ECO BY DESIGN

Good for the guest.
Good for the wilderness.
Good for our neighbours.

Nkuringo Eco Collection

IN HARMONY WITH NATURE

www.nkuringoecocollection.com

Long before a guest arrives, many of the decisions that will shape their stay have already been made.

Where the water comes from. How energy is generated. What reaches the kitchen. Who we employ. What we buy locally. How waste is handled. And how tourism fits into the lives of the communities around our lodges.

Most of these decisions will never appear on an itinerary. But together, they explain what Eco means at Nkuringo Eco Collection.

We have never thought of eco as a label added to the business. It is how we have chosen to build and run it.

It began with a simple idea

In 2007, Lydia Eva Mpanga was working alongside communities on the edge of Bwindi Impenetrable Forest. Here, extraordinary wildlife lived beside communities with limited economic opportunities.

She believed tourism could do more than bring visitors to see mountain gorillas. It could create employment, support local enterprise and give tourism a meaningful place in the communities living alongside the forest.

What began as a community campsite and guided walking safaris gradually grew into Nkuringo Eco Collection.

The properties have changed, and the collection has grown, but the principle behind them has remained: the guest, the place and the people who live there should all benefit from tourism.

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HOW WE PRACTICE ECO

Our Eco approach is clearest in the day-to-day operations of our lodges.

Water

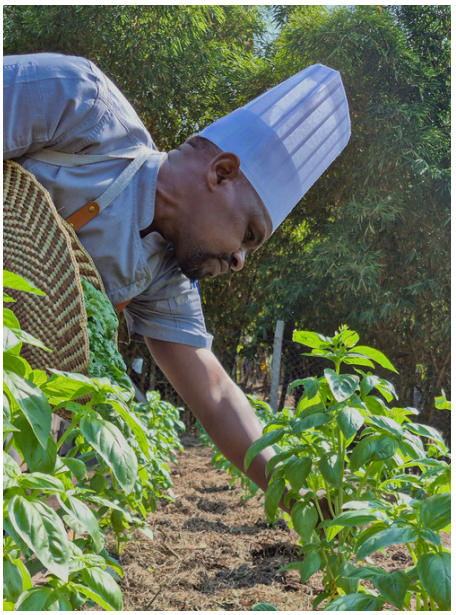
At Nkuringo Gorilla Lodge, all lodge water comes from harvested rainwater. At Mirima Kibale Lodge, water is drawn from a combination of harvested rainwater and a solar-powered borehole, with lake water used for the gardens and flowers.

Harvesting and managing water this way allows us to make better use of the resources available around each lodge while reducing unnecessary demand on other sources.

Energy

Uganda gives us plenty of sunshine, so solar energy is part of how we power our lodges. It also heats water for guest showers, with generator backup available when weather conditions make it necessary.

We are now formally measuring solar's contribution to our overall energy use so that, as we improve, we can report our progress accurately rather than make claims we cannot support.



From Garden to Kitchen

Our kitchen gardens grow vegetables and herbs that make their way into our kitchens and onto our guests' plates.

It gives our chefs access to fresh, seasonal produce while reducing some of the transport involved in bringing food to the lodges.

Whenever possible, we also buy from Ugandan farmers and suppliers.

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HOW WE PRACTICE ECO

Our approach becomes clearest in the ordinary workings of our lodges.

USING LESS. REUSING MORE.

We actively reduce single-use plastics. Guests receive reusable aluminium water bottles, with refill stations available at our lodges and in our safari vehicles.

Materials are reused where practical. Empty wine bottles, for example, find a second life edging garden beds. Waste is separated, and organic kitchen and garden waste is turned into compost for our gardens and farm.

Appropriate non-recyclable waste is currently managed through our waste-management system, including an incinerator.

Where firewood and charcoal are used, they are sourced from planted eucalyptus rather than indigenous forest trees.

We also use organic guest bathroom products, while shower wastewater is managed through a permeable-stone drainage system.

None of these measures, on its own, defines an eco lodge. It is the way they work together, day after day, that matters.

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WHO BENEFITS

The environmental side of Eco is only part of the picture.

Approximately 90% of our staff come from the communities around our lodges. That means tourism creates employment close to where it operates, while the people welcoming our guests bring with them a knowledge of the place that cannot be imported.

Through our community programmes in Nkuringo and the work of Gorilla Junction Foundation, we support opportunities for local people to participate in tourism, develop practical skills and build careers in hospitality. Local guiding and community-based experiences create further ways for visitors and neighbouring communities to meet.

We make the same choice when we buy.

Wherever practical, lodge supplies come from Ugandan farmers, artisans, builders and other local suppliers. Local art and handicrafts have a place in our lodges, and local materials have been used in their construction. Each purchase keeps more of the value created by tourism within Uganda and, where possible, within the communities around us.

At Nkuringo Gorilla Lodge, guests may also experience performances by Batwa and other members of neighbouring communities, giving local people an opportunity to share their music and culture directly with visitors.

Guests can take part too

Guests are welcome to plant a tree during their stay, contributing to our ongoing restoration efforts and taking part in the long-term care of the landscapes around our lodges.

Participation can also be much simpler: using water thoughtfully, following responsible wildlife-viewing practices and approaching community visits with respect.

These may seem like small actions. So are many of the decisions we make ourselves.

And that is really the point.

Eco is something we practice

A rainwater tank, a solar panel, a kitchen garden or a newly planted tree does not tell the whole story.

For us, Eco is the accumulation of practical decisions: how we source water, generate energy, grow food, manage waste, buy supplies, create employment and look after the places in which we operate.

Some practices are well established. Others are still being measured and improved. We would rather keep doing the work, learn from it and report it accurately than turn sustainability into a collection of claims.

Eco by Design at Nkuringo Eco Collection is hospitality that works for the guest, respects the places where we operate, and creates value for the people and wildlife that call them home.

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