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# Tour Notes

Ghana, Togo, and Benin Explorer

Tour Duration – 25 Days



## Tour Rating

Fitness ●●●○○ | Off the Beaten Track ●●●○○ | Culture ●●●●● | History ●●●○○ | Wildlife ●○○○○

## Tour Rating

Busy

## Tour Highlights

- ✓ Immerse yourself in the culture of the Ashanti people in Kumasi
- ✓ Take a trip back in time and visit the slave castles of Elmina and Cape Coast
- ✓ Enjoy the spectacular sunrise before heading to Kakum National Park for a canopy walk
- ✓ Explore the buzzing Togolese capital, Lome and take a stroll around the city's unique fetish markets
- ✓ Experience a traditional voodoo ceremony
- ✓ Visit the beach and the sombre 'Gate of No Return,' the point from which slaves left Africa for the New World.
- ✓ Take a boat to the stilt village of Ganvie
- ✓ Learn about the fascinating history of the kingdom of Dahomey at Abomey



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## Tour Map



## Tour Essentials

- Accommodation:** Comfortable hotel accommodation  
**Included Meals:** Daily breakfast (B), plus lunches (L) and dinners (D) as shown in the itinerary  
**Group Size:** Maximum group size 12  
**Start Point:** Accra – you can arrive any time on day 1  
**End Point:** Lome – you can depart after 1930hrs on day 25  
**Transport:** 4WD or minibuses  
**Country Visited:** Ghana, Togo, and Benin



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### **Ghana, Togo, and Benin Explorer**

*If you would like to experience life how it is for the locals during your time in West Africa and not just follow the well-trodden tourist routes, then this tour is perfect for you. Mixing with the local people at every opportunity and experiencing daily life in this wonderfully welcoming region with our expert guides, opens doors and experiences that last a lifetime. There are so many positives to embrace here. As we travel through Ghana, then into Togo and onto Benin, we discover ancient cultural sites, beautiful beaches and learn about the region's dark historical past. A truly fascinating journey and the perfect opportunity to explore a corner of Africa which is still largely undiscovered.*

### **Tour itinerary notes**

While our intention is to adhere to the day-by-day itinerary as printed below, a degree of flexibility is built in. Overnight stops may vary from those suggested and on occasions alternative accommodation, of a similar standard to that named below, will be used.

### **Tour Guide**

Our guides are a key strength, chosen for their knowledge of and passion for the areas in which they work. All of our guides are carefully hand-picked, and are not just passing through these countries, but are usually locally born. Unlike some companies it should be noted we do not send a guide or tour leader from Undiscovered Destinations in the UK as we have every confidence in our locally appointed representative who is responsible for operating the tour on our behalf. Where possible you will have the same guide throughout your trip but on occasions it may be necessary to change the guide at one or more points during the tour.

## *Itinerary*

### **Day 1: Arrival in Accra**

Arrive in Accra and transfer to your hotel. Depending on your time of arrival, there may be time to explore this vibrant African capital. Overnight Alisa Hotel or similar. (D)

### **Accra**

Ghana's capital is one of Africa's biggest cities, with the inevitable traffic, noise, and mayhem. Despite being a fast growing, lively city, the people are friendly and welcoming and maintain many aspects of their tribal African roots. The National Museum houses one of West Africa's best ethnographic, historical and art collections, which gives a good introduction to Ghana and surrounding areas. The old quarter of Jamestown is the heart of the old colonial town (British protected area) and was inhabited by the Ga people, who founded Accra in the 16th century. There are numerous bustling markets to explore where you can discover everything from food, clothing, and household goods to traditional crafts. There is even an area for the fabrication of special coffins that take the forms of fish, fruit, animals, or your favourite car, traditionally based on the occupation of the deceased, but customisable by prior request.

### **Day 2: Accra**

You have the choice for breakfast this morning; you can have a light breakfast at the hotel or try a local breakfast from one of the food stalls at Makola Market, one of Accra's best local markets. Almost everything is sold here from herbal remedies, traditional cloth, jewellery and food to mobile phones, TVs, and sound systems.



