



Benin/Togo/Ghana: Voodoo, Slavery and Paradise Beaches

The three West African countries Benin, Togo and Ghana surprise the visitor not only by their fine sandy beaches but also by their multiple cultural highlights and scenic treasures. On this journey we experience the countries' rich and diverse culture, visiting spectacular voodoo ceremonies and fetish markets. We also discover pristine tropical forests and even walk through the canopy of giant rainforest trees. We visit impressive slave castles and picture postcard fishing harbours. Boat trips take us to remote villages built entirely on stilts across lagoons and estuaries covered by mangrove forests and we have encounters with rare primates, local chiefs, voodoo-priests and fire-eaters. Atmospheric hotels on palm-fringed beaches and the delicious food of the West African coast areas make this journey a true pleasure for passionate travellers and connoisseurs.

Tour Highlights

- Ouidah: Birthplace of Voodoo
- Grand Popo: Zangbeto ceremony
- Togoville: Togo's Voodoo capital
- Lomé: Fetish market and beaches
- Klouto: Fire dance, tropical forest hike
- Afadjato: Ghana's highest mountains
- Wli: Largest waterfalls in West Africa
- Tafi Atome: Sanctuary for Mona monkeys
- Ada Foah: Boat ride on the Volta River
- Cape Coast & Elmina: Slave castles
- Kakum: Suspended canopy walkway
- Pirogue ride to stilt village of Nzulezo
- Ankasa: Pristine rainforest
- Ankobra, Busua, Butre: Ghana's top beaches
- Cape Three Points: Wild coastal landscape

Day 1: Arrival at Cotonou Cadjehoun Airport

Meet and greet with your tour leader and transfer to the hotel (5 km).

(-/-), Overnight at Cotonou, Hotel du Lac or similar

Day 2: Cotonou - Ouidah

This morning sees us journeying to Porto Novo, Benin's official capital city. We visit the colourful Grand Mosque, the close-by market and the impressive Musée Ethnographique. From Porto-Novo we continue to Abomey-Calavi where we take a motorboat ride out to the stilt village of Ganvié, situated on Lake Nakoué. This remarkable aquatic village

has been called "the Venice of Africa". Towards evening we make for the town of Ouidah, considered to be the birthplace of voodoo. (150 km)

(B/D), overnight at Ouidah, Hotel Jardin Brésilien or similar

Day 3: Ouidah - Grand Popo

At Ouidah we will learn more about the history of slavery and the mysterious rituals of voodoo. Taking a walk along the slave route, from the slave market to the beach, where the unfortunate victims were loaded aboard the ships, we experience their last terrible trek on African soil. We also visit the amazing Python Temple dedicated to the ancient snake cult and get acquainted with the concepts of voodoo in the Sacred Forest. This afternoon we continue to Grand Popo where we will witness a spectacular Zangbeto ceremony. (50 km)

(B/D), overnight at Grand Popo, Hotel Auberge or similar

Day 4: Grand Popo - Lomé

Today we head west crossing into Togo. At the small town of Glidji we meet His Royal Majesty King Gê-Fioga Sèdegbe Foli Bebe XV, chief of Togo's Gan population. Via Aneho we reach Lac Togo where we board a pirogue that takes us to Togoville. We visit the town's impressive cathedral built during the German colonial period and explore the animistic quarter where we will be met by an extraordinary voodoo priestess. Later in the afternoon we continue to Lomé, Togo's vibrant capital. (60 km)

(B/D), overnight at Lomé, Hotel Novela Star or similar

Day 5: Lomé

This morning we explore Togo's capital. We visit the fascinating Musée International du Golfe de Guinée and the central market, the famed Grand Marché, one of West Africa's largest markets. We also visit the amazing fetish market, where a mix of ingredients of traditional medicines and charms is sold. Alongside with crocodile bones, monkey skulls and leopard skins we will see dried chameleon and birds. The afternoon is left free at your leisure. Explore more of Lomé or enjoy our beach location. (60 km)

(B/D), overnight at Lomé, Hotel Novela Star or similar

Day 6: Lomé - Kloto

After taking breakfast at the hotel, we'll leave Lomé and the tropical beaches of Togo heading northwest to the town of Kpalime. From here the road winds up through the mountains. At Kloto we take a walk through the tropical forests and the village of Kouma Konda with a local guide. We meet the village's artists and learn more about the native plants used in traditional medicine, cosmetics and cooking. This evening we witness traditional dances performed by the villagers and a fire dance. (150 km)

(B/D), overnight at Kloto, Hotel Nectar Auredia or similar

Day 7: Kloto - Afadjato - Wli

A few kilometers from Kloto we cross the border into Ghana. This morning sees us climbing Mount Afadjato, at 885m Ghana's highest peak. Afadjato can be ascended on a good hiking trail with great views. We then continue to the small town of Wli boasting Ghana's largest waterfalls. We spend the afternoon walking to the lower waterfall (easy). (60 km)

