



Rediscover the
meaning of travel

Tour Notes

Ghana, Togo and Benin - Ouidah Voodoo Festival

Tour Duration – 13 Days
From 8th to 20th January 2021



Tour Rating

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

Tour Pace

Busy

Tour Highlights

- ✓ Delve into the mysteries of the Voodoo festival in Ouidah
- ✓ Witness an incredible fire dance in Sokode
- ✓ See the Tamberma's adobe castles
- ✓ Experience the Ashanti culture and memorials
- ✓ Wander the old town of Elmina and visit the castle of St George, once used for holding slaves





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Tour Map

Ghana, Togo and Benin - Ouidah Voodoo Festival



Tour Essentials

Accommodation: Simple but comfortable hotel accommodation

Included Meals: Daily breakfast (B), plus lunches (L) and dinners (D) as shown in the itinerary

Group Size: Maximum group size 16 – On this tour you are likely to be joined by travellers from companies other than Undiscovered Destinations, with a mix of nationalities

Start Point: Lome – you can arrival anytime on 8th January 2021

End Point: Accra – you can depart anytime after 21:00hrs on 20th January 2021

Transport: Minibus or microbus

Countries Visited: Ghana, Togo, Benin

Group Size – Important Information

The maximum group size for this tour is 16. The group will be led by an experienced local guide and dedicated transport will be provided. As tourism facilities in West Africa are limited and some tours including those that include a festival can be popular, it should be noted that on occasions other tour groups will be travelling in the region and may be following the same or a similar itinerary. They may also be staying at the same hotels.



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Ghana, Togo and Benin - Ouidah Voodoo Festival

A journey to the spiritual heart of West Africa, where myth, religion and reality intertwine to create an intoxicating blend of extraordinary experiences. Stretching from the dusty borderlands of the north to the tropical coast in the south, Ghana, Togo and Benin encapsulate all that is special about West Africa, with great scenery and wildlife complemented by a joyous and exuberant people who will make you feel welcome from the moment you arrive. Starting in Lome we visit its bizarre fetish market, and then head to Ouidah in Benin. Here we witness one of the region's most incredible cultural experiences, the annual festival of voodoo, where people perform unique rituals and ceremonies in devotion to ancient gods, and where you can expect to bump into the earthly manifestations of voodoo spirits. We learn about the history of the region in the once powerful kingdom of Abomey, discover the fortified houses of the Tamberma people, and travel to the heart of the Ashanti kingdom in Kumasi. Finally we end up back at Ghana's coast, where we visit the castles of the first Europeans to reach these shores and relax on the beach. Discover the soul of West Africa.

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. Depending on the mix of nationalities in the group, and the group size, the guiding may be conducted in English plus additional languages, and there may be more than one guide with the group.

Itinerary

[Togo] Day 1, 8th January 2021: Arrival in Lome

Arrive in Lome and transfer to your hotel. For those arriving early in the day, the rest of the day is at leisure to explore. Overnight Hotel Sarakawa or similar. No meals nor guided excursions are included today.

[Togo and Benin] Day 2, 9th January: Lome – Ouidah (150km; Driving time: approx. 3 hours)

Lome is the only African city to have been colonised by the French, British and Germans. This morning we will begin a city tour with a visit to Independence Square, before continuing to the lively and colourful 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). After lunch we travel to the border to cross into Benin and travel to Ouidah for the night. Overnight Hotel Casa del Papa or similar. (BLD)

Lome

Lome is a lively city situated on the coast, virtually on the border with Ghana and with a population of just under a million. It retains a slightly shabby, but in the right light decidedly enchanting, feel and was sorely affected by the civil disturbances in the 1990's that rocked Togo.



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Founded by the Ewe people in the eighteenth century, it became the capital of German Togoland under colonial occupation. Lome's formal attractions are relatively sparse but include its Grand Marche, celebrated for its rich textile businesswomen known as 'Nana Benz' who monopolise the sale of cloth in the country. Lome has several buildings dating back to the colonial period including a 19th century Gothic style cathedral which looks rather out of place in a West African city.