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Later we visit the Artist Alliance Gallery on the beach front, showcasing traditional and contemporary art and artifacts from Ghana and neighbouring countries. From here we set off for the 'fantasy coffins' of Teshie Nungua. After a burial, a celebration follows and it is believed that the departed move on to another world and the decorated coffins may represent the occupation of the deceased, or something that was important to them, ranging from cars and cigarette packets to crocodiles and beer bottles! During our visit we have the opportunity to meet these infamous coffin makers. This afternoon we head to Independence Square where we find the enclosed flame of African liberation, lit by Kwame Nkrumah in 1961, and head to the Kwame Nkrumah National Park, the final resting place of Ghana's founder before heading to Jamestown, one of Accra's poorest suburbs, yet steeped in history. Visit Fort James, and see the interesting Brazilian stone houses, built by free enslaved Africans who came over from Brazil after the abolition of the slave trade. Our evening is dedicated to meeting locals who are trying to change the lives of youths through boxing. Overnight Alisa Hotel or similar. (BLD)

**Day 3: Krobo Traditional Beads and Wli Waterfalls** (approx. 5 hours total driving)

This morning we leave Accra and head towards the Volta region. Our first stop is Krobo, renowned for their traditional bead jewellery. We visit a family-run compound to learn about this ancient bead-making process and have a go at making our own! We continue to the Volta region, crossing the White Volta River towards Wli and Wli Falls. We visit the Wli waterfalls, the most amazing in the area, located on the border between Togo and Ghana. The walk to Wli waterfalls is approx. 45 minutes following a flat path. At the falls there is an opportunity for swimming, or if you choose to, you can hike to the upper falls before we return to Wli and our hotel. Overnight Wli Water Heights or similar. (BLD)

**Day 4: Mount Afajato and Tafi Atome** (approx. 45 mins driving)

An early start this morning as we set off to Mount Afajato. At an elevation of 885m, it is Ghana's highest mountain, and we spend this morning hiking (approx. 2 hours in and out). This afternoon visits the Monkey Sanctuary of Tafi Atome. We take a walk in the forest to see the Monas and Colobus monkeys. We head back to where we crossed the river to Akosombo. Overnight Akosombo Continental Hotel or similar. (BLD)

**Day 5: To Kumasi** (approx. 5 hours driving)

Our journey today will take us into the beautiful Akuapem hills. At the top of the range is the Aburi Botanical Gardens, founded by the British in 1890. We spend some time in the gardens, enjoying the wide variety of indigenous and exotic flora and the spectacular views of Accra. We visit Aburi craft village, a short distance from the gardens where traditional African drums, sculptures and crafts have been carved for generations. We head to Korifuda for lunch and a visit to their famous traditional bead market before continuing to Kumasi. Overnight Noda Hotel or similar. (BLD)

**Day 6: Local Villages of Kumasi**

Today we mix old and new visiting some of the ancient communities and young vibrant designers. Our first stop is Adanwomasie, the birthplace of Ghana's rich colourful Kente cloth. After spending some time here with the locals, we head to Ntunso where adinkra cloth and symbols originate. We have lunch in a local restaurant before heading to Adum, the commercial centre of Kumasi. Explore Adum and visit Kejetia market before transferring to our hotel. This evening is at leisure, or you may wish to experience the local nightlife and music in Kumasi. Overnight Noda Hotel or similar. (BLD)

**Day 7: Ashanti Kingdom** (approx. 3 hours driving)

Early start as we head to the Manhyia Palace, home of the Asantehene King of the Ashanti and the ruler of the powerful Asanteman kingdom. After a fascinating journey through the history of the Ashanti people, we head south to the villages of Bonkro and Breku where we have a lunch that has been prepared by a local chef.



