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# Tour Notes

Equatorial Guinea - Encompassed

Tour Duration – 10 Days



## Tour Rating

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

Tour Pace - Busy

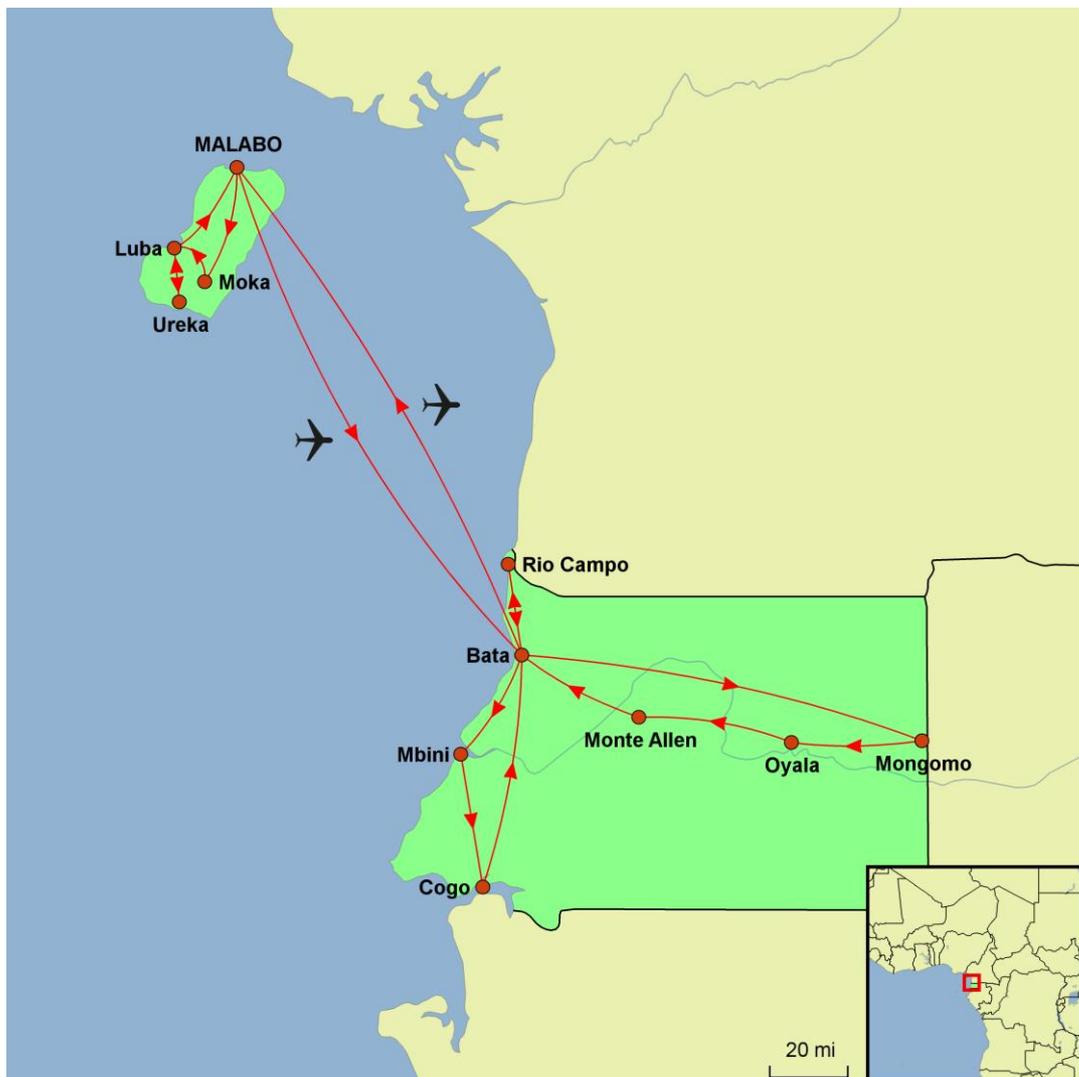
## Tour Highlights

- ✓ Discover one of the least visited countries in the world
- ✓ Explore a nation which features a stunning variety of landscapes, sights and peoples
- ✓ Visit the Bioko Biodiversity Protection Program and meet the resident researchers who protect the local nesting sites of Ureka
- ✓ Watch the turtles come ashore to lay their eggs



