

May 6, 2017

RE: Welcome and Tips for International Attendees of Africa TESOL 2017

Dear Participant:

The Association of Teachers of English in Rwanda and Africa TESOL planning committee is thrilled to welcome you to Rwanda for the 2nd Annual Africa TESOL Conference on 12-13 May, 2017. We have put together a short guide to help make your stay in Kigali in the days before, during, and after the conference as comfortable and as enjoyable as possible.

We look forward to receiving you in beautiful Kigali.

Warm Regards,



Richard Niyibigira

ATER President and 2017 Africa TESOL Conference Chair

Encl: Welcome and Tips for International Attendees of Africa TESOL 2017



Welcome and Tips for International Attendees of Africa TESOL 2017

Logistics

Finances: Rwanda uses the Rwandan Franc (often denoted RWF; officially FRW). As of May 1st, the exchange rate was 1 USD = 826 RWF, 1 EUR = 900 RWF, 1 GBP = RWF = 1066 RWF. You can access RWF via ATM machines located in almost any bank around the city; the withdrawal limit is usually 100,000 RWF. It is also possible to pay for food or goods (e.g., at supermarkets or more upscale restaurants) using a Visa credit or debit card.

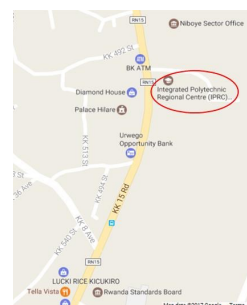
Packing: Although Kigali is very close to the equator, it also has an altitude of approximately 1500m (almost 5000 ft). Therefore, if it is sunny, days can be warm, but if it is rainy, they can be quite cool. It could be chilly during the evenings: a jacket or sweater is advisable. The temperature may range from 24 -17 °C (74 - 61°F) and the conference falls near the end of the rainy season.

Arrival:

- If you are obtaining your visa upon arrival, after you get off the plane you will see immigration. First, get into the line on your left and pay for your visa. It's usually most efficient to pay with 30 USD if possible. After you pay, you get into the next line, to your right. There, you enter into the country. If you already have a visa, skip the line on the left.
- There is a WC to the left of the desks before you pass through immigration; there is another one at baggage claim. There is also free wifi at baggage claim.
- As you exit the airport, if you are staying with Nobleza, you can take their airport shuttle. If you are staying elsewhere, take a taxi from an official taxi driver; they will likely approach you and wear badges around their neck. The standard fare from the airport to Kacyiru, where the U.S. Embassy is, for example, is 7000 RWF. It may be possible to negotiate to instead pay more (i.e., 10 USD) cash to the driver if you do not have RWF.

Nobleza Hotel: KK 15 Road in Kicukiro Center, on the Main road to Bugesera; +250 784 752 496; + 250 788306 512;

Conference Location: Integrated Polytechnic Regional Center (IPRC) in Kicukiro, Kigali; near the Niboye Sector office on Bugesera Road. After you enter campus, follow the road for about



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a ten-minute walk to the very back of the campus where you will see the new building, which is where Africa TESOL 2017 will take place.

Transportation

- **Public transportation:** There are buses that cover transportation in Kigali but the routes are unpublished. The cost is 240 RWF per ride. To use the bus system, buy a Tap & Go card for 500 RWF and load them with as much credit as you feel you need. Buses are fairly safe during the daytime, but unless you are familiar with Kigali, it is recommended that you take taxis or motos for more efficient and clear movement from one destination to the next.
- **Taxis:** Always clarify the destination and negotiate the price before you begin your ride. A sample fare from Nobleza to Papyrus, a popular bar / restaurant in Kimihurura, is approximately 5000 RWF. Note that prices will vary depending on your ability to bargain, your ability to clearly explain where you want to go, and the time of the day. You might find taxis via the hotel reception or outside popular night spots. One trusted English-speaking taxi driver is Jonas Hagenimana, available via WhatsApp at +250 / 788 512 087.
- **Motos:** Many Rwandans in Kigali choose to travel by moto. They are ubiquitous throughout the city. You may hire one from the street or via the [SafeMoto app](#). You should always know where you are going and negotiate the price before you get on. In giving directions, it works best to first state the part of the city you need to go to, and then exactly where, referencing a landmark. A sample fare from Nobleza to Papyrus, a popular bar / restaurant in Kimihurura, is approximately 1000 RWF, unless it is very late night, in which case it might cost 1200 RWF.