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After lunch we spend time in the local community, visiting a local school and meeting the Kuapa Kokkoo farmers, who grow and sell cocoa. We learn about the chocolate-making process and how it is used for production of chocolate and soap, among other things. Overnight Picathartes Guesthouse or similar. (BLD)

#### **Day 8: Community Life and a Cooking Lesson**

This morning we assist with the preparation of a local breakfast, and during breakfast decide what local dishes you would like to have a go at cooking yourself! We visit to the local markets to buy our ingredients for dinner before heading back to our hotel for a relaxed afternoon. This evening we head back into the village to prepare and cook our evening meal. Overnight Picathartes Guesthouse or similar. (BLD)

#### **Day 9: Cape Coast Castle, Baobab Foundation and Batik (approx. 3 hours driving)**

Today we bid farewell to our new friends and set off south towards Elmina in Ghana's central region. We stop at the town of Assin Manso and the Ndonkor Nsua (Enslaved African river). This is where enslaved Africans were checked for fitness before being shipped to America. We then make our way to Cape Coast, following the same route used by the slaves, to Cape Coast Castle (UNESCO) where we learn about the recent history of Ghana. Lunch will be taken at a restaurant operated by Baobab Children's Foundation, an organisation focused on helping and improving the lives of children in this region. This afternoon immerse yourself into true African art with a traditional batik making workshop. Overnight Brenu Beach Resort or similar. (BLD)

#### **Elmina**

Elmina is best known for its Castle of St George, built in 1482 by the Portuguese and occupied by the Dutch and British in the following centuries. The Castle and its museum are of considerable interest and the town is now a colourful thriving fishing port where hundreds of colourfully painted wooden fishing canoes are anchored. The best time to see the port is in the morning when fishermen arrive back with their catches, and traders crowd the area. In addition to the Castle of St George Elmina boasts another – the smaller Fort St Jago, situated on top of a hill as a protective measure against the castle being bombarded from above. There are also numerous animistic shrines throughout the town built by Posuban societies to protect the fishermen.

#### **Day 10: Kakum National Park**

An early start today as we enjoy the spectacular sunrise before heading to Kakum National Park for a canopy walk. At the border of the forest, we find the International Stingless Bee Project, and learn about their importance to our ecosystem. Continue to a local farm to learn about traditional uses of the palm tree, including palm wine and 'Akpateshi,' a local hard gin of varying strengths, believed to be around 70%. Stop for lunch before heading back to our beachfront hotel for an afternoon at leisure. Overnight Brenu Beach Resort or similar. (BLD)

#### **Kakum National Park,**

Covers a surface of 357 sq. km of mostly undisturbed virgin rainforest. It is found at the easternmost extent of the Guinean Forest of West Africa and reputed to be one of the most biologically diverse ecosystems in the African continent. Park rangers are here specifically trained in the medical and cultural significance of the local plants.

#### **Day 11: Brenu Akyinim Community, Nzulezu Stilt Village and Ankasa Reserve (approx. 5 hours driving)**

Today we head West towards the Ivory Coast border and Ankasa Reserve. We spend time visiting the local community and school, before continuing to Beyin for lunch. After lunch we take a leisurely canoe ride through the Amasuri wetlands and Nzulezu Stilt village. After spending time meeting the locals, we set off for Ankasa Reserve which is connected to the Nini-Suhien National Park, covering a protected area of over 500sqkm of pristine rainforest. This evening there is an option for a night walk in the forest, or alternatively spend it at leisure. Overnight Ankasa Reserve Lodge or similar. (BLD)



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### Day 12: Ankasa Reserve

This morning we visit the stunning Bamboo Cathedral. Located 12kms inside the forest. To get to this remote location, we can either take mountain bikes or by car. After a morning in the forest, we head back to our hotel for lunch before an afternoon spent in the community. We visit a local school, meet with farmers, and have the chance to experience local delicacies such as Gari, pounding FuFu and a local chop bar. Overnight Ankasa Reserve Lodge or similar. (BLD)

*Optional – afternoon biking around the surrounding area or a walking trail in the forest*

### Day 13: Brenu Akyinim

After a relaxed morning we leave Ankasa and head back East to our beachfront accommodation in Brenu Akyinim. On arrival check-in to your hotel with the remainder of the afternoon at leisure. This evening enjoy dinner on the beach around a bonfire with local Ghanaian drumming keeping us entertained. Overnight Ankasa Reserve Lodge or similar. (BLD)