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## Tour Map - Equatorial Guinea - Equatorial Guinea Encompassed



### Tour Essentials

- Accommodation:** Comfortable hotels  
**Included Meals:** Daily breakfast (B), plus lunches (L) and dinners (D) as shown in the itinerary.  
**Group Size:** Maximum of 12  
**Start Point:** Malabo – you can arrive any time on the first day  
**End Point:** Malabo – departure on the last day can be any time from 19:00  
**Transport:** 4WD or Minibus  
**Countries:** Equatorial Guinea



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### Equatorial Guinea – Encompassed

Amid the malaise of contemporary misrule Equatorial Guinea's people strive for a better life. An oil rich state whose population languishes in poverty, the country is often cited as an exemplar of the paradox of plenty. However, although the concept of tourism is not well understood, colonial cultural and architectural legacies, empty beaches and pristine primary forests are a good place to start. The very fact that there are so few visitors lends an unaffected aspect to Equatorial Guinea. Make no mistake, travel is sometimes arduous, but the rewards are unexpectedly rich.

### 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 – Malabo

Arrive in Malabo, capital of Equatorial Guinea, located on the island of Bioko, 30km off the coast of mainland West Africa. Equatorial Guinea is a disparate nation comprising five islands and a continental African province. Transfer to hotel accommodation. Overnight Hotel Yoli.

### Day 2 – Malabo - Luba

After breakfast your guide will provide a tour briefing at 9am. Travel to Bioko Sur, a protected jungle area covering the southern portion of Bioko. En route to Moka we pass through the town of Riaba, crossing the impressive Puente Cope bridge along the way. In Moka we visit the Bioko Biodiversity Protection Program and learn about its conservation work. After lunch we continue to Batété, site of Equatorial Guinea's oldest church, built entirely from wood in 1887, and sorely in need of some maintenance. Our last stop is Luba, a picturesque port on the west coast where in 1778 the Spanish first landed and laid claim to the island. A monument commemorating the event lies at the northern end of town. Overnight Hotel Nautico. (BLD)

### Day 3 – Ureka

Today we head to the southern coastal village of Ureka. Known as the wettest place in Africa, and one of the wettest in the world, Ureka endures a record-breaking 10,450mm of rainfall per year. Take an umbrella. In Ureka we visit the local office of the Bioko Biodiversity Protection Program. From November to March researchers and staff work to protect nearby sea turtle nesting sites. During our visit it may be possible observe turtles laying their eggs in the sand – a remarkable sight. However, it's not easy. Turtles nest very late in the evening, if they appear at all. Nest sites may lie a two hour torchlit hike away along tidal beaches – take swimwear and be prepared to wade. In the early hours we return to our hotel. Overnight Hotel Nautico. (BL)



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**Please note** - Depending on the tides you should be prepared to wade through water up to waist height as the tide comes in. It is important that appropriate footwear and shorts or swimwear is worn. You must also bring your own torch. Bring some snacks to have later in the evening before returning to the hotel. Depending on the location of the nesting sites it can be up to a 2 hour walk along the beach in each direction.

### Further Information

A good deal of flexibility is required on this day, as changes to the advertised programme may be required at short notice. Depending on the tides we may have some spare time. Other activities may be arranged should this be the case, including a visit to Arena Blanca Beach, and/or a local cacao (chocolate) factory.

### Day 4 – Ureka – Malabo

After breakfast we return to the capital for a walking tour of the city. Exploring among colonial architecture and local markets you'll hear Spanish and perhaps Pichinglis – a kind of Creole English that arrived with Sierra Leonean migrants in the early 19th century. The recent influx of oil wealth has led to widespread development in Malabo, leading to a surprising choice of cafes and restaurants. Whether it's Spanish paella or local pepe soup, you'll find it all in Malabo. However, the city is not large, and a tour of its neat downtown avenues takes only a few hours. After lunch we visit 'New' Malabo, with its 5-star hotel and plush shopping centres, a contrast to the old centre. Overnight Hotel Yoli. (BD)

