

Tribal Ghana, Togo, and Benin

ROYAL FESTIVALS, MASK DANCES, VOODOO SPIRITS, CASTLES OF CLAY



TRIP DATES

2024

March 20–April 3, 2024

October 16–30, 2024

2025

February 19–March 5, 2025

October 29–November 12, 2025



Wilderness Travel

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VOODOO SPIRITS, CASTLES OF CLAY

Traditional cultures, renowned art forms, flamboyant festivals, mask dances, and a dazzling ethnic mosaic are the golden gems of West Africa. Our cultural odyssey brings us into fascinating tribal worlds guided by ancient spirits. Along the way, we meet unforgettable people including the Tamberma, with their fairytale clay castles. In the heart of voodoo country, we visit practitioners, watch trance-dances, and learn about the awesome power of the voodoo spirits. Our journeys witness the Akwasidæ Festival in Kumasi, honoring the Ashanti king, and the exuberant mask dances of the Egun Mask Festival in Benin.



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Itinerary

DAY 1

ARRIVE IN LOMÉ, TOGO

Arrive in Lomé, where you are met and transferred to 2 Fevrier Hotel for dinner and overnight...D

DAY 2

EXPLORE LOMÉ

The vibrant capital of Togo, Lomé is the only African city that was a colony of the Germans, the British, and the French. It is also one of the few capitals in the world bordering with another nation. These elements have led to the development of a unique identity reflected in the lifestyle of its inhabitants and in the architecture of the town—Lomé is indeed a crossroads for people, trade, and cultures, a cosmopolitan city in small size. We will visit the central market, with its famous “Nana Benz,” as the women who control the market are called. They control the sale of expensive “pagne” (cloths) coming from Europe and sold all over West Africa. We also visit the administrative quarter where the flavor of colonial time is still very present, and the fetish market, where we can find an eclectic assortment of all the necessary ingredients for love potions and magical concoctions.

Over the last decades, some local modern artists have been exhibiting their work in Europe and US in a tradition called the “Togolese school” and we will visit the town accompanied by a contemporary artist. If you are shopping for African art, Lomé is the perfect place as it acts as a transit place for African tribal art, folk art, modern paintings, and handicraft. Some art galleries are known for their collections of old ritual objects, highly valued by collectors of primitive art. Overnight at hotel...BLD

DAY 3

VOODOO / ZANGBETO MASK DANCE / OUIDAH, BENIN

All along the coast of Togo and Benin, voodoo is a religion that has been passed on by the ancestors and is still fervently practiced. Although for many Europeans, voodoo is only a vulgar form of black magic, in truth, voodoo is a true religion, far richer and more complex than people often think. In a remote hidden village, we will join a voodoo ceremony. The frenetic rhythm of the drums and chants help in calling in the voodoo spirit, who then takes possession of some of the dancers. They fall into a deep trance, eyes rolling back, grimaces, convulsions, insensitivity to fire or pain. Sakpata, Heviesso, and Mami Water are just some of the voodoo divinities who can show up. In this remote village, surrounded by the magic atmosphere of the ceremony, we will finally understand what people mean when they say “In your churches you pray to god; in our voodoo shrine, we become god!”

In the afternoon, we cross the border into Benin and reach a village where we can attend a Zangbeto masked dance. The Zangbeto mask is covered with colored straw and represents wild, non-human spirits, such as the forces of nature and of the time before human beings. The mask-wearers belong to a



TRIP DETAILS AT-A-GLANCE

Length:	15 days
Arrive:	Lomé, Togo
Depart:	Accra, Ghana
Lodging:	14 nights hotels and guesthouses
Meals:	All meals included (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
Activity:	Cultural Adventures
Trip Level:	1 2 ③ 4 5 6 Rugged road travel, cultural exploration, easy walks

HIGHLIGHTS

- Traditional Ashanti culture, with its kente cloth, bead-makers, and elaborate funerary rites
- The surreal voodoo world of the Togo and Benin coasts
- Elmina Castle, the “talking drums” of the Dagomba, the Tamberma people and their castles of clay
- Vibrant Akwasidæ and Egungun Mask festivals on every departure





secret society and keep their identity hidden, as the non-initiated cannot know who they are. When Zangbeto comes out, it is an important event for the village. Its performance guarantees protection against bad spirits and malicious people. The spinning movement of the mask symbolizes the spiritual cleaning of the village, and Zangbeto also performs miracles to prove its powers. We continue to Ouidah for overnight at Hotel Casa del Papa...BLD
Approximate driving time: 4 hours