[Benin] Day 3, 10th January: Ouidah - Voodoo Festival

Spend today delving into the mysteries of voodoo at Ouidah's annual voodoo festival. Although there are many festivals around the country, this is the largest. You can expect to see followers and adepts of the various voodoo gods, from the elaborately costumed Zangbetos, to the followers of Kokou, renowned for injuring themselves as a way to reach the divine. Around the edges of the main performance area you can find groups from various voodoo temples performing their own rites and rituals. This is a fascinating insight into a much maligned religion, and unlike anything you may have seen before. Overnight Hotel Casa del Papa or similar. (BLD)

Voodoo

Mythologised by bloodthirsty Hollywood films, voodoo originates from this region of West Africa, having been carried to New World countries like Haiti by slaves centuries ago. Voodoo is one of the most important religious systems in this region, an animistic religion comprising of many hundreds of different gods, although there is belief in one supreme being. Togo and Benin are dotted with voodoo temples, manned by priests, but voodoo ceremonies can take place anywhere and it is quite possible to stumble upon them throughout the region. Ceremonies can take many forms but often involve followers falling into trances, accompanied by the beat of pounding drums and dancing. Often adepts will become insensitive to pain, slashing themselves with sharp objects or breaking bottles over their heads. Sacrifice also plays an important part of the religion, and although it is most common to sacrifice chickens, many other creatures are also offered up to the gods such as goats, dogs and cats. Great significance is placed on fetishes, inanimate objects where the spirits are said to reside and which can become focal points for worship.

[Benin] Day 4, 11th January: Ouidah – Dassa (250km; Driving time: approx. 5 hours)

The stilt village of Ganvie, in the centre of Lake Nokwe is our goal this morning. We take a boat onto the lake and explore the village, hopefully seeing a local market where all the trade is conducted on small boats. From here we continue to Abomey. Abomey was the centre of the notorious kingdom of Dahomey, a fierce people who struck terror into the hearts of the surrounding tribes. We visit the Royal Palace, its walls reputed to be forged from the blood and bones of captives, to gain an insight into this once great African power. Continue to Dassa for an overnight stay. Overnight Hotel Jeko 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

Abomey was once the capital of one of Africa's greatest nations, Dahomey, whose rulers struck terror into the heart of surrounding tribes as they made war, conquered land and captured slaves. Its kings built numerous palaces, only two of which remain, the rest having been burned to the ground when the French attacked. Dahomey was a powerful kingdom, and put up fierce resistance to French occupation but in the end was defeated. The kingdom employed a large army, including regiments of female 'Amazons'.



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The remaining palaces have been turned into a museum which contains artefacts from Dahomey including a throne which sits on top of human skulls.

[Benin] Day 5, 12th January: Dassa – Natitingou (350km; Driving time: approx. 6 hours)

We leave the lush coastal belt of Benin behind and head north into a different landscape, where Islam replaces Voodoo as the dominant religion. We stop en route at the Dankoli fetish, the most powerful fetish in Benin, where we may see sacrifices being performed to ask for the favour of the gods. In the afternoon we discover old Taneka villages located on a mountain of the same name. The villages are made up of round houses with a conical roof, protected at the top by a terracotta pot. The upper part of the village is inhabited by the young initiated and the fetish priests who only cover themselves in goat skin and carry a long pipe. Wander along the alleys bordered by smooth stones and explore the life of the tribe, who have been living on archaeological sites for centuries. Overnight Hotel Tata Somba or similar. (BLD)

[Benin & Togo] Day 6, 13th January: Natitingou – Defale (100km; Driving time: approx. 3 hours)

The villages of the Somba and Tamberma people, straddling the border between Togo and Benin, are one of the undoubted highlights of the region. Each house is built out of earth as a fortress, able to be defended against the slaving raids of old and capable of shielding an entire family and their livestock from invaders. We spend today visiting several of these magical and enchanting structures, and meeting the Tamberma people, some of whom still wear headgear made from the horns of gazelles and sport bones through their lips. We then cross back into Togo and drive to Defale. Overnight Hotel Defalé or similar. (BLD)

The Tamberma people

The Tamberma live in the far north of Benin and Togo. Once famous for their nudity, increasing outside influences mean that they now wear clothes, although many people will still sport traditional adornments. The Tamberma are both hunters and farmers and it is not uncommon to see groups of Tamberma men returning from a hunt with their bows and arrows. The big draw however is the fantastic architecture found in this region. Tamberma houses, called 'tatas' are robust fortress type dwellings, with separate enclosures for humans, livestock and grain, and were easily defended in case of slave raids. Some houses also contain wells, meaning that a family could remain there for some time, prompting raiders to give up and look for easier prey.