(B/D), overnight at Wli, Big Foot Safari Lodge or similar

Day 8: Wli - Tafi Atome - Keta

This morning we leave the Eastern Highlands of the Volta Region heading back to the coast. En route we stop at Tafi Atome where we may have a close encounter with the rare Mona monkeys. The Tafi Atome Monkey Sanctuary was established in 1992 to protect the animals from poachers and other enemies. We then continue via Ho and Sogakope to the town of Keta. The unique location of Keta between the rough Atlantic Ocean and the quiet lagoon has attracted European merchants for hundreds of years. (300 km)

(B/D), overnight at Keta, Lorneh Lodge or similar

Day 9: Keta - Anomabo

This morning we take a boat ride on the Volta River. The town of Ada Foah lies on the river mouth which creates a vast delta dotted with beautiful islands and sand bars. This unique place is a paradise not only for us but also for numerous migratory bird species that use the estuary as grounds for seeing out the winter. Later today we continue our journey along the coastal road to Anomabo Beach which we reach in the afternoon. (320 km)

(B/D), overnight at Anomabo Beach Resort or similar

Day 10: Anomabo - Cape Coast - Kakum - Anomabo

This morning we drive to Cape Coast where we visit the famous slave castle, a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1979. The afternoon is left free to relax at Anomabo Beach. There is an optional tour to Kakum National Park where those with a good head for heights can experience the unique canopy walkway suspended between the huge tropical trees. (20/100 km)

(B/D), overnight at Anomabo Beach Resort or similar

Day 11: Anomabo - Ankobra

Today we head west along the coast to the dream beach of Ankobra. En route we visit the well-preserved ruins of Fort Gross-Friedrichsburg, a Brandenburg-Prussian fortress on the Gold Coast. In the afternoon we reach Ankobra Beach and make ourselves comfortable in our charming hotel. (200 km)

(B/D), overnight at Ankobra Beach Resort or similar

Day 12: Ankobra - Ankasa NP- Ankobra

A day trip takes us to the stilt village of Nzulezo, situated on the freshwater Lake Amansule. It can only be reached by canoe from Beyin. The village, supporting a population of 500 people is entirely constructed of wood and raffia palms. We explore Nzulezo walking on a central walkway and meeting the local people, learn more about the history of the village. From Beyin we head northwest to Ankasa National Park located close to the Côte d'Ivoire border. This exciting ecotourist destination offers a number of natural attractions such as the Bamboo Cathedral, the Big Tree and wild creeks and waterfalls. (160 km)

(B/D), overnight at Ankobra Beach Resort or similar

Day 13: Ankobra - Butre - Busua

Today sees us journeying back east to the dreamy villages of Busua, Butre and Dixcove, where we find some of Ghana's

most beautiful beaches. Our overnight stop is Busua from where we visit the small fishing village of Butre. The main point of historical interest is Fort Battensteyn, the ruin of an old Dutch fortress. Climbing the steep hill to the castle is rewarding: the views from the fortifications are stunning. Later today we take a boat ride on Butre River through mangrove forests. Returning to Busua there is the opportunity to walk to the close-by fishing community of Dixcove. (80 km)

(B/D), overnight at Busua, African Rainbow Resort or similar

Day 14: Busua - Elmina

Cape Three Points is situated close to Busua. A bumpy dirt road passing through vast rubber plantations brings us to Ghana's most southerly point. The 19th-century lighthouse offers a fantastic panoramic view of the cliffs and the rough ocean. Between November and January there are good chances to spot whales.

Later today we continue to Elmina. (120 km)

(B/D), overnight at Elmina, African Village or similar

Day 15: Elmina - Accra

We spend the morning exploring Elmina. We visit Elmina Castle, the oldest fortress on the Gold Coast on a guided tour. You then have time at your leisure to discover more of the town. You can explore the bustling fish market, a ship wharf and a Posuban shrine. Take a stroll to the town's second fortress São Jago da Mina, located on a nearby hill. From here you'll have a stunning view over the picturesque fishing harbour, the impressive Elmina Castle and the deep blue ocean.

This afternoon we continue our journey to Accra, Ghana's vibrant capital city. (170 km)

(B/D), overnight at Accra, Afia Beach Hotel or similar

Day 16: Accra - end of tour

Our final day sees us visiting Accra. During a three-hour city-tour we'll visit the most important sites of Ghana's capital, such as Independence Square, Kwame Nkrumah Memorial, Ussher Fort and James Town. Later you'll have time to visit the National Museum. In the afternoon we return to our hotel. You will have the use of 2 day rooms until the transfer to the airport for the flight home. Our tour ends this evening. (50 km)

(B), day use rooms

Please note that from time to time our itineraries may be amended.