### Day 14: Elmina Markets and Accra (approx. 3 hours driving)

We leave Brenu Akyinim and spend a couple of hours exploring Elmina's local fishing market and the boat builders before heading to Accra and a stop at the mall, an insight to modern day life in Ghana. Later enjoy dinner and stay overnight in Accra before we continue our adventure the next day and cross the border into neighbouring Togo. Overnight Alisa Hotel or similar. (BLD)

### Day 15: Accra to Lome, Togo (approx. 5 hours driving dependant on local conditions and border checks)

After breakfast meet your driver and continue by road to the Togolese capital Lome. Depending on traffic and border formalities the drive is expected to take around 5 hours. After check-in at the hotel, the remainder of the day is free without any organised activities or sightseeing. Overnight Sarakawa Hotel or similar. (BD)

### Lome

Togo's capital is a vibrant city situated on the coast, sitting right on the international border with Ghana and with a population of just under a million. Slightly dishevelled, it is quite an atmospheric little city and is now recovering from the civil disturbances suffered by the country in the 1990s. Its origins date back to the 18th century, when it was settled by the Ewe people, one of Togo's largest ethnic groups. Like many African cities it does not have too much in the way of formal sightseeing but there are a few things worth exploring - the Grand Marche with its exuberant businesswomen known as 'Nana Benz' who monopolise the sale of cloth in Togo. Not to be missed is the fetish market, where animal parts are sold for use in traditional medicines. This is not a great place for animal lovers, with heads and body parts of everything from sharks and crocodiles to gorillas on sale but offers a fascinating insight into a belief system very different from our own. Lome has a number of buildings which date from the German occupation, most noticeable of which is a rather bizarre looking 19th century Gothic style cathedral which looks rather out of place in a West African city.

### Day 16: Lome

This morning we will begin a city tour with a visit to the lively and colourful grand Marché, or big market, with the Sacred Heart Cathedral in its midst. We then head to the fascinating- if rather gruesome- fetish market, where animal parts are sold for use in traditional medicines; Vodou healers and practitioners are on hand for consultations (please see the Notes section for more information). We then visit Artisans' village where we will see artisans weaving cloth, carving statues, making baskets, lampshades and sewing leather shoes besides much more. In the evening you can decide to rest at your hotel or if you prefer your guide can take you out into town to experience local nightlife. Overnight Sarakawa Hotel or similar. (BLD)



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**Day 17: Lome to Ouidah (Benin)** (approx. 2hr30m driving dependant on local conditions and border checks)

Today we leave Lome and head to Aneho, historically known as Little Popo. On arrival we take a pirogue across Lake Togo to Togoville on the north-eastern side of the lake. As we mix with the locals walking through the communities, we will visit the many active shrines learning their importance to the locals living here. Prior to setting off back to Aneho we also visit a shrine that commemorates the appearance of the Virgin Mary on Lake Togo in the late 1970s. After lunch we cross the border into Benin and arrive at Ouidah, a stronghold of voodoo and once an important slave port. The rest of the day is at leisure. Overnight Casa del Papa Hotel or similar. (BLD)

**Day 18: Ouidah – Cotonou** (approx. 1 hour driving)

After breakfast we set off for our tour of Ouidah. We visit the python temple, where snakes are venerated as representations of gods, and head to the beach and the sombre 'Gate of No Return,' the point from which slaves left Africa for the New World. You will also experience a private Voodoo Ceremony during your time at Segbe. After lunch we continue to Cotonou. The rest of the day is at leisure. Overnight Hotel Casa de Cielo or similar. (BLD)

**Voodoo**

Voodoo, or Vodoun as it is known here, is one of the most important religions in this part of West Africa. Forget what you may have seen on TV about it being a form of black magic – here it has the same legitimacy as any other belief system and has been adopted as an official religion by Benin. Voodoo is a complex and intricate way of seeing of the world, with literally hundreds of different gods responsible for various areas of daily life – some are benevolent, some less so, and in order to communicate with them and ask for favours local people will seek the assistance of followers, or adepts. There are numerous voodoo temples scattered around the coastal regions of both Benin and Togo, each headed by a priest who for a suitable donation will intercede on your behalf. Voodoo is not limited to the temples though and travelling around the region it is not unlikely that you will see some ceremony being carried out. Also, worth looking out for are the Egunguns – earthly manifestations of the dead who roam the streets in outlandish costumes, striking fear into the heart of local people. Sacrifice and blood are important within voodoo rituals, and any ceremony worth its salt is likely to involve a chicken being killed, its blood spilled onto a shrine in order to seal the pact. You are also likely to see fetishes dotted around villages – these are inanimate objects such as rocks or trees in which a spirit is believed to reside, often covered in candle wax, feathers, and blood where sacrifices have been made. Gaining some understanding of voodoo allows you a glimpse into a magical world where nothing is quite as it seems and is perhaps the most fascinating aspect of travelling here.

