At the bottom of Rwanda’s Volcano Mountains which are home to the famous mountain Gorillas and unique biodiversity sits the New Buffalo Mountain Lodge which is located in Kinigi, Musanze District in the Northern Rwanda.

The hotel gets the name from Buffalos also found in the Volcanoes National Park that few people know their existence because of the overshadowing popular Gorillas.

Eric Twagirimana, the founder and General Manager of New Buffalo Mountain Lodge revealed that the name of his hotel was inspired by animals in this conservation park that are not always mentioned neither their tourism developed.

Eric Twagirimana, the founder and General Manager of New Buffalo Mountain Lodge

The hotel is only six kilometres to the famous park in a quiet environment with an excellent safari facility and easily linked to various attractions and services in the area.

Besides mountain gorillas, the Volcanoes National Park is home to buffaloes, elephants, golden monkeys, Spotted Hyena, black-fronted duiker, and bushbuck among others. The park also harbours reptiles, amphibians, insects and bird species including a variety endemic to the park.

Twagirimana who also represents private operators in tourism and hotels in Musanze and Burera advocates for the development of the general tourism outlook of the Volcanoes National Park so that people can come visit all these animals, birds and landscape to have a complete Rwanda safari experience.

His advocacy has even influenced his strategy to business ensuring that his hotel can welcome, provide comfort and a great experience to every tourist visiting the region.

The New Buffalo Mountain Lodge offers excellent services for lodging, bar and restaurant at uniquely friendly rates that can fit well in budgets of many of the travellers to the area.

Neighbouring many high end hotels, Twagirimana chose a different marketing strategy and approach to allow tourists with less budget but would rather stay in the proximity of the Volcanoes National Park.

“We welcome anyone who would like to have a great experience but working under a restricted budget, we offer a variety of services to cater for different categories of clients and can’t fail to accommodate clients coming to this region and particularly to our hotel,” emphasizes Twagirimana.

Opened in September 2016, when many conservationists and tourists descended on Kinigi for the annual Kwita Izina, the baby gorilla naming ceremony, the New Buffalo Mountain Lodge got its first clients.

This laid down the first network of customers for the new hotel that had opened after three years of construction. Twagirimana built the hotel from an initial idea he had from 1999 when he had visited the area and dreamed of building a hotel.

The dream came before he had attended his university, when he left for studies in West Africa would always return; the beauty and potential of the area reinvigorated his dream to enter into hospitality sector in Kinigi.

Upon returning to his motherland, he got a job and saved until was able to buy land in Kinigi and started building his dream hotel.

Working and investing into hospitality has not been Twagirimana’s preoccupation but also support to the local communities. Through small projects the hotel facilitates local youth by equipping them with technical skills.

The youth who are not able to continue their formal education are trained to acquire skills like tailoring free of charge. New Buffalo Mountain Lodge also pays health insurance to at least five households every year.

New Buffalo Mountain Lodge works closely with Musanze District to promote the development of the area and contributes to the local economy through job creation and taxes.

Twagirimana appreciates the role played by the district and the national government in general. A network of public infrastructures has been erected in the

area and authorities are always available to facilitate operators in the hospitality sector.