[Togo] Day 7, 14th January: Defale – Sokode (120km; Driving time: approx. 3 hours)

This morning we take an easy walk through Kabye and Moba villages and then continue our journey in the mountains to meet the Kabye ethnic group. Kabye dwellings called «Soukala» are composed by several adobe huts joined by a wall - each dwelling is the domain of a patriarchal family. In the villages located at the top of the mountains, women are potters using an ancestral technique without the wheel while men are blacksmiths still working iron with heavy stones instead of hammers and anvil as in the early dawn of Iron Age. We follow the process of shaping a hoe. This evening get to witness a fire dance. In the centre of the village a large fire lights up the faces of the participants, who dance to the hypnotic beat of the drums eventually leaping into the glowing embers. They pick up burning coals and pass them over their bodies and even put them in their mouths without injuring themselves or showing any sign of pain. It's difficult to explain such a performance. Maybe it really is the fetishes that protect them from the fire. Overnight Hotel Central or similar. (BLD)

Sokode

Sokode is Togo's second largest town, and an important trading centre in the north of the country due to its strategic location. It has a couple of very good markets, selling all manner of goods.

Fire dance

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They pick up burning coals and pass them over their bodies and even put them in their mouths without injuring themselves or showing any sign of pain. It's difficult to explain such a performance. Is it matter of courage? Magic? Maybe it really is the fetishes that protect them from the fire.

[Togo] Day 8, 15th January: Sokode – Kloto (290km; Driving time: approx. 5 hours)

Today we head south, stopping at Atakpame, a typical African town built on a hill where you can find all the products from the nearby forest. We continue to the tropical forests surrounding Kpalime, a town with a rich, colonial past and is now an important trading centre. Visit the market and arts centre before an afternoon walk in the forest. Overnight Gess Hotel or similar. (BLD)

[Togo & Ghana] Day 9, 16th January: Kloto – Koforidua (220km; Driving time: approx. 5 hours)

We cross into Ghana and drive to Krubo, famous for its beads. We visit a factory specialized in the production of glass beads. We continue to Koforidua for the night. Overnight Hotel New Capital View or similar. (BLD)

[Ghana] Day 10, 17th January: Koforidua – Kumasi (200km; Driving time: approx. 5 hours)

We travel to the centre of the Ashanti kingdom, Kumasi. We visit the Ashanti Cultural Centre with its rich collection of Ashanti artefacts. Kumasi is also home to a bustling market selling all manner of goods from crafts to everyday items. We may be lucky enough to witness an Ashanti funeral – a colourful and exuberant affair which gives a great insight into the complex culture of this once powerful kingdom. Overnight Hotel Miklin or similar. (BLD)

Kumasi

Kumasi is the historical and spiritual capital of the Ashanti Kingdom. With its population of nearly one million, Kumasi is a sprawling city with a fantastic central market where traders from all over Africa come to sell their wares. Every kind of Ashanti craft (leather goods, pottery, kente cloth) is found here, along with just about every kind of tropical fruit, vegetable, and provision. We visit the Ghana National Cultural Centre, which has a rich collection of Ashanti artefacts, housed in a reproduction of a traditional Ashanti royal house.

Ashanti

The Ashanti people were one of the most powerful nations in Africa until the end of the 19th century, when the British annexed Ashanti country, bringing it into their Gold Coast colony. Originally from the northern savannah regions, the Ashanti people migrated south, carving farms out of the wild rainforest. The region was rich in gold, and trade in this precious metal developed quickly, with small tribal states developing and vying for control of resources. In the late 17th century the Ashanti ruler brought these states together in a loose confederation and the Ashanti Kingdom was born. Their social organisation is centred on the Ashantehene figure, the king of all the Ashanti. The Ashanti are the lords of the gold, so they dress themselves with it during ceremonies. The Ashanti Kingdom was famed for its gold, royalty, ceremony and the development of a bureaucratic judicial system.

[Ghana] Day 11, 18th January: Kumasi – Anomabu (250km; Driving time: approx. 4 hours)

This morning we continue our tour of Kumasi, with the visit of the Royal Palace Museum which hosts a unique collection of gold jewels worn by the Ashanti court. Later, we drive to Anomabu on the coast. Overnight Anomabu Beach Resort or similar. (BLD)

[Ghana] Day 12, 19th January: Anomabu – Accra (180km; Driving time: approx. 3 hours)

Explore the old quarter of Elmina as well as the Castle of St George, the oldest European constructed building in Africa once used for holding slaves. We also see the unique Posuban shrines, built by traditional local societies that were once responsible for the defence of towns along Ghana's coast. Return to Accra for an overnight stay. Overnight La Vila Boutique or similar. (BLD)



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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.

[Ghana] Day 13, 20th January: Accra – Departure

Explore Accra, taking in its main sights including the atmospheric old quarter of Jamestown, the Kwame Nkrumah Mausoleum and something unique to Ghana – the coffin makers. These craftsmen build elaborate coffins in many weird and wonderful shapes including fish, cars, animals and aeroplanes! You can depart any time after 21:00 – please contact us if you are in doubt before to book your flights. This evening transfer to the airport for your departure flight. Day use rooms are available until 18:00. (BL)

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 Kwame Nkrumah Mausoleum and memorial park is the resting place of the former president of Ghana. 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 upon prior request.