**Ouidah**

Founded in the fifteenth century and made famous by Bruce Chatwin's novel, 'The Viceroy of Ouidah,' Ouidah was once a centre for the slave trade in this part of West Africa and many of its buildings bear witness to a strong European influence. As well as a rather imposing and out of place cathedral, Afro-Brazilian architecture and crumbling colonial buildings, the Portuguese fort holds an interesting history museum which gives an insight into the past life of the town. Of equal interest is the Python Temple, where a collection of snakes is venerated as earthly representations of voodoo gods. A thought provoking excursion is the 3km walk along the 'Slave Route', where those boarding the boats across the Atlantic were herded like cattle to the shore. At the end on the beach lies the modern 'Gate of No Return,' built in memory of the thousands who never made it back.



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### Day 19: Cotonou – Porto-Novo - Cotonou

This morning we leave Cotonou and head to Porto-Novo, Benin's capital city. Our first stop is the Ethnographic Museum, which was established by the Dahomey Institute in 1957. The museum houses costumes, ceremonial masks, and drums as well as other historical artifacts. We also visit the Royal Palace, now known as the Honme Museum, which is housed in the walled compound of King Toffa who signed the first treaty with the French in 1863. Most of the displays here are from the period of King Toffa's reign and there is an excellent example of Alounloun, a traditional Beninese instrument used to play music called Adjogon. A stone throw away from Honme is the Da Silva Museum in a beautiful Afro-Brazilian house dating back to the 1870's. This eclectic museum is home to some wonderful Afro-Brazilian artefacts. Our last stop is the Great Mosque which offers excellent photographic opportunities and fascinating history. We head back to Cotonou for lunch before visiting the Dantokpa Marche, one of West Africa's largest outdoor markets. Covering over 20 hectares it sells everything you could imagine and is a major contributor to the Benin economy. Overnight Hotel Casa de Cielo or similar. (BLD)

### Day 20: Ganvie, the Venice of Western Africa and Agongointo (approx. 2hr30m)

Before heading to Abomey, we visit one of the most beautiful communities here in Benin at Ganvie. Known as the Venice of West Africa, a relaxed paced day and we may decide to try our hands at fishing under the tutelage of a local fisherman. If we are lucky and get a sizeable catch, then our lunch will be fresh fish grilled the local way. After lunch we set off to Abomey (approx. 2 hours' drive). On arrival visit the recently (1998) discovered underground dwellings of Agongointo - Zougoudo just a few kilometres outside of Abomey. Discovered during road construction these underground dwellings are believed to date back to the 16th century during the reign of King Dakodonou the second King of Abomey. There are believed to be several hundred of these built 10 meters underground and they were used to protect locals from invaders in addition to offering the element of surprise for local warriors when attacking the enemy. Overnight SunCity Hotel or similar. (BLD)

### Ganvie

On Lake Nokwe lies the stilt village of Ganvie, a settlement of 25,000 people isolated from the land and only accessible by boat. Legend has it that the Tofinou people fled here in the 18th century to escape the depredation of the more powerful Dahomeyans on the lookout for slaves, and that they were transported to their new home by crocodiles. Whatever the truth behind it, Ganvie is an interesting place to drift through in a boat, watching how people go about their daily lives on the water, stopping at local markets watching the fishermen casting their nets, and is far removed from the busy towns making this a real delight to explore. The market on the mainland is also worth a look, if only for the rather gruesome section dedicated to voodoo.

