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### NEW BANDAS FOR VIRUNGA LODGE

Rwanda's Virunga Lodge celebrates 10th anniversary, debuts two new luxury 'banda' villas

Jessica Keller  
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It's been 10 years since conservationist Praveen Moman built eco-luxe Virunga Lodge, in hopes of bringing sustainable tourism and awareness of endangered mountain gorillas to intrepid travellers in post-conflict Rwanda. This summer, the lodge celebrates a successful decade with the debut of two new Deluxe Bandas, bringing the lodge's total count of bandas to 10.

Virunga Lodge is one of four eco-luxury safari lodges operated by Volcanoes Safaris in Uganda and Rwanda. Conceived by Moman, the sustainable tour operator seeks to preserve endangered wildlife – specifically gorillas and chimpanzees – while supporting local communities and eco-systems. In fact, the company donates USD 100 from the cost of each safari to the Volcanoes Safaris Partnership Trust, whose projects endeavour to reduce

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human-wildlife conflict.

Virunga, specifically, provides refuge for Rwanda's gorillas and employment for members of the surrounding communities, as well as emigrants from Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo who have fled conflicts in their home regions.

Support for local trade can be seen in the design of the new Deluxe Bandas, outfitted in handcrafted teak furniture, traditional artisanal touches and local artworks, all made by craftspeople and artists in the area. Constructed in the local building style, and generating hot water and electricity via solar energy, the bandas have a minimal impact on the environment.



Knowing their accommodation is sustainable and ethically appointed is just part of the allure of the new 65-sq-m Deluxe Bandas, each of which offers a stone fireplace, living room area and private terrace displaying breathtaking views of the twin lakes and Virunga Volcanoes. A complimentary hamper filled with locally sourced gifts, such as kitenge kimonos, is a welcome surprise for new arrivals.

The celebration of Virunga Lodge's 10th birthday continues later in the summer with the release of a photographic essay telling the story of Virunga Lodge and Volcanoes Safaris' conservationist work.

Visit [volcanoessafaris.com](http://volcanoessafaris.com)



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