Please note that this tour is operated and sold in conjunction with our local partner, and so you are likely be travelling with people of different nationalities and from companies other than Undiscovered Destinations. Depending on the mix of nationalities in the group, and the group size, the guiding may be conducted in English plus additional languages, and there may be more than one guide with the group. The maximum group size on this tour is 16.

Tour inclusions/exclusions

Inclusions:

Arrival and departure airport transfers – please see notes below

All accommodation

Services of English-speaking guide / tour leader (there may be more than one guide with the group and the explanations may be in additional languages)

Meals as listed (B – Breakfast, L – Lunch, D – Dinner)

Entrance fees for sites listed as part of the itinerary

Visa support documentation if required

All transport as mentioned





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Excluded:

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

Notes

Airport Transfers

We include airport transfers in the price of your tour if you are arriving on the first day and leaving on the last day of the advertised itinerary. These will be provided by our local representative or on occasions by the hotel used for the first and last nights of the tour. When the transfer is provided by the hotel this will often be via a shared shuttle bus operated by the hotel. If you are planning to arrive before the start date, and/or leave after the end date of the tour, Undiscovered Destinations can arrange private transfers at an additional cost. Please check with us at the time of booking.

Please note that if you have arranged extra pre and/or post tour accommodation, either through Undiscovered Destinations or directly with the hotel or an agent, airport transfers are not included in the price of your tour. Please contact us if you would like Undiscovered Destinations to arrange private airport transfers at an additional cost.

Important Information

Foreign Office 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 present there are no warnings against travel to Ghana, Togo or Benin. 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.

It should also be noted that on many of our tours we have set-aside Day 1 of the itinerary as an 'arrival day'.



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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 your room to have a 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 (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.

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

Water £0.40

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 expected in the higher end restaurants, rather than the smaller local ones.





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Foreign Exchange

ATM Availability: ATM's are available in most towns in the region but transactions are not always successful.

Credit Card Acceptance: Credit cards are not widely accepted other than in high end hotels

Local Currency: Ghana is the cedi. Togo and Benin is the CFA.

Recommended Currency for Exchange: Euros or US Dollars are easily exchanged

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 Your 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, to the accommodation used for the tour. In all other cases charges will 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

Ghana - Single entry visa required

Visitors from most countries, including UK, EU and US require a visa to enter Ghana, which is issued in their country of residence. This needs to be obtained in advance and should be a single-entry visa. Multiple entry visas are also available should travel plans require this. You will need a Letter of Invitation which we will arrange for you.

Benin - Single entry visa required

Visitors from most countries, including UK, EU and US visitors require a visa for entering Benin. This can be obtained by completing an online e-visa application: <https://evisa.gouv.bj/en/>

Togo - Multiple Entry visa required

British passport holders need a visa to enter Togo. You are advised by the FCO to obtain your multiple entry visa before travel.

Visas for most nationalities can also be issued on arrival however they are limited to 7 days and getting an extension to cover the 8th day of the tour can be time consuming as it will be done locally. The fee for the visa on arrival is currently 20 Euros or CFA 10,000. You are also required to provide 3 passport photos and an additional cost for the extension may be applied. For more information please contact the Embassy of Togo in London, <http://togoembassylondon.com/consulate/>



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All visa requirements can change so we do recommend that you check with your nearest embassy and foreign office for the most up to date advice and information.

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 per country visited, 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

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.

Vaccination against yellow fever is a compulsory requirement for entry into Ghana and Togo, and you must bring your certificate with you. This may or may not be checked when you enter the country, but we strongly advise that you do not risk being denied entry.

You should also seek advice about malaria prophylactics.

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.

The Fetish Market in Lome

This is an authentic market for local people and is an important part of the Voodoo culture, but tourists are allowed to visit. However, some people may find it upsetting as there are the remains of many animals and birds on display, including some that are under threat. The animals are all said to have died of natural causes.

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

West Africa 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 light 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. 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 immunised, 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. We also recommend bringing a torch or a head torch for use in dimly lit areas or for any electricity outages which can occur from time to time.

Environmental Responsibility

We are committed to reducing our impact on the environment. On this tour single-use plastic bottles of water will not be handed out. Water will be provided from a large container. We kindly ask you to bring your own water bottles/flask with you on this trip. If you have any concerns please contact us.

Footwear

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

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

Electrical supply is 220V/50 Hz and plugs have three square pins as in the United Kingdom. We advise bringing a travel adaptor.

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 6th July 2020.