DAY 4 OUIDAH

Considered the capital town of the African voodoo, Ouidah was conquered by the Dahomey army during the 18th century and become one of West Africa's main slave ports. The town has Afro-Portuguese architecture and a Python Temple that faces the Catholic cathedral. The laid-back attitude of the locals blends in harmoniously with the sound of waves from the sea and the rhythm of the drums—Ouidah has a timeless atmosphere well described by Bruce Chatwin in his book *The Vice-Roy of Ouidah*. In the morning, we'll enjoy a visit of the town, and in the afternoon have time to relax on the golden beach of our hotel, visit fishing villages devoted to salt production, or make an excursion on the Mono River's mangrove ecosystem. Overnight at Hotel Casa del Papa... BLD

DAY 5 GANVIE / ABOMEY / GELEDE DANCING MASKS

A few miles north of Cotonou, we board a motorized boat to cross Lake Nokwe and reach Ganvie, the largest and most beautiful African village on stilts. The approximately 25,000 inhabitants of the Tofinou ethnic group build their huts on teak stilts in this lake, covering the roofs with a thick layer of leaves. Fishing is their main activity, and Ganvie has managed to preserve its traditions and environment despite the long human presence and the lake is not over-fished. Life unfolds each day around the canoes that men, women, and children guide with ease using brightly colored poles. It is with these canoes that men fish, women deliver goods to the market and children go to school and play.



We then head to Abomey, where we attend a Gelede dancing masks event. The Gelede is both a cult, a secret society, and a mask. First of all, it is the cult of Oudua, the great divinity, the old mother and the Mother Earth. Gelede is also the daughter of Ougun, the god of iron, and one of the main gods in southern Benin's voodoo religion. But the Gelede is also the secret society that holds the Gelede masks and organizes special dances. Gelede performances recall our western "theater" in which each mask represents a character, often humoristic or ironic. This theatrical aspect of the masks mimicking short stories has the function of educating, not simply entertaining the village. Gelede masks have feminine features but are worn by men dressed up like women and dancing incredible performances, sometimes a chorus made up of more than 20 singers dancing in a large circle, with two big drums in the middle. The surrounding public, happy and excited, sings along, laughing and clapping

hands. Colors dominate the scene with the dancers dressed up and moving all the time. Overnight at Hotel Sun City...BLD
Approximate driving time: 4 hours

DAY 6

ABOMEY / DASSA / EGUN MASK DANCE

The Dahomey Kingdom maintained its power by way of a permanent state of war, which allowed kings to capture prisoners and then sell them as slaves. The royal Dahomey army also included a female troop famous for its boldness and aggressive fighting spirit. Historians like to emphasize the “secular” aspect of the Dahomey kings’ rule. However, even though the king was considered neither a god nor a priest, many human sacrifices were performed on the kings’ graves on special occasions. The power was exercised in a rational way, easy to understand also for a European, the proof being that the kings of France and of the Dahomey interchanged diplomatic representatives at the end of the 18th century. This morning we’ll walk the living streets of Abomey, meeting the descendant of families related to the old kingdom—a journey that will take us back to the glorious days of the Dahomey Kingdom.

We then head to Dassa, which was the capital of an ancient kingdom founded by Olofin in 1385. Here we witness the amazing Egun mask dance. The Egungun is a very powerful secret society, and Egun masks are considered to be the reincarnation of deceased people and are known and feared for their aggressiveness and their unpredictable way of moving around. Intensively colored, the masks are covered with a multitude of pieces of cloth in many shades of red. The men wearing the mask costumes emerge from the forest and form a procession through the streets of the village, leaping toward any foolish spectator who dares getting too close. And nobody wants to be touched by the Egun because any contact carries the danger of death. Better watch out! When masks arrive, they perform a kind of bull fight designed to scare the crowd, but in truth they are actually greeted with bursts of laughter! Overnight at Hotel Jeko...BLD

Approximate driving time: 2 hours

DAY 7

FETISH HILLS / TANEKA VILLAGES

Today is a long and intense day. On our way north, we stop at the Dankoli Fetish, an important place for the voodoo cult: thousands of little sticks are pushed in this fetish as testimony of the countless prayers for a good harvest, a happy wedding, an easy delivery, success at school, and so on. Once the prayers are answered, people come back to sacrifice what they had promised—a goat, a chicken, or a cow, according to the nature of the prayer. Traces of blood, palm alcohol, or oil on the fetish are proof that many prayers have been answered.