### Abomey

Once the capital of the powerful kingdom of Dahomey, Abomey gained a notorious reputation as the centre of a fierce civilisation, whose rulers preyed mercilessly on the surrounding tribes as they conquered neighbouring lands and captured slaves. During the 'Scramble for Africa' Dahomey put up strong resistance against the French colonial armies but in the end were no match for modern weapons, and the kingdom fell in 1892, its king Gbehanzin setting fire to the city. Abomey had been renowned for its palaces, and although many were lost, two still remain which give the visitor a fascinating insight into this once mighty nation. Now museums, they contain a number of interesting exhibits from earlier times, the most impressive of which is a throne which sits on top of human skulls. Also worth a look is the nearby temple whose walls are said to have been made with the blood of enemies.





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### **Day 21: Abomey – Natitingou (approx. 7 hours driving)**

An early start as we dedicate the morning to a city tour of Abomey before we depart for Natitingou. Our first stop is the Royal Palace, where we gain an insight into the history and exploits of the warrior kings. The architecture is quite unique and though the palaces are no more inhabited, two of them are now in use as the Historical Museum of Abomey. The museum contains some 1050 relics of the Abomey kings which include Voodoo artefacts, some skulls, and banners of the royal family. After the tour we head towards Natitingou (approx. 7 hours' drive). On arrival into Natitingou we check-in to the hotel. Overnight Tata Somba Hotel or similar. (BLD)

*\*lunch today is a packed lunch. Optional – can stop at one of the local vendors en route*

### **Day 22: Tata Somba**

Today visit Tata Somba village with the Ditamari people who live in this region of northwest Benin. The locals at Tata Somba are still living in traditional homesteads that have not changed in centuries with entire families staying in these remarkable buildings. The houses are built as fortresses to keep out intruders and wild animals. The Somba people are known for their traditional body scarring rituals which are given to children from 2 to 3 years of age. These marks are used to identify which tribe you belong to, and additional scarring is given later in life to indicate readiness for marriage, reaching puberty and after childbirth. After lunch visit the museum to learn more about the culture and life of the people in Benin. Next, we learn about the process of making shea butter processing from a local family before returning to our hotel. Overnight Tata Somba Hotel or similar. (BLD)

### **Day 23: To Behicon via Parakou (approx. 2hr30m driving)**

We leave Natitingou and head south towards Behicon. En route we find the ancient town of Parakou. Walk through this community meeting locals and the warrior men, and we have the opportunity to see a traditional Horse Dance, an energetic and unique dance, which only the finest warriors can perform. It showcases their triumphs over their enemies and at the same time honours their forefathers. From here we continue to Behicon enjoying lunch en route. On arrival check in to the hotel and the remainder of the day is at leisure. Overnight Hotel Princess or similar. (BLD)

### **Day 24: Hike Mt Klouto and visit Kpalime food market (approx. 6hr30m driving)**

This morning set off for Kpalime, crossing the border back into Togo. This afternoon we enjoy a leisurely hike of the stunning Mt Klouto. Afterwards visit the local food market to experience daily life before heading to your hotel. Overnight Parc Residence Hotel or similar. (BLD)

### **Day 25: Kpalime to Lome and Departure (approx. 2hr30m driving)**

A relaxed breakfast this morning as we set off from Kpalime heading southwards to Lome. Today will mainly be a travel day and we will stop for lunch and to walk around some of the communities we pass through. Our aim is to reach Lome in the early afternoon where we can enjoy some last-minute shopping if needed or some relaxation time on the coast before our early evening meal after which we transfer you to the airport for your departure after a wonderful tour through West Africa. (BLD)



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## Inclusions and Exclusions

### **Inclusions:**

Arrival and departure airport transfers  
All accommodation  
Transport throughout  
Services of English-speaking guide  
Meals as listed (B – Breakfast, L – Lunch, D – Dinner)  
Water in the vehicle  
Entrance fees for sites listed as part of the itinerary

### **Excluded:**

International flights  
Any airport taxes  
Travel Insurance  
Visas  
Drinks  
Items of personal nature  
Tips (Discretionary)

## Important Information

### **Foreign Office Travel Warnings**

We constantly monitor the advice posted by the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). In particular we will always advise clients of any travel warnings. At present there are no warnings against travel to Ghana. Please feel free to contact us should you have any specific concerns or would like to know in detail what measures are being taken to ensure visits remain trouble free and without incident.

