Scott-Elliot pass (4372m asl.), where there are spectacular views of Bujuku Lake and Mount Speke. After, the trail passes you through an alpine zone of sparse vegetation and rough boulders, descend past the Kitandara Lakes for dinner and overnight at the Kitandara camp.

The descend takes an average of 3 – 4 hours.

Day 7

KITANDARA – MT. BAKER (4843M asl.) – KITANDARA

The climb starts early morning from Kitandara Camp through Fresh Field pass (4215m asl.) with views of DR Congo up to Edward peak.

The ascend to the peak takes about 5 – 6 hours.

From Edward peak descend back to Fresh Field pass and then back Kitandara camp for an Overnight.

The descend takes an average of 3 – 4 hours.

Day 8

KITANDARA – GUY YEOMAN (3261m asl.)

From Kitandara, take on the trail that ascends steeply up the headwall, spreading out from the base of Mount Baker and continuing along the south side of the mountain to Fresh field Pass 4282m asl. At this point you can view into the Congo to the west and Mount Stanley to the north.

From the pass, take on the long high alpine mossy. Thereafter start the descend through steep rocky trails and the rock shelter at Bujongolo, the base camp for the historic expedition by the Duke of Abruzzi in 1906 and then an overnight at Guy yeoman camp.

The hike takes an average of 6 – 7 hours.

Day 9

GUY YEOMAN – NYABITABA - NYAKALENGIJA (1615m asl.)

Below Guy Yeoman, the route descends the cliffs of Kichuchu. Beyond Kichuchu the muddy path crosses the Mubuku River twice through a bamboo forest before climbing downwards to Nyabitaba to complete the circuit.

Continue descending Nyabitaba Camp and complete your trek by the evening at Nyakalengija, the base camp.

The descent takes 7 – 8 hours

WHAT IS INCLUDED

Cost includes

- Park fees
- All activities
- All accommodation
- A professional driver/guide
- All transportation
- All Taxes/VAT
- Round-trip airport transfer
- Meals
- Drinking water

Cost excludes

- International flights (From/to home)
- Additional accommodation before and at the end of the tour
- Tips (Tipping guideline US$10.00 pp per day)
- Personal items (Souvenirs, travel insurance, visa fees, etc.)
- Government imposed increase of taxes and/or park fees
- Climbling equipments

GOOD TO KNOW

- Packing for Safari? Keep it simple!
- Bring comfortable, lightweight clothes in natural colors like khaki, olive, sand, and earth tones. Pack layers too: mornings can be surprisingly chilly, while the middle of the day gets hot. You don't need a fresh outfit for every day, since most lodges and camps can arrange laundry service.
- Don't forget your sun protection: a good hat, sunglasses, and sunscreen. Comfortable shoes are enough for most safaris. Heavy hiking boots are only needed if you're doing a walking safari, primate tracking, or mountain climbing.
- A good pair of binoculars is a must. A camera is great, but binoculars will transform the way you experience wildlife, especially birds and animals that are far away.
- For luggage, we recommend a soft-sided bag over a hard suitcase. It fits much more easily into safari vehicles and small aircraft, where space is tight and weight is often limited to 15 kg.
- Most importantly, don't overpack. Travel light and enjoy the adventure!

Ready to book this safari?

Request a quote and we will tailor it to your dates and group: **gorillatreking.com/safari/9-day-rwenzori-central-circuit-stanley-speke-and-baker/**

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Starting prices are per person and depend on season, group size and availability; request a quote for exact pricing. Itineraries can be adjusted to suit your plans.