In the afternoon we explore a few old Taneka villages located on a mountain with the same name. The villages are made up of round adobe huts covered with a conical roof protected on the top by a terra cotta pot. The Taneka have been living on an archaeological site for centuries and it looks as if the first



“This was an unforgettable trip, featuring cultural exchanges and visits to unbelievable festivals and sites. Every day held something of interest, and we had the benefit of meeting friendly people and participating in authentic festivals such as the tribute to the Ashanti king and the voodoo ceremony.”

Sara K., Las Cruces, NM



Itinerary (cont'd)



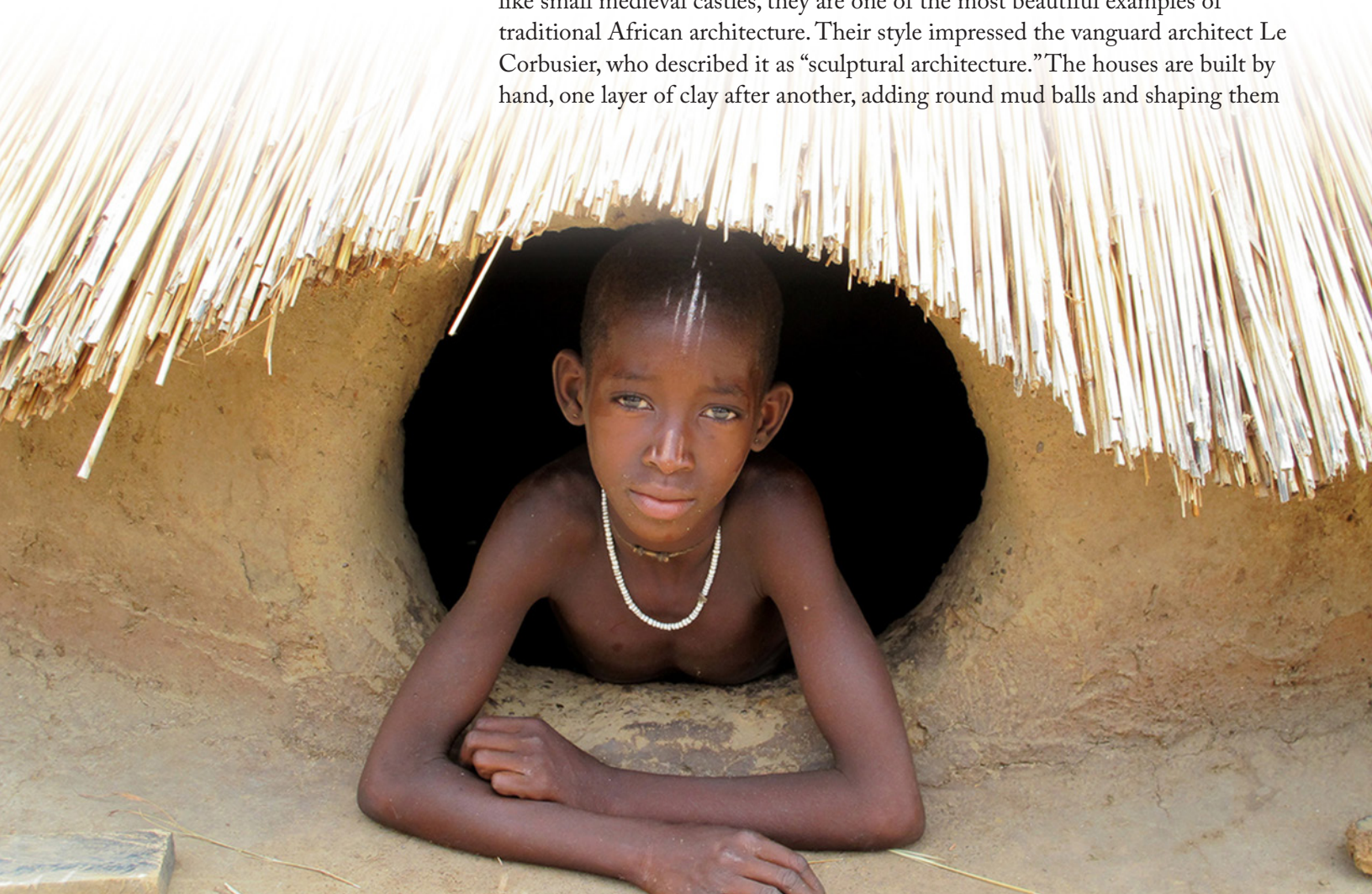
inhabitants (from Kabye tribe origins) moved to the mountain during the 9th century. Since then, other ethnic groups have joined, thus forming a melting pot where even though each group kept its own cults and initiation rites, common religious and political institutions were defined.