It should be noted that this information applies to British citizens. Other nationals are asked to check the current position of their respective government.

### **Accommodation and Meals**

#### **Hotel Check-in Times**

As a general rule most hotels will allow guests to check-in from 2pm. Please note that the price of your tour does not include guaranteed early check-in. Therefore, please advise us if you would like to ensure that your room is available for an earlier arrival. This is particularly relevant on the first day of the tour and for early morning arrivals. One option is to pre-book and pay for an extra night at the beginning of your tour which will guarantee your accommodation is available irrespective of what time you arrive. Please contact us for information and costs.



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It should also be noted that on many of our tours we have set-aside Day 1 of the itinerary as an 'arrival day'. For this reason and because tour participants are likely to be arriving at different times, and often from different countries, guided sightseeing or other activities are not included. If you are arriving early or before the start date of the tour and would like to organise some extra arrangements on a private basis, please contact us.

### **Accommodation Rating**

On this tour you can expect to stay in comfortable small-scale accommodation. With a few exceptions you can expect rooms to be en-suite, with private bathroom and when necessary, air-conditioning will be provided. In general, you will find your hotel has a restaurant and/or bar.

We welcome solo travellers and single rooms will be allocated subject to the applicable tour supplement. Please note that on occasions you may not always be allocated a double or twin room, as some hotels have designated single rooms. These may be smaller in size. However, the supplement payable takes this into consideration.

### **Service Standards**

Please note that standards of service in much of Africa are not comparable to those of more developed countries, especially in the more off the beaten track locations. Service is often slow and lacks the same attention to detail, and your patience and understanding will be appreciated.

### **Food & Drinks**

The daily meal basis is shown in the tour itinerary; breakfast (B), lunch and dinner (D). Please note that lunch may be a picnic. Drinks are not included and will be payable locally in cash.

### **Dietary Requirements**

If you have any special dietary requirements, you must notify us at the time of booking. While we will make every effort to cater for you, we cannot guarantee that this will be possible.

### **Budgeting for your Tour**

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the tour price, any optional sightseeing, souvenirs, and items of a personal nature such as laundry.

### **Food**

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch £10 / Dinner £10

### **Drinks**

The prices for drinks can vary greatly depending upon location and the prices detailed below are an average guide. In general, you would expect that drinks purchased in a supermarket or local bar to be less expensive, whilst drinks in an upmarket bar or restaurant may be more expensive.

Bottle of Beer £1 / Bottled water £0.40



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### **Tipping – Guide and Drivers**

Tipping is commonly recognised as a way of rewarding guides and drivers for good service. If you are happy with your guide and driver, please consider leaving a tip for them.

Tipping is generally only common in the better restaurants, rather than the smaller streetside ones.

### **Foreign Exchange**

**ATM Availability:** Present in most of the cities

**Credit & Debit Card Acceptance:** Cards generally accepted in larger towns and cities

**Local Currency:** Ghanaian Cedi and West African CFA franc

**Recommended Currency for Exchange:** US Dollars or Euros

**Where to Exchange:** Your guide will advise you

### **Joining your Tour**

#### **Flight Information**

Our advertised prices do not include the cost of international flights. Please contact us if you would like a quotation to book a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

#### **Joining Tour Abroad**

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will receive a free airport transfer, both on the advertised start and end dates of the tour. In addition, arrival and/or departure transfers will be provided in conjunction with any pre and/or post tour accommodation that has been booked through Undiscovered Destinations. In all other cases charges may apply for airport transfers. Please advise the date, time, and flight number for your arrival/departure. If we have not been advised of this information at least 2 weeks before travel, then you will be required to make your own way to the hotel on Day 1 of your tour.

#### **Travel Insurance**

It is a condition of booking with Undiscovered Destinations that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country and be valid for the entire duration of your holiday.

#### **Visa Information**

At the time of writing British, US and Australian nationals require visas for a tourist visit to Ghana, Togo, and Benin. For further details please visit the applicable website shown below.

