



Take a closer look
www.1111Camino.com

1111
...on the river



TABLE OF CONTENTS
SUBSCRIBE

FROM THE MAGAZINE

- State of the State:
Energy
- Executive Edge
- Tech startup of the month: VideoBloom, Inc
- Who owns Colorado:
Highland bucks real estate slowdown
- Athena Award Winner:
Sister Alicia Cuaron

**E-NEWSLETTERS
SUBSCRIBE**

- ColoradoBiz Update Newsletter Archives
- Subscribe to ColoradoBiz

COLORADOBIZ LISTS

TOP 250 PRIVATE COMPANIES

1. CH2M Hill
 2. PCL Construction Enterprises Inc.
 3. Great-West Life & Annuity Insurance Co.
 4. Vistar Corp.
 5. Hensel Phelps Construction Co.
- COMPLETE LIST

TOP PUBLIC COMPANIES

1. Qwest Communications International Inc.
 2. First Data Corp.
 3. Transmontaigne Inc.
 4. Ecostar Communications Corp.
 5. Liberty Media Corp.
- COMPLETE LIST

EXTRAS

- Golf Guide
- Golf Course List
- Colorado Vine

PARTNERS



HOME E-NEWSLETTERS M&A/ACG Denver BIZ LINKS EVENTS RSS COLORADO VINE ARCHIVES/SEARCH

Rebuilding Rwanda... (cont'd)

"There is already a real shortage of low-cost housing in Kigali that is planned and decent," said Teta Isibo, a planner in the Kigali City Planning Department, as she walked me through this environmentally progressive haven. "This all fits in to the strategy of the master plan."

Win-win tourism

When Gaylord Layton got the call from John Dick in 2004, asking if he might be interested in investing in Rwanda somehow, he couldn't have been more skeptical. "I thought Rwanda was a poverty-stricken, dangerous place where genocide had taken place," says Layton, a lifelong world traveler and president of Tayside Associates LLC. "I didn't even think it was safe to go there."

But after meeting with Kagame in Denver and paying a visit to the so-called Land of a Thousand Hills, Layton was smitten: verdant hills, the cool blue waters of Lake Kivu, the towering mystical-looking volcanoes of the Virunga chain, and — of course — the chance to spend the day in the bamboo forest tracking the rare mountain gorillas, which number about 700 worldwide. While many envisioned a land of bloodshed, Rwanda, he discovered, was actually a hidden gem of a tourist destination.

"I came out of that whole thing and said to myself, 'What this place is missing is a great safari lodge,'" Layton says.

Not anymore. In January, the doors opened on the Silverback Sabyinyo Lodge, a plush lodge with eight adobe-style bungalows seated on a lush hillside in the shadow of the jagged 3,634-meter Sabyinyo volcano. Each bungalow has its own fireplace, rose-colored carved-stone bathtub, and private veranda looking out over the mist-covered volcanoes. The three hearty meals served daily in the glorious main lodge are a welcome departure from the bland fare so typical of the country.

It's not cheap: Rooms range from \$371 to \$644 per person, plus a \$50 per night per-person community fee. But it is already being lauded by some expatriates as the best hotel in the country. It also represents a unique investment strategy that fuels the local economy and protects the gorillas.

The lodge was built via a unique three-way partnership between Layton, Governor's Camp (a Kenyan safari company), and the African Wildlife Foundation. The three entities pitched in on materials and labor, employing up to 650 locals per day at \$1 to \$2 per day for many months to build it. Then, it handed ownership over to a community trust called SACOLA, which represents roughly 6,000 low-income Rwandese living in nearby Kinigi.

SACOLA earns money by leasing the lodge back to its creators and also gets every penny of the \$50 per-person, per-night "bednight fee" — which amounts to roughly \$150,000 annually for community water projects, health and education. Layton, who intends to get his principal investment back but hand over his share and any equity to the community trust in five years, hopes to set an example for other investors.

"I was motivated to do the deal for philanthropic reasons, but I also wanted to make sure that we put together a model or template so that entrepreneurs could say, 'This is a good investment,' and maybe they could repeat the experiment," Layton says. "We have these micro-loans for these very small businesses, but there is also a need for some kind of a macro/micro loan — loans to start off larger businesses in Rwanda."