In the upper part of the village we may come across some young initiated, who wear only magical amulets, and by the fetish priests who only cover themselves with a goat skin and always carry a long pipe. The Taneka believe that in order to become a man, it is necessary to combine time, patience, and many sacrifices. Initiation is a lifetime process until life itself becomes a rite of passage, therefore life should not be conditioned by a “before” and “after” but rather as following a continuous path. Overnight at Hotel Tata Somba or similar...BLD
Approximate driving time: 8 hours

DAY 8

ADOBE CASTLES / SOKODE, TOGO

We enter the land of the Somba, who live in fortified adobe dwellings. Shaped like small medieval castles, they are one of the most beautiful examples of traditional African architecture. Their style impressed the vanguard architect Le Corbusier, who described it as “sculptural architecture.” The houses are built by hand, one layer of clay after another, adding round mud balls and shaping them



according to the plan of the house, a kind of sensual gesture mixing strength, care, and beauty. Large shrines of phallic form at the entrance of their homes show their animistic beliefs. With permission from the elders we enter their homes to better understand their way of life. Their houses are projections of their cosmology: the ground floor, with its darkness, represents death and is the place of the ancestors; the second floor, open to the sky, represents life and is the place where grandmothers keep babies until they “find out” which ancestor has come back as the new life—only then the baby will be allowed to come down from the terrace. All family food supplies and stock are kept inside the fortified house, for safety reasons in case of attack by enemies. For centuries these populations have been seeking refuge on the Atakora Mountains to escape Muslim slave traders coming from the north.



We drive south and cross the border of Togo via Ketao. In the evening, we arrive at the villages of the Tem tribe to watch the fire dance. At the center of the village, a large fire lights up the faces of the participants as they dance to the hypnotic beat of drums and eventually step into the glowing embers of the fire, picking up the burning coals, passing them over their bodies, and sometimes putting them in their mouths—all without hurting themselves or showing any sign of pain. It’s difficult to explain such a performance. Is it matter of courage? Self suggestion? Magic? Maybe it really is the fetishes that protect them from the fire. Overnight at Hotel Lamirelle or similar...BLD

Approximate driving time: 5 hours

DAY 9

BASSAR PEOPLE / DAGOMBA VILLAGES, GHANA / TAMALE

We meet the Bassar people who developed traditional iron-producing techniques and have managed to preserve them up to this day. They will show us their old clay blast-furnace and tell us about the fusion process. Here, empirical knowledge and magical beliefs blend together, turning this process into an almost alchemical experience.

In a rarely visited savanna region of Ghana, we find several traditional villages of the Dagomba people. Their homes are round clay huts with thatched roofs. The village chief’s house is characteristic, as it is the largest and the only one with a central pole supporting the roof. It is where the elders’ council meets. The entry to the chief’s home is nicely framed with pieces of colored burnt clay. If we are lucky, we may have access to one of last witches’ villages in Ghana. The “witches” have been exiled from their villages because they were found guilty of terrible events such as the death of a teenager, a mysterious disease, or a bad harvest, and they now live all together in a specific place. Overnight at Gariba Lodge in Tamale, the capital of Northern Ghana...BLD

Approximate driving time: 6 hours





DAY 10 FOREST MONKEYS / TECHIMAN

The scenery changes completely as we head from a brown, rolling landscape dotted with baobabs to a land of flowering trees. As the landscape changes, so does the ethnic makeup of the region. In the Brong Afo region, we leave the main road and follow a track to a sacred forest. The people living in this region consider the mona and colobus monkeys as their totems. As a result, they have one of the largest communities of these species in the world. Walking in the forest through giant trees with emerald-green light filtering down through the forest, we will meet many of these sacred monkeys. Overnight at the Encom Hotel in the market town of Techiman...BLD