### Day 5 – Malabo – Bata

We enjoy a leisurely start to the day before taking a lunchtime flight to Río Muni, the country's mainland province, where we touch down at the coastal city of Bata. Far larger than Malabo, this is the throbbing heart of the nation and a gateway to the continental Africa. Here, walk along the breezy Paseo Marítimo which runs the length of this long, thin city, and take in ocean views. If you thought Malabo was a cultural melting pot, then prepare to be amazed by Bata, as you rub shoulders with Spanish businessmen, Italian engineers, Chinese construction workers, Middle Eastern hoteliers and African traders from across the region. These diverse groups have all brought their own food, so the choice of restaurants and bars is fantastic. As you might expect, there is also a strong cultural scene, centred mainly around the Spanish, French and Equatoguinean Cultural Centres, featuring music, art and other events throughout the year. Following an afternoon city tour, we return to our hotel for dinner. Overnight Hotel Carmen. (BD)

### Day 6 – Bata – Rio Campo - Bata

Leaving Bata behind, we follow the north coast towards the border with Cameroon. Along the way we stop at the old Punta Mbonda lighthouse and Tika Beach before reaching the Rio Campo in time for lunch. The river marks the border between Equatorial Guinea and Cameroon, and it's likely we'll encounter local people making the international crossing in simple canoes. From Rio Campo we return to our hotel in Bata. Overnight Ibis Hotel or similar. (BL)

### Day 7 – Bata - Mongomo – Djibloho (Oyala)

Today we journey through the forested inland plateau to the President's hometown of Mongomo, on the Gabonese border. The town is home to a series of ostentatious architectural monuments, including is the massive Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, the second largest church in Africa, styled after St Peter's in Vatican City. From Mongomo, we continue to the country's proposed new capital city of Djibloho, also known as Oyala. Truly isolated in the heart of the jungle, it's a surreal experience to drive a deserted eight lane highway until Oyala's skyscrapers suddenly appear on the horizon, seemingly out of nowhere. Due for completion in 2020, the city already boasts a five-star luxury hotel, our home for the night, and an 18-hole golf course. Overnight Hotel Djibloho (Oyala). (BD)

### Day 8 – Monte Allen – Bata – Mbini - Cogo

Venturing back towards the coast, our next stop is Monte Allen National Park, a vast expanse once filled by abundant wildlife, including forest elephants, Western Lowland Gorillas and chimpanzees. Sadly, the park had



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little infrastructure and after years of neglect by government attracted the attentions of poachers. We are unlikely to see any wildlife. Nonetheless, a visit still allows us to experience the jungles of one of Africa's least visited national parks. From Monte Allen, we return to Bata and continue to Mbini, located at the mouth of Benito River. The river landscape here is dominated by the Chinese-built suspension bridge which stretches 800m over the river, linking the southern portion of the coastline to Bata. The bridge is a sight to behold, especially when illuminated at night. However, be careful taking photographs as bridges are designated 'strategic sites.' Overnight Complejo Turistico de Mbini or Kogo Ocean Resort, Cogo. (BD)

#### Day 9 – Mbini - Cogo – Bata – Malabo

After breakfast we drive to Cogo, located on a peninsula at the mouth of the Muni River surrounded by the Reserva Natural del Estuario del Rio Muni. The government hopes to make Cogo a commercial and tourism hub for the area, and as a result it's expanding rapidly. The redevelopment of the waterfront is already underway and it's clear the walkway by the market aspires to be a smaller version of Bata's Paseo Maritimo. On a clear day you can see right across the river to Gabon. In the afternoon we return to Bata where there's time for an early evening dinner before the short return flight to Malabo. (BD)

#### Day 10 – Pico Basile

After breakfast we drive to the summit of Pico Basile, at 3,018m it's the highest point on the island and in the country. Descending, we call in at the so visit the church of the Virgin of Bisila, an interesting example of the appropriation of a pre-Christian forest deity. Later, we return to Malabo in time for airport check-in and evening flight departures. (B)

## Tour Inclusions/Exclusions

#### Inclusions:

Arrival and departure transfers  
All accommodation  
Transport  
Domestic flights  
Services of English-speaking guide / tour leader  
Meals as listed (B – Breakfast, L – Lunch, D – Dinner) –Entrance fees for sites listed as part of the itinerary  
Tourist permits

#### Excluded:

International flights  
Travel Insurance  
Visas  
Drinks

## Important Information

#### Foreign Government Travel Warnings

We constantly monitor the advice posted by the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). In particular we will always advise clients of any travel warnings. At the time of writing the FCO has no travel warnings in place for Equatorial Guinea. Please feel free to contact us should you have any specific concerns.

