



WIKIPEDIA PHOTO
South Korea's Incheon International Airport boasts a golf course and spa.

COURTESY OF MUNICH AIRPORT
Munich Airport handles a staggering number of passengers each year with typical German efficiency.

COURTESY OF CHANGI AIRPORT GROUP
Changi Airport in Singapore has been named world's best airport five times.

Florida tempts Canadians in the off-season

Deluxe hotel offers cut-rate stay in the summer

This is a low-season discount for spring, summer and fall at a luxurious destination where winter rates start at about \$300 US per night.

ROCHELLE LASH
SPECIAL TO THE GAZETTE

The Inn on Fifth, a deluxe hotel in Naples, Fla., is offering a Snowbird Special for Canadians, valid until Dec. 19, 2014.

The deal starts at \$895 US for two people, for a seven-night stay in a well-appointed room in the main building or \$1,675 in one of the new Club Level Suites, across Naples' main street.

At the centre of downtown Naples, the Inn on Fifth has 119 guest rooms, including 32 Club Level suites, plus a rooftop pool and a full-service spa. The Inn on Fifth includes valet parking, Wi-Fi, beach shuttle, and access to tennis nearby. Club Level suites add a lounge with refreshments and a private deck.

Snowbird Special: 888-403-8778, www.innonfifth.com; certain blackout dates apply, including holidays.



The Inn on Fifth, a deluxe hotel in Naples, Fla., is offering deep off-season discounts for Canadian snowbirds.

Top five airports in the world

Nearly 13 million voters in a global survey narrow down the first-class hubs

MARK STACHIEW
POSTMEDIA NEWS

They may not have the glamour of the Academy Awards, but if you're a frequent flyer, then you might be more interested to know the winners of this year's World Airport Awards.

The awards are based on the results of an independent, global survey that collected nearly 13 million votes of air travellers from 110 countries. And the 2014 award winners are:

1. Changi Airport, Singapore
Last year's top airport remains on top of the heap, making it the fifth time that

Changi has been named the world's best airport. What makes it so special? It could be because of the rooftop pool, the movie theatre, the butterfly garden or the free foot massages.

The Asian hub offers so many distractions that it's a wonder more travellers don't miss their connecting flights.

2. Incheon International Airport, Incheon, South Korea

Incheon is in an arm's race with Changi for providing amazing distractions for travellers. This airport boasts a golf course, spa, private sleeping rooms, skating rink, casino, indoor gardens and a duty-free shopping mall

that has been rated the best in the world for several years. Perhaps its biggest boast is its lightning-fast arrival and departure times.

3. Munich Airport, Munich

Now the second-busiest in Germany, Munich's airport hosts a staggering number of passengers each year, but it's done with such typical German efficiency that it's a joy for passengers. Some of that efficiency comes from the Vorfeld fluggastbrücken. That's the German phrase for the airport's special jet bridges that act as a waiting area for passengers to be carried to airplanes by bus instead of having them wander for kilometres from one gate to another to board their aircraft.

4. Hong Kong International Airport, Hong Kong

When Hong Kong's vener-

able Kai Tak Airport was replaced with the new Hong Kong International Airport, it was an opportunity to create a modern experience from the ground up.

Passengers in transit flock to the airport's new shopping mall SkyPlaza, which offers a wealth of shops and restaurants.

5. Schiphol Airport, Amsterdam

One of the busiest airports in Europe, Schiphol offers visitors top-notch shopping and dining, but it has some unique attractions.

Getting into downtown Amsterdam by train is a breeze, but if your layover is too short, visit the airport's free Rijksmuseum annex to get a taste of Dutch art. You can even download Dutch ebooks and music for free while you are there.

RWANDA: A Livingstone descendant reaches the source of the Nile at last

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The Source of the Nile

As a descendant of 19th-century Scottish explorer David Livingstone, I admittedly have a bias in favour of visiting this historical spot.

The source of the Nile bedevilled and beguiled Europeans for centuries. Livingstone died in destitution, his health ruined, without ever solving the mystery. A German explorer placed it in neighbouring Burundi, others put it in Tanzania, but it was not until 2006 that a British expedition, using GPS and satellite maps, finally tracked the farthest reaches of the Nile — back to an unassuming spring high in the mountains of western Rwanda. (Something,

it should be noted, that is still hotly contested in Burundi.)