Approximate driving time: 6 hours

DAY 11 KUMASI / ASHANTI FUNERAL

We drive through lush hills to Kumasi, the spiritual and historical center of the flourishing Ashanti Kingdom. Until the end of the 19th century, when the British annexed Ashanti land and created the British colony called the Gold Coast, the Ashanti people were one of the most powerful nations in Africa, and today the Ashanti traditions are still strong. We visit the market as well as the fascinating Ashanti Cultural Center, with its rich collection of Ashanti artifacts housed in a full reproduction of a traditional Ashanti



house. Kumasi today has nearly 2.5 million inhabitants and a fantastic central market, Kejetia Market, one of the biggest in West Africa. Every kind of Ashanti craft is found here, along with tropical fruits, vegetables, and everyday goods. Afterwards, we hope to attend a traditional Ashanti funeral, a festive event held in a local stadium or perhaps in the courtyard of a school. Depending on who is being honored, there can be a thousand attendees, all wearing the beautiful black and red robes the Ashanti wear for funeral celebrations. We use the English word "funeral" for these events, but in Ashanti culture, funerals are important social celebrations, often held months or even a

year after the person has passed away. It is an occasion for relatives, friends, and well-wishers to bring presents to the family and to socialize. Upon our arrival, we are introduced to the deceased's family and we proceed through the receiving line, where we will be made to feel welcome by the family. An Ashanti chief is usually in attendance, surrounded by his court, under the shade cast by large, colorful Ashanti umbrellas. Drumming and dancing can last late into the evening, but we attend for just a few hours to enjoy this unforgettable cultural event. Overnight at hotel in Kumasi...BLD

Approximate driving time: 3 hours

DAY 12

KUMASI / AKWASIDAE FESTIVAL

Today we explore Kumasi, with its colonial buildings around the market and hand-painted shop signs and then head to the fascinating Royal Palace Museum, where we can see the unique collection of massive gold ornaments worn by the Ashanti king and court. Later, we attend an Akwasidae Festival. Overnight at hotel in Kumasi...BLD

Akwasidae Festival: There are certain days of each year on the Ashanti calendar set aside for a celebration at the Royal Palace. This ceremony is called Akwasidae. During the celebration, the Ashanti king, the Asantehene, is seated under a spectacular umbrella of colorful, draped cloth and is wearing vividly colored traditional royal robes and massive pieces of gold royal jewelry that are centuries old (Ashanti gold jewelry and masks are considered masterpieces of African art). In front of the king, a narrow passage is formed, made up of dignitaries of various functions: ritual sword bearers, guards armed with muskets, knife bearers responsible for carrying out executions, and carriers of beautiful fans made of ostrich feathers. Seated at the side of the king are the Ashanti elders and the advisors under the authority of the Royal Speaker, who holds in his hands the scepters and symbols of Ashanti power covered in gold. The ceremony includes a procession of royal attendants who bring forth





gifts, storytellers who recite the history of the Ashanti king, drummers, and trumpeters playing horns of ivory. Dancers in vivid red costumes perform an erotic dance. This traditional ceremony takes place in one of the last African Kingdoms to have kept its ancient rituals alive. We will enjoy the splendor, the flavor, and the atmosphere of these grand monarchs of the forests of yesteryear.

DAY 13

ELMINA / ELMINA CASTLE

We head to Elmina Castle (St. George de la Mina), a dramatic white-washed fortress perched right at the water's edge. It was the first building constructed by Europeans in sub-Saharan Africa. On our guided walk through the castle, we enter its evocative slave dungeons, peek through the "Door of No Return" that the captives passed through as they were taken to awaiting ships, and look out over the coast from behind the old cannons on the roof. The castle was built by the Portuguese in the late 15th century, first as a refueling base for ships going around Cape Horn, later for trade in Ghana's natural wealth of gold, of great interest to Europeans, and then for the Atlantic slave trade. Outside the castle is a wonderful fishing village with a harbor full of huge, colorfully painted fishing boats. The alleys in the old part of town have a lively atmosphere harkening back to a time when Elmina was a thriving African trading post hosting merchants from all over the world. Overnight at the Coconut Grove Hotel, our beachfront lodge in the town of Elmina...BLD