Fogler agrees. "There is a small but very dedicated group of people who are very interested in investing in Africa. The problem is the lack of investment vehicles," he says. "If you say, 'I have \$30,000 to invest or \$1 million or \$2 million to invest,' how do you do it?"

In 2004, Fogler set out to answer that question and established Thousand Hills Venture Fund. So far, the fund — made up of roughly 25 investors — has pumped \$600,000 into Rwandan business, including housing projects, Internet cafes and other technology-driven chains, and has the capacity to invest \$2 million. Another investment vehicle he's involved with has the capacity to invest much more, he says. And, it is hoped, reap an ample profit.

Initially, Fogler too says he was driven to investigate Rwanda by a twinge of "post-genocide guilt." The Western world did nothing to help during the genocide, so we must do something now, the thinking goes.

But now, having given up his job as an attorney and made at least 20 trips to this exotic foreign land, Fogler is beginning to realize that his efforts, and those of others like him, may be about much more than guilt, or money.

Most Popular Stories

1. Who owns Colorado: Highland bucks real estate slowdown
2. School's in for two ex-business owners
3. My uncle and the essence of leadership
4. Stretch your marketing dollars
5. Something for nothing

Call For Nominations

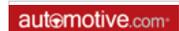
TOP COMPANY 2008
Colorado's Most Prestigious Business Award

Top Company status will be awarded in ten business categories in 2008

- Energy & Natural Resources
- Financial Services
- Health Care
- Real Estate/Construction
- Manufacturing
- Nonprofit
- Retail/Wholesale
- Services
- Technology/Media/Telecommunications
- Tourism/Hospitality

colorado biz

DOWNLOAD YOUR NOMINATION FORM HERE



- Car Dealers
- Cars for Sale
- Car Insurance
- New Car Prices

Auto Transport



"Rwanda is not just about Rwanda," Fogler says. "It is a small, poor country with almost everything going against it. A lot of people look at Rwanda and say, 'If Rwanda can become a leading example in Africa after all that it has been through, then to some extent, there is hope for every other country.'"

Lisa Marshall is a Colorado freelance writer who spent two weeks in Rwanda this February. She can be reached at mlisamars@aol.com.

PAID LINKS

Local Directory

- 401K Plans
- Accounting
- Advertising & Marketing
- Air Charter
- Air Travel
- Annuities
- Answering Services
- Antivirus / Antispam So
- Apartment Loans
- Apartment Rentals
- Apartments

Previous | 1 | 2 | 3 |

automotive.com

- Car Dealers
- Cars for Sale
- Car Insurance
- New Car Prices

Auto Transport



4/1/2008-4/30/2008
Last modified on 4/1/2008 1:38:38 PM.

[Click here for a printable version.](#) [RSS](#)

READER RESPONSE

The Age of Propaganda will come to an end, my friend!

4/3/2008 5:05:28 PM

READER RESPONSE

eulade

Interesting to see how someone new to our country can get the point about it's reality and orientation ;when others who spent decades around like some belgians -where I am-pretend ignorance or confusion.bravo for your good insight!

4/3/2008 4:01:03 PM

READER RESPONSE - Leave your comments

Nickname:

Email:

Your email address will only be used to contact you about your posting.

Comments: **(required field)**

Type the characters shown in the image for verification: **(required field)**

90549819

ColoradoBiz Online welcomes and encourages reader comments. Permission to post reader comments is assumed, and we reserve the right to excerpt or edit for clarity any comments that are posted. We won't be able to publish all comments. And we can't vouch for the accuracy of posts from readers. Nickname will be used to identify your post.

[Click here to view other Magazine Articles by this author](#)



[ADVERTISE](#) | [CONTACT US](#) | [EVENTS](#) | [SUBSCRIBE](#) | [FREELANCE GUIDELINES](#) | [RSS](#)

Build your Volkswagen

Visit VW.com to Build a Volkswagen & Find it a Dealer in Your Area. www.VW.com

Ads by Google