I reached the source of the Nile in a four-by-four on a long, rough road that wound its way into the clouds. Hiring a driver is mandatory for most truck rentals in Rwanda — and for good reason. Even with Livingstone as a forebear, I wouldn't have wanted to navigate those tortuous mountain roads on my own.

The source itself is just a small pond — a puddle really — in a quiet forested trail. But to stand there, at a site so many explorers dreamed of and died for? I think it's worth it. Even better, it's close enough to the resort town of Karongi, on Lake Kivu, that you can fall back for dinner and a sunset view at the end of the day.



A giraffe roams the savanna in Akagera National Park in Rwanda.



A gorilla peers out of the forest in Volcanoes National Park.

Akagera National Park

Rwanda is known mainly for its primate tours — and rightly so. Rwanda's national parks feature some of the largest primate populations in Africa, everything from chimpanzees to golden monkeys to the mountain gorillas of the Virunga forests.

But eastern Rwanda is starkly different. A savanna scrubland bordering Tanzania, it features Akagera National Park, home to spring-loaded impalas, bar-code ar-

rangements of zebras, impossibly graceful giraffes, wallowing hippos, a handful of elephants and more than a few muck-dwelling crocodiles.

True, Akagera doesn't offer the scale of safaris that Botswana or Kenya do — although there are plans afoot to reintroduce lions into the park. (No word on what the zebras and impalas think about that.)

But if you want to expand your itinerary after a visit to Nyungwe

Forest, Lake Kivu and Volcanoes National Park, Akagera is an easy overnight trip from the capital of Kigali.

There is a hotel near the southern gate of the park, and although you aren't required to hire a guide to accompany you, it is strongly recommended. The area is vast, with plenty of thorn-bush forests, and finding the animals can be tricky. But how often does one get to see rainforest mountain gorillas and savannah giraffes on the same trip?

I passed one former "poacher's village" on the way in that now boasts a health clinic, a brand-new elementary school and a clean-water supply, all courtesy of the revenue generated by the gorillas. Killing or kidnapping these primates would now be considered counterproductive.

The gorillas, many of them fully habituated to the presence of humans, live in several far-flung groups, accessible only on foot, with visits limited to one hour. I made my trek to the distant Amahoro group with a disconcertedly fit band of hikers, and arrived, panting and out of breath, to find a dozen gorillas

lounging about amid nettles. As the babies tumbled over each other, a silverback rose like a mountain and shoved his way past us. It was, in every sense, breathtaking. I don't think I exhaled till well after he passed.

My best tip? Although there are accommodations near the park entrance, you can easily stay in the pretty lakeside town of Rubavu instead, on the border of Congo. The Lake Kivu Serena Hotel provides information, early morning wake-ups and a box lunch for your trip to Volcanoes National Park, allowing you to once again combine comfort with trail-slogging conservationism.

Planning your visit

Although there is no nationwide advisory in effect for Rwanda, the Canadian government advises a high degree of caution because of grenade attacks and warns against non-essential travel to rural areas bordering Burundi and the DRC due to incursions by rebel army groups. The areas within the boundaries of Volcanoes National Park and Nyungwe National Park are excluded from the advisory, as are the towns of Ribavu, Kibuye and Cyangugu.

■ For more information: travel.gc.ca/destinations/rwanda

■ Passes to see the mountain gorillas, arrangements for rental vehicles and drivers (required!), as well as travel to

and accommodations inside Rwanda, can be arranged through Thousand Hills Expeditions: thousandhillsexpeditions.com

■ For more on Nyungwe Forest Lodge,

offering luxury in the heart of the rainforest of the Congo-Nile divide, visit www.nyungweforestlodge.com

■ For accommodations on Lake Kivu that can also be used as a springboard to the mountain gorillas farther east, see Lake Kivu Serena Hotel in Rubavu/Gisenyu: www.serenahotels.com/serenalakekivu

■ For accommodations on Lake Kivu closest to the source of the Nile, see Moriah Hill Resort in Karongi/Kibuye: moriah-hill.com



An impala takes a drink in Akagera National Park in Rwanda.