Elmina Castle: Portuguese traders passed this way in search of trade routes to Asia, stopping originally in this natural port just to buy food and water. They soon discovered Ghana's major natural resource, gold, and a bustling trade in gold between Europe and Africa began. It is said that the gold that backed the currency of the rulers of the Venetian Empire came from the Elmina Castle. The original building was constructed in 1482 by Portuguese traders with stone brought from Europe. A tiny Portuguese church was built in the middle of the castle's courtyard in the mid 16th century. The castle was then captured by soldiers of the Dutch West Indies Company and turned into a major center for the Atlantic slave trade, set in motion by the Caribbean sugar boom and the demand for labor in New World colonies. The later and much larger expansion of St. George's in 1637 by the Dutch is what exists today. Some 10 million Africans were sold into slavery between the 1500s and 1800s from such forts along West Africa's coast, bartered by their own tribal kings and chiefs to European traders. Elmina eventually fell to the British, who in 1833 outlawed the slave trade at home and in their colonial possessions. The castle was restored in 1957 after Ghana gained its independence from Britain.

DAY 14

KAKUM NATIONAL PARK / CAPE COAST / ACCRA

This morning we experience the thrill of a "canopy walk" in the deep rainforest of Kakum National Park. This is one of the world's highest suspended rope bridges held by steel cables. From 120 feet above the ground, we'll enjoy a stunning bird's-eye view of the rainforest. We then head to Cape Coast castle, built by the Swedish in 1653. Between 1657 to 1664, it changed hands many times as it was conquered by the Danes, the Dutch, the Fanti (a local tribe), the Swedes, and finally the British. Today, it hosts a museum on the history of slave trade.

We head up the coast of the Gulf of Guinea past fishing villages to Accra, the capital of Ghana. Accra has maintained its unique identity despite the fast-paced development currently underway in this intriguing African city. Today we stop by the Kwame Nkrumah Park and Mausoleum, created to honor Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, who led Ghana to independence from Britain in 1956. Overnight at La Villa Boutique in Accra. This evening, we gather for a festive Farewell Dinner...BLD

Approximate driving time: 5 hours

DAY 15

ACCRA / DEPART

We take a trip to the old James Town section and the Accra seafront, with its harbor full of fishing boats. One special visit is to Accra's famous coffin makers. These wood handcrafted "fantasy" coffins are in the shape of fruits, animals, fish, cars, airplanes—and designs only limited by the intended occupant's imagination. Accra's flamboyant coffin designs have been collected and shown in museums. Day rooms will be held for us at our hotel until 6 pm. In the evening, transfer to the Accra Airport for departure on homeward-bound flights...BLD



"This was a very worthwhile and horizon-expanding trip. This part of Africa is not a heavily-traveled tourist destination, and tourist facilities are often basic, but the wealth of cultures, tribes, and customs makes this a great trip for those who have already experienced the more 'popular' Africa destinations."

—Jack S., Evergreen, CO

Trip Cost, Payment & Insurance

TRIP COST

Prices are per person, valid through 2024

\$7995 (6-12 members)

\$8595 (3-5 members)

Single supplement: \$1200

2025 Trip Cost: Please call for details

To offer the lowest possible cost, our trips are priced according to the number of participants on the trip. All costs are per person, based on double occupancy. If you wish to have a single room, you must pay the single supplement fee. Please note that Wilderness Travel staff, or guests of Wilderness Travel such as travel writers, photographers, or leaders-in-training, are not included in the tier pricing count.

CURRENCY EXCHANGE RATE

Due to the volatility of currency markets, we can only offer the most competitive pricing on our West African trips by partially tying the trip cost directly to the value of the Euro. In the late spring of 2023, when we set the rates for our 2024 program, the US Dollar equaled 1.0 Euros. While in most years, no price changes are ever necessary, if there were to be a significant change in exchange rates, we may be forced to raise or able to lower our trip cost; if so, your final invoice, sent two weeks before your final payment is due, will reflect the difference. Please note that the calculation will not be a straight proration. While most of the trip cost is paid in Euros, the remainder of our expenses are paid in US Dollars. The overall effect is to moderate any change; thus, if the Euro were to rise in value, the trip cost would rise less than might be expected, and if the Euro were to fall, the drop in land price would also be less than might be expected.

TRIP COST INCLUDES

- Expert leadership of a Wilderness Travel Trip Leader and local guides
- Accommodations in hotels
- All meals included as indicated in the Detailed Itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
- Soft drinks and beer with meals
- Mineral water in the vehicle

Land transportation, airport transfersLand transportation, airport transfersLand transportation, airport transfers

TRIP COST DOES NOT INCLUDE

International airfare, any meals not specified after each itinerary day, airport departure taxes, optional tipping or gratuities to leaders or staff, any additional hotel nights made necessary by airline schedule changes or other factors, pre-trip expenses such as medical immunizations (if any), travel insurance, or passports and visas; and other expenses of a personal nature (alcoholic beverages, laundry, etc.).