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



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## 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.

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

At Undiscovered Destinations we know our travellers prefer to stay in comfortable, mid-range accommodation which meets our own exacting standards. 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.

### Food & Drink

The daily meal basis is shown in the tour itinerary; breakfast (B), lunch (L) 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. Eating out can be expensive, and you should budget around 20 to 30 euros for meals not included in the tour.

Lunch £8.00

Dinner £12.00



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### Drink

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 £1.50

Water £1.00

### Tipping – Guide and Drivers

Tipping is common practise in Africa. If your local guide has been helpful then you could think about tipping. This amount can obviously be left to you. When tipping a driver, a guide or hotel staff a few euros will always be gratefully received.

### Foreign Exchange

**ATM Availability:** ATM machines which accept international cards can be found in Malabo and Bata, but reliability can be a problem and the machines may not always work

**Credit and Debit Card Acceptance:** The use of credit and debit cards is limited to the top hotels and restaurants in Malabo and Bata

**Local Currency:** CFA Franc

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

**Where to Exchange:** Exchange facilities are available at Malabo's airport and in the city's major banks. Outside of Malabo and Bata facilities will be very limited

### 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 arrival and departure. In order that the transfer can be arranged please ensure that you advise us of your flight information once available. 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

All nationals except American citizens require a visa to visit Equatorial Guinea. Previously the process has been difficult or visas have been granted for business visitors only. However, Undiscovered Destinations has an excellent relationship with the country's London embassy, and applications made by our travellers will be



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given full consideration. Although no guarantees can be given, we anticipate that with the necessary supporting documentation, applications will be granted.

Should you be applying from outside of the UK, or there is no diplomatic representation in your home country, please contact us for further assistance. It is likely the London embassy will consider applications made from travellers in Australia, New Zealand, Canada and other countries without an embassy or consulate.

At the time of writing the London embassy will require your application to be supported by a Police Certificate. This is to confirm whether or not the applicant has a criminal record in the United Kingdom. To apply for a Police Certificate in the UK please visit [www.acro.police.uk/police\\_certificates.aspx](http://www.acro.police.uk/police_certificates.aspx).

Please be aware that visa information is subject to change, therefore please refer to your nearest embassy for up to date advice. Please note that the price of your tour does not include visa costs.

### 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 the UK.

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 the developing world, 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. Anti-malaria medication will also be required and the use of a DEET-containing insect repellent is highly recommended.

You will also need to have a Yellow Fever vaccination certificate to enter Equatorial-Guinea.

The legal status and regulation of some medicines prescribed or purchased in your home country can be different in other countries. If you're 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'll need to contact the embassy, high commission or consulate of the country or territory you're travelling to.

## Preparing for your tour

### Climate

Equatorial Guinea has two distinctive and very pronounced seasons: rainy and dry seasons. April to October are the wettest months of the year, and December to March are the driest. We generally schedule our group tours to depart between November and March when you can expect average daytime temperatures in the region of 30°C.



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### **Clothing**

When it comes to clothing it is usually recommended that lighter clothes are worn through the day, and warmer ones at night. A hat is also advised to be worn through the day to protect from the sun, along with at least one piece of waterproof clothing for any days that the weather may be wet or windy.

### **Equipment**

Suncream/sunblock is a must. Insect repellent, including a bite spray will also be useful to have. A torch is always useful. If you are bringing a digital camera it is also advisable to bring a spare battery, as there will be occasions when electricity is not available.

### **Footwear**

Sensible footwear is important and although most tours only include moderate walking or trekking comfortable walking shoes/boots is recommended.

### **Luggage on tour**

Your luggage should not exceed 20kgs (44lbs). One large rucksack, and one small hand luggage rucksack is acceptable. We advise you to travel with a rucksack or soft bag rather than a suitcase.

### **Service Standards**

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.

### **Electric Supply & Plugs**

Generally electrical supply is 220-240V AC (50 Hz) and uses European two circular pin style plugs.

### **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 updated 17 January 2020

