
FORT PORTAL



This guide is by no means exhaustive. Rather, it is meant to give you a selection of the best that you can try out and help you settle in a little when you first get here. Use it at your own risk, the authors bear no responsibility for any accidents or illness resulting from the use of this guide.

Eating Out

Dutchess

Owned by a Dutch couple (hence the name), and run by a German (Christian), Dutchess is best known across Uganda for its Pizza (probably the best in the country). Top picks: *The Royal* (blue cheese and chorizo), *Calzone Bolognese* (a very big meaty calzone), and the *Piccante* (anchovies, chilly and garlic - we recommend adding olives). Their pepper steak is also very good.

Dutchess also do a take away service, you can order anything off the menu, they charge 1,000UGX for the box plus however much the boda costs (the motor-bike to deliver it, usually <2,000UGX unless you live a very long way out). You can also buy double cream, cream cheese, humous, good bread, and chorizo/pepper salami, cheese etc to take away. Tel 0704879474, 0777067717, 0718746211. www.dutchessuganda.com



Gardens Restaurant



Located well, just opposite the lower shell garage and Mpanga Market, Gardens is where every tour operator passing through FP will stop with their 4X4 full of muzungu's (Ugandan for "white people"). This place has the best drinks list including some excellent juices, cappuccino, and other speciality coffee's, though they are all quite expensive by Ugandan standards. For me, more of a lunch place than dinner, but it does have an excellent selection including pizza's, a "local food buffett" (with some muzungu designed dishes) and the best burger in town. There is also a good craft shop attached to Gardens. It has a larger selection than Maria's in town, but it is more expensive and you don't get the same personal experience.

Delhi Gardens

Just off the Boma playing fields you will find Delhi Gardens, Fort Portals local curry house. A spacious restaurant built on wooden stilts, the view from the back over the Rwenzori's is simply stunning. There are few places I would rather enjoy a cold beer, game of pool and a masala papad (Ugandan for popadom). The curry's are excellent and great value. Top recommendations: butter chicken (completely different than the UK equivalent), lamb kadai and paneer & cashew kadai.

Ravens Restaurant

Just below Hotel Cornerstone, not far from the centre of town you will find Ravens. They serve good quality local foods with a good selection and great price. The place is always full of locals enjoying dinner, what more recommendation could you want...



Sweet Aromas



Sweet aromas cafe is run by an American lady called Laurie and does the best cakes and cookies in town! Go here for a cheaper but still freshly brewed filter coffee (2,000UGX) and to sample some of their sweet treats. Cookies and cakes start at 500UGX each and go up to about 2,000UGX. They also have Wifi here so it's the perfect place to head to for a couple to hours to work on that report...

Bars and Nightlife

Golden Bar

One of our favourites, just along the road from Ravens you will find Golden Bar. A smallish bar with a nice outdoor seating area behind for an early evenings cold refreshment. They also serve excellent BBQ pork sticks for a few thousand shillings, we recommend 2-3 sticks per person for dinner.



Forest Bar

One of the most popular night-spots in town, this is located just off one of the main streets down a side ally as all good night-spots should be. Get ready for a pat down from a man with a gun as you go in, once inside the place initially seems completely black, but one you find your way into one of the two main bars and your eyes adjust to the dark you'll have a great night here. Occasionally have live music and good drinks promos.

Africana

More popular with the local's than Forest, this place is always full. In the early evening their is a nice area out the back for a cold drink and some dinner if you fancy. The menu is more extensive than you'd think including BBQ pork and fried goat which taste great, but the wait can be lengthy. After dark this place really starts to come alive and by 4 in the morning you won't be able to move for locals enjoying a dance. Dance until the sun comes up if you want.

Gluepot

Gluepot has a similar vibe to Africana late on, its wooden stilts straining under the hundreds of locals out for a good dance. Earlier in the day they show sports and have several pool tables. Again the party will last as long as you do.

Shopping

Andrews Brothers Supermarket

This place supplies the essentials any muzungu living in Uganda needs: ground coffee (go for the locally grown stuff in the golden packet), proper butter, cheese, fillet steak, pork, sausages, mince, chickens as well as most other things you would expect from a supermarket back home. Most of the items listed above you wont find anywhere else in town, but a lot of the more generic things you will. You pay a small mark up for the convenience and nice shopping experience, but its probably worth it.



Mega Supermarket

This place, also sometimes known as they Indian supermarket as the owners are Indian, offers many of the same things as Andrews at a similar price. Their spice selection is generally better as is their breakfast cereal selection.



Mpanga Market

The big orange market next to the Mpanga river and opposite Gardens Restaurant. This makes for the nicest fresh produce shopping experience in town. Food is arranged in brightly coloured piles forming fabulous displays. In general, the piles cost between 500 and 2,000UGX but prices do vary seasonally. They might put a slight mark up on things for muzungus and a small haggle may be needed, but generally the asking price is pretty close to the price you should expect to pay (e.g. ask 2,000, pay 1,500).

Kabundaire Market

This is the old market, sometimes called the farmers market. It is much 'rougher around the edges' than Mpanga, but also has some different charms because of this. This is where the farmers bring their produce to sell to the market vendors so you can often get your veg a bit cheaper if your buying lots. They also have lots of second hand clothes here and tailor's. if you want your favourite african fabric turning into skirt, bring it here. You'll pay around 7,000UGX to turn it into a skirt, 10,000 if you want a lining (which you probably do, most of the fabric is quite thin).

Maria's Crafts

This is where lots of our friends from all over the country have chosen to buy their last minute trinkets before going back to the UK. The quality of the stuff is excellent and the price is fair, no need to haggle normally, although small discounts can normally be agreed if your buying a few things. Most of the crafts are made by members of a women group. The kind of craft shop you want to go into time and again, just to see if they've got anything new in.