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

At time of reservation: \$600

90 days prior to departure: Balance

CANCELLATION AND TRANSFER FEE SCHEDULE

Up to 91 days prior to departure: No charge!

61-90 days prior to departure: 25% of trip cost

46-60 days prior to departure: 50% of trip cost

45 days or less: 100% of trip cost

TRAVEL INSURANCE

We highly recommend you purchase travel insurance. You can take advantage of a comprehensive Travel Protection Plan designed for Wilderness Travel by Travelex, or purchase other insurance on your own. See our website for details: www.wildernesstravel.com/insurance

Arrival & Departure

Upon confirming your trip reservation, we will send you a Welcome Packet that includes a list of documents (passport, visas, etc.) required for your trip. Please feel free to call if you would like this information before making your air arrangements.

ARRIVAL & MEETING PLACE

Lomé, Togo

Suggested Airport: Lomé-Tokoin International Airport (LFW)

Suggested Date & Time: Day 1, anytime

Meeting Place: A complimentary transfer is provided from Lomé-Tokoin International Airport to 2 Fevrier Hotel for all trip members arriving on Day 1. Your Trip Leader or a WT representative will meet you outside the customs area and will be holding a Wilderness Travel sign.

Please note that flight schedules to West Africa change constantly and extra overnights before or after your trip dates may be required.

DEPARTURE

Accra, Ghana

Suggested Airport: Kotoka International Airport (ACC)

Suggested Date & Time: Day 15, after 7:00 pm

On the last day of the trip, day rooms are available at La Villa Boutique until 6:00 pm. A complimentary airport transfer will be provided for all flights departing on Day 15.

INTERNATIONAL AIR TRAVEL

You are responsible for making your own arrangements for flights to and from West Africa. Airlines with the most convenient schedules for this trip include:

Delta Airlines

www.delta.com

British Airways

www.britishairways.com

Lufthansa

www.lufthansa.com

There are many online consolidators for booking travel, but for more personal help arranging air transport, you can contact Exito Travel at 1-800-655-4053 in the US or 1-800-670-2605 in Canada. They are very adept at putting flight itineraries together, to even the most far-flung places. More information can be found on Exito's website at www.exitotravel.com.

Depending on your routing, it is necessary to depart from the US one or possibly two days prior to Day 1 of the trip itinerary. The name on your airline ticket must match the name on your passport exactly, and your passport must be valid for at least six months after your date of return to the US.

Please do not purchase your tickets until you are confirmed on the trip. Once your tickets have been purchased, please send us a copy of your airline schedule so we can reserve your airport transfers. It is your responsibility to ensure your flight times coordinate with the arrival and departure logistics for this trip.

Trip Leader

Wilderness Travel Trip Leaders have a passion and a joy for creating an unforgettable journey. We are extremely proud of them and the incredible travel experiences they make possible. For more information about our Trip Leaders, including client comments about them and which specific trips they will be leading, please visit our webpage and click on “Trip Leaders”: www.wildernesstravel.com/trip/ghana-togo-benin-festival-tour/



SENA GATRI

Sena Gatri was born in Akossombo, Ghana, and has been a guide in West Africa since 2007. He studied English at the University of Lome and is also fluent in French, and understands different local dialects, which include Fanti, Twi, Achanti, Ga, and Ewe. He loves to travel and read, and makes it a point to create a wonderful atmosphere for guests to explore this diverse region in Africa.

Trip Details

WHAT THE TRIP IS LIKE

This trip is rated Level 3, moderate. Tourist facilities are very limited in the remote savanna regions and small villages we visit.

There are few first-class hotels anywhere outside the cities, but rest assured we always try to obtain the best possible. For the most part, the hotels are comfortable, but they are very basic. Hotel air conditioning in West Africa does not cool a room to American standards of comfort, and may not work sometimes, and there may be occasions where the hotel electricity goes off for periods of time. We travel by one minivan or by two 4WD vehicles, depending on weather and road conditions. Our support staff travels in another vehicle with cooking supplies. On our road journeys, we make frequent "outdoor bathroom" stops and you have ample opportunity to stroll around villages and markets to see and experience the differences in architecture, dress, and culture among the many tribes in West Africa. On travel days, our staff prepares a lunch for us ahead of time in the morning and we enjoy it in a roadside restaurant en route.