Food

Markets: The open-air covered market in Kigali most frequented by foreigners is in Kimironko. There, you can find fresh fruits, vegetables, flowers, and fish, as well as regionally printed fabrics, tailors, and knick-knacks. All prices are negotiable, and it is advised to bring your own bag. *Directions:* Tell the driver to bring you to the market in Kimironko. For your own reference, it is next to the Kimironko Simba.

Bodegas: You will find many small local stores where you can conveniently buy food items, water, and even vegetables and samosas. Buying food there will support the local economy.

Supermarkets: There are also three major supermarket chains in Kigali - Simba, Nakumatt, and Sawa City.



- **Simba** is likely your most convenient choice in terms of bigger supermarkets. It carries all the basics, including packaged food products, some produce, bakery items, liquors, and some household goods. The Simba Gishushu location on KN 5 road also serves reasonably priced eat-in hot food and is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, so it often serves as a pretty busy local hangout, as well. The Simba closest to IPRC Kigali is Simba Kicukiro on KK15 Road. *Directions:* Ask to go to Simba Kicukiro or Simba Gishushu.
- **Nakumatt** tends to be the priciest and also carries the most international products (at night you may see their employees dusting off boxes Kelloggs' cornflakes). There are two locations quite close to each other in Kigali's center; the one at the MTN center there is open all night. *Directions:* Ask to go to Nakumatt "mu mug" (in the city center) at the MTN center.
- **Sawa City** carries international brands and is reputed to especially carry several British choices.

Restaurants

- **Local restaurants:** There are many local restaurants you might enjoy. For example, near the U.S. Embassy in Kacyiru, on the corner of KG 5 and KG 3 Avenues at Resto-Bar Umutuzo, you can enjoy an all-you-can-eat lunch buffet for 1000 RWF. Numerous local restaurants around the city offer similar offers, usually for around 2000 RWF.
- **Cafes:**
 - [Inzora Rooftop Café](#) - café ideal for work space inside Ikirezi bookstore
 - [Casa Keza](#) - café, tapas bar, with a gift shop; quiet area
 - [Shokola](#) - two locations; one on the top of the public library in Kacyiru; the other in Kimihurura
- **Restaurants with International Cuisine:**
 - [Heaven](#) - International cuisine with Rwandan and African flavors
 - [Repub Loung Kigali](#) - Rwandan food with an upscale flair
 - [Meze Fresh](#) - gourmet burrito bar
 - [Sol e Luna](#) - pizzeria with a Monday night trivia competition
 - [Papyrus](#) - upscale pan-Asian cuisine with a lounge and bar; popular late nights
 - [Poivre Noir](#) - Belgian / French cuisine in Kimihurura
 - [Mille Collines](#) - Famous internationally as the site where over 1200 individuals survived the 1994 genocide. Known today for its delicious all-you-can-eat brunch, with pool access, wine, and wifi included, for 15,000 RWF.



Nightlife - Places are generally open every night but listed here for their best known evening.