British Nationals - [www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice](http://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice)

US Nationals - <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel.html>

Australian Nationals - [www.smartraveller.gov.au/](http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/)

Other nationals should check the latest requirements with the authorities in their home country, or with the destinations nearest embassy or consulate.

Should you require any documentation to support a visa application, such as a letter of invitation, upon request this will be provided by Undiscovered Destinations after receipt of your balance payment.



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As it is the travellers' responsibility to ensure that they meet all entry requirements it is essential that you check the rules and any other conditions at the time of booking and again when making your balance payment. In addition, we would strongly advise that you make a final check around two weeks before your arrival. This is important as requirements can change at short notice. Undiscovered Destinations, when possible, will provide guidance about entry rules, but in the first instance please contact the relevant authorities, including the applicable embassy or consulate for assistance.

### Passports

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, valid for at least six months after the date of return to your country. We strongly advise that your passport contains a minimum of two blank pages, as this may be a requirement of the local immigration authorities. In addition, certain countries will stipulate that the two blank pages are opposite each other. If you are unable to meet these requirements you may be refused boarding by your airline or denied entry by the immigration authorities.

For specific information about the requirements for your destination please check with the country's embassy or consulate. Alternatively, UK citizens can visit [www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice](http://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice)

### Vaccinations & Protection

As with travel to most parts of Africa, we strongly recommend that you contact your doctor's surgery or a specialist travel clinic for up-to-date information, advice, and the necessary vaccinations. For a visit of less than one month, almost certainly you will be advised to have immunisations against the following: Diphtheria and Tetanus, Hepatitis A, Typhoid, Meningitis. You will also need to also need to take anti-malarial medication.

**It is mandatory for entry to Ghana to travel with a valid Yellow Fever Certificate.** If you fail to do so you will be made to receive an injection on arrival.

The legal status and regulation of some medicines prescribed or purchased in your home country can be different in other countries. If you are travelling with prescription or over-the-counter medicine, read this guidance from NaTHNaC on best practice when travelling with medicines. For further information on the legal status of a specific medicine, you will need to contact the embassy, high commission or consulate of the country or territory to which you are travelling.

## Preparing for your tour

### Climate

The region experiences two distinct seasons and travel is possible all year. The dry season runs from October until April, and the wet season from May until September – these can change by a few weeks either side depending on climate variations. The rains, although heavy, usually take the form of short sharp bursts.

### Clothing

Ghana is very warm and so light cotton clothes are generally a good idea. You should also bring a hat – the sun is very strong here, even in the winter. It might be a good idea to bring a fleece in case of cooler evenings in the north, but this is usually not a problem.



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In general, shorts are acceptable, although there may be occasions when it is appropriate to wear long trousers for example at an Ashanti funeral and the Akwasidae festival. Long trousers also provide better protection against insects and are recommended for nature walks.

### **Equipment**

The first thing on your list should be a first aid kit. Whilst there is no undue cause for alarm, travellers are best advised to travel well-prepared: adequately immunized, with sufficient supplies of prescription drugs, along with a medical kit. Sun cream/sunblock is a must. Insect repellent, including a bite spray will also be useful to have.

### **Environmental Responsibility**

We are committed to reducing our impact on the environment. On this tour single-use plastic bottles of water will not be given. Water will be provided from a large container. Please bring your own water bottles/flask with you on this trip.

### **Footwear**

Footwear is a main priority on this tour. Comfortable walking shoes/boots are recommended, as well as a pair of sandals.

### **Luggage on tour**

Your luggage should not exceed 20kgs (44lbs). One large suitcase/rucksack, and one small hand luggage rucksack is acceptable.

### **Electric Supply & Plugs**

In Ghana electrical supply is 220V/50 Hz and plugs have three square pins as in the United Kingdom.

In Togo and Benin electrical supply is 220V/50 Hz and plugs are European continental type.

### **Tour Itinerary Versions**

Please ensure that you have an up-to-date copy of these tour notes immediately before you travel, as from time to time our itineraries may be amended, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers. You will be informed of any major changes to your tour, but small changes may just be added to these tour notes. These tour notes were prepared 3 January 2024.