Although we are accompanied by a support crew staffed by experienced veterans of West Africa, participants should understand that this trip involves long drives, lack of proper bathroom facilities, hot and humid weather, and somewhat basic hotels outside of Accra. The physical shape you are in will be an important factor in your enjoyment of your trip. We recommend you bring Gatorade-type powdered mixes or packets of OHS (oral hydration salts) to add to your water bottle from time to time on really hot days. Dehydration is a serious risk and should be prepared for.

There are dangers inherent in any expedition traveling to remote regions. These dangers include everything from the possibility of a vehicle accident or sickness without access to the means of rapid evacuation. The availability of medical supplies, or the adequacy of medical attention once provided, cannot be guaranteed and cannot be expected to

measure up to Western standards. If you have any chronic health problems (respiratory or cardiac problems, a bad back, or diabetes), we recommend you consider a different trip.

WEATHER

Ghana, Togo, and Benin have very hot, humid climates that vary very little year round. Mid-day temperatures can be in the 90s, with little cooling in the evening. In the inland regions, the wind can sometimes stir up dust storms. Rain is unlikely in the areas we visit, but possible. The intense heat can be very wearing, and it doesn't cool down much at night. We don't recommend this trip for people who can't tolerate humid conditions.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT TRIP

Adventure travel often involves exotic destinations, unusual levels of physical exertion, or activities you may not have participated in previously. We work hard to help you choose the right trip for you, paying attention to your individual interests, abilities, and needs. If you have questions about the level of comfort or any of the activities described in this itinerary, please call Wilderness Travel at 1-800-368-2794 and ask for the Africa Manager or email us at africa@wildernesstravel.com.

REFERENCES

We'd be happy to put you in touch with a past client that has traveled with us on this or a similar trip.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

At www.wildernesstravel.com, you can book your trip online or find out about added departures, last-minute deals, and one-time Limited Edition adventures that aren't listed in our catalog. You can also access our complete library of detailed itineraries filled with enticing photos and videos, read bios of our Trip Leaders, find descriptions of trip accommodations, and check real-time availability of any trips that interest you.

Average Daily Max/Min °F												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Accra	90/73	90/75	90/75	90/75	88/75	84/73	82/73	84/73	84/72	86/73	88/73	88/73
Lomé	88/73	90/75	90/75	90/75	88/75	84/73	82/72	82/72	84/72	86/73	88/73	88/73
Rainfall - Inches												
Accra	0.5	1.3	2.6	4.0	5.5	8.0	2.8	1.4	2.7	3.5	1.8	0.9
Lomé	0.5	1.7	3.8	5.2	6.7	9.4	4.0	1.9	4.0	4.8	2.2	0.9



WILDERNESS TRAVEL HAS BEEN AWARDED:

Best Travel Specialists in the World: *Condé Nast Traveler*, 2024, 4-time winner

World's Best Tour Operators: *Travel + Leisure*, 11-time winner

Best Wildlife, Hiking & Walking Trips: *AFAR Magazine*, 3 years in a row

Best Adventure Travel Companies: *USA Today*

Trip of the Year: *Outside Magazine*, 9-time winner

50 Tours of a Lifetime: *National Geographic Traveler*, 9 years in a row

Best Adventure Travel Companies: *National Geographic Adventure*, 3-time winner

Please be advised that California has established a Travel Consumer Restitution Fund under the California Seller of Travel Law that took effect January 1, 1996. This fund is designed to protect consumers from unscrupulous practices by discount airfare ticket sellers or air charter operators. Unfortunately, this law does not cover non-California residents and, even in the case of California residents, it does not cover any foreign travel where the foreign "providers of transportation or travel services" are not in compliance with the Sellers of Travel Law (compliance being defined as registered as a Seller of Travel in California and a participant in the Travel Consumer Restitution Fund). Thus none of Wilderness Travel's tours qualify and we are required by law to advise each client that they are not covered by the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires sellers of travel to maintain a trust account or bond. This business has a trust account. California Seller of Travel #100769640

While as accurate as possible at the time of printing, this itinerary should be considered an approximate indication of the schedule and scope of activities and trip routing, rather than an inflexible schedule of events; it is subject to change due to circumstances beyond our control. This trip is subject to the Limitation of Liability and all the terms and conditions as detailed in the General Information section of the Wilderness Travel Catalog.

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