Job's DVDs

If you're here for a while you'll want to find a good DVD supplier. The best is down one of the alley's between Andrews and Maria's crafts. The board showing DVD titles on the main street lets you know which ally to go down. Of course, they are all dodgy rip-off DVDs but it is impossible to get anything else here. The advantage of Job's shop: they have not been dubbed over badly into local languages; if you get a bad copy he will replace it no questions asked; he'll often cut you a deal if your buying a few and he likes new releases and popular western TV series. If their is something you are really after he will also try and locate it for you.

Miscellaneous

Sports

If you are wanting to play football you can do this on pretty much any patch of grass you can find any night of the week. The big games seem to happen opposite Buhinga Hospital (Fort Portal Regional Referral Hospital) and on the Boma playing fields.

At Boma you'll also find a well used basket ball and volley ball court. Occasionally the volley ball court is turned into a tennis court.

For a social sporting event head to Boma on Mondays and Thursdays around 1800 for ultimate frisbee. This is great fun and as much of a workout as you want it to be. It has also become a place for muzungu's to meet, although the Ugandan's do play as well. Check out the Facebook page for more details.



Internet

Depending on how long you are staying and how heavy your usage will determine how you get internet here. It is all 3G at present through the various mobile network providers. Orange (now africel) do the best deal for bulk (100GB for 900,000UGX valid for 1 year (for long term volunteers)). Airtel and MTN also have good coverage. If you go for Airtel call Patrick Mujuni on 0700398837 for a deal (currently 14,000UGX for 1GB). If you get your smart phone unlocked before you come out you may be able to 'hotspot' off that (i.e. create a WiFi bubble). Alternatively you can get a USB dongle or a WiFi box, but these can be a bit pricey.

Getting Around

Boda-boda's are everywhere. These motorbike taxi's are definitely the cheapest and easiest way to get about town but have no illusions, they are dangerous. We wouldn't recommend them, but if you are going to use them, find one you trust and get their number, and buy yourself a helmet. A journey that would take you 30mins to walk should cost between 1,000 and 2,000UGX.

Private Hires (would be called a taxi at home) are expensive but safer. They congregate around the lion roundabout towards the top of town, opposite the Total garage. A journey that might cost 1,500 on a boda will cost 10,000-15,000 in a private hire. We recommend Joseph on 0772327014 for better prices and safe driving.

Matatus (also called taxi's) are the white minibusses with blue squares down the side. These are very cheap like Boda's, but you are crammed in like cattle. A better bet for heading a medium distance cheaply, they run set routes so you need to find out where the one you want will leave from.

If you are trying to get a longer distance, say to Kampala, then you are going to want the Link bus. These leave from the bus station and although the seats are small, you will at least have your own. They do often drive at terrifying speeds, but this is less scary when you are on it than when it is driving towards you on the road.

Banking

Stanbic Bank in the centre of town is the best, at least one of their cash-points is normally working for MasterCard as well as Visa. Barclay's have started charging 16,000UGX for a withdrawal unfortunately so stick to Stanbic, if the queue is very long just come back later when its gone down a bit.

Healthcare

Overview

The government health care system is, in theory, free for all and structured as follows: Mulago in Kampala is the National Referral Hospital, below this there are 13 Regional Referral Hospital (one in FP), below this there are district hospitals. More rurally there are health centres, a grade IV health centre is the highest functioning, it should have a theatre for minor procedures and caesarean sections. A grade III health centre should have delivery services. Grades I & II are extremely rural and you are unlikely to come across these.

The government system is significantly propped up by the private system. In general, if you can afford to go private you do. Most doctors who have a government job also have a private job, and this often causes a conflict, but no-one has a solution to this as the government pay is poor, their are no repercussions for poor work and everyone does the same thing...

Fort Portal Regional Referral Hospital (Buhinga)

This is the main government hospital in FP. It officially has around 330 beds however in practice has significantly more inpatients than this. Patients are admitted to the hospital through the Out Patients Department (OPD). When a patient arrives in OPD they are triaged to either the appropriate specialist or to a clinical officer to make a diagnosis and form the treatment plan. The patient is then either admitted to the main hospital or discharged. The hospital has a male and female surgical and medical ward, a paediatric ward, a TB ward and maternity complex. It also has a private wing where patients can pay to stay in a slightly nicer room. This wing also houses the relatively new Neonatal unit.

Virika Hospital

This is a catholic private hospital associated with the cathedral and many nuns. It generally has the reputation as being the best hospital in FP although fairly expensive for Ugandans.

Kabarole Hospital

Also a private hospital but the reputation is not as good as Virika.

Alpine Clinic

A private clinic situated opposite Dutchess, this is where a lot of muzungu's go for their needs, fortunately we haven't required their services.

Maranatha Health

A private clinic run by Kim and Dr Michael Findlay from Australia. Principally a children's clinic, they also offer adult clinics on Thursdays and are always willing to help out. Located about 4km out of town on the Kasesse road just past the Kasusu Trading Centre.

Vocabulary

The local language is Rutooro, and a few basics such as greetings and thank you go a long way.

English	Rutooro
Good morning, how are you? (to a single person)	Oli Ota?
Good afternoon, how are you? (to a single person)	Osiibire Ota?
Good morning, how are you? (to many people)	Muli muta?
Good afternoon, how are you? (to many people)	Musiibire muta?
I am fine (in response to the above greetings)	Kurungi
Thank you	Webale
Thank you very much	Webale muno
Thank you for the good work	Webale emirimo