• **Thursday night:**

- [Inema Arts Center](#), a local gallery in Kacyiru, hosts a popular happy hour at its galleries and gardens from 6:30 - 9:00 p.m. or so. There's a bar and either live music or a DJ, and it's a great place to mingle with locals and expats alike. ATER
- [Champion Hotel](#) in Remera has a full bar and kitchen serving typical Rwandan fare; its indoor-outdoor upstairs bar/restaurant hosts a well-attended Thursday evening DJ spinning salsa-bachata-kizomba.
- [Ogopogo](#) - This Italian restaurant, Trattoria, located in Kimihurura, sometimes turns into a dance party late night Fridays and Saturdays. Ogopogo is the old, but often still used, name. Thursday nights they usually have a karaoke and draught beer special.
- [Le Must](#) is half pub with shisha (one side), half nightclub (the other side); busy as a Thursday late night hangout

• **Friday night:**

- [Radisson Blu](#) - Salsa, bachata, and kizomba DJ with outdoor dance space and two free cocktails for all ladies on Friday nights from 7 - 11 p.m. at the Radisson Blu, the iconic dome of the Kigali Convention Center; kitchen is also open. To arrive in a car, go behind and around the back of the dome to the security gate; a moto can also drop you off at the security entrance.
- [Sundowner](#) - Pub-like and known for its pizza; popular with locals and expats alike for its DJ after 10 p.m.
- [Rosty](#), a large bar in Remera, hosts live bands every Friday night, often by Rwandan and Burundian musicians.
- [514](#) - large semi-covered bar across from Rosty in Remera, with a DJ or live music and some dancing on Friday and Saturday evenings

• **Saturday night:**

- [The Blue Note](#) - Formerly called the White Horse, this pub often features live music, often jazz, on Friday and Saturday nights. It is located downtown, opposite the Belgian School.
- [Cocobean](#) - Located on KG 5 Ave. in Kacyiru next to Inzora café / Ikirezi bookstore; has outdoor tables with shisha around a pool and an indoor nightclub with a small but often packed dancefloor; sometimes charges a cover of 5000 RWF
- [People](#) - Night club featuring salsa, kizomba, bachata, and merengue from 9-11 p.m. on Saturday nights and Bollywood, Latin pop, and Afropop from 11 p.m. until late. Likely will charge approximately 3000 RWF cover. On Fridays, it sometimes has a little Naija flavour.



Additional Places and Activities of Interest:

[Kigali Public Library](#) - Located near the US embassy in Kacyiru, Rwanda's first public library was opened in 2012 with a beautifully designed and well stocked space. Free wifi.

[Impact Hub](#), also known as The Office, is a community of social enterprises, entrepreneurs, and innovators; on on floor, start-ups share office space, and on their top floor café, they often host a wide variety of arts and entrepreneurship events open to the public.

The 5.4 km [Kigali Night Run](#) is rumored to be taking place on the evening of Friday, May 12, at 7:00 p.m. Starting point at KBC roundabout and registration is free; contact +250 788 353 479 to confirm and get more detailed information.

[Nyamirambo Women's Center](#) offers well-established walking tours in one of Kigali's lively neighborhoods and offers traditional basket-weaving and cooking classes.

[Talking through Art](#) is a small NGO that aims to help physically impaired people in Rwanda through vocational training and employment support. For those with extended stays, they offer tours with local guides for 5000 RWF on 15-17 May in Nyamirambo (starting point, Anglican church St. Etienne in Kiyovu) or Gikondo (includes a home visit and basket weaving; starting point Cercle Sportif parking). If desired, tours can include a lunch stop at a local restaurant (each person paying their own bill). All proceeds go to support the NGO and guide. You can read more about the project and its CEO [here](#) and book a tour via WhatsApp at +250 736 111 478.

For those with extended stays, the [Goethe-Institut](#) in Kiyovu offers English-subtitled films free and open to the public on Tuesday, May 16th at 6:30 p.m.; it also is hosting an open Mic poetry slam on Thursday, May 18th at 6:30 p.m., also free and open to the public.

Safety: Theft and violent crime is rather low in Kigali, but as anywhere, it still occurs. Therefore, it is advised to take some precautions in terms of securing your valuables. It is also advised to follow municipal rules, such as to refrain from walking on the grass, refrain from littering, and refrain from taking photos of government buildings or government officials. Do not walk on the same side of the street as the Office of the President.

