

Burkina Faso: West Africa's Best-Kept Secret

Burkina Faso, literally translated as “Land of the Upright People” and host to Ouagadougou’s famous film festival, has more to offer than exotic names: stunning landscapes, several game-rich natural parks, traditional and modern architecture, rich handicraft and arts, a thriving music scene. Its cultural and scenic diversity mean that you never have to travel too far to find an attraction or experience unlike any other. Enjoy the history, nature and sights of this underrated destination!

Highlights of this trip:

- **Ouagadougou:** Africa’s film capital
- **Sabou:** Sacred crocodiles
- **Manega:** Interesting ethnological museum
- **Bobo Dioulasso:** Sudanese-style mosque,
- **Banfara:** Rocks, waterfalls and hippos
- **Sindou Peaks:** Breathtaking rock formations
- **Loropeni:** Pre-European, mystical stone ruin
- **Gaoua:** Animistic Lobi culture
- **Tiébélé:** Decorated, fortress-like houses
- **Laongo:** Internationally Renowned Sculpture Park

Day 1: Arrival at Ouagadougou Airport

Meet and greet with your tour leader and transfer to the hotel.

(-/-), Overnight at Ouagadougou, Hotel Le Grand Calao or similar

Day 2: Ouagadougou - Bobo Dioulasso

After breakfast, depart Ouagadougou and its friendly people heading towards Bobo Dioulasso. The road is lined with strange-looking baobabs and huge mango trees. At Boromo, cross the Mahoun or Black Volta, one of West Africa's largest rivers. Arrive at Bobo Dioulasso, Burkina Faso's second-largest city, in the late afternoon. There may be time to explore the colourful central market, the Catholic cathedral and the train station, a splendid example of French colonial architecture (370 km).

(B/D), Overnight at Bobo Dioulasso, Hotel Auberge or similar

Day 3: Bobo Dioulasso - Banfara

This morning you discover the town’s famous mud-stick mosque and its old quarters before departing to Banfara, which we reach after one and a half hours. Upon arrival, we explore the stunning surroundings of this town set in beautiful scenery of sugar-cane fields and tree-lined hills. Explore the magnificent rock formations of the *Dômes de Fabédougou* and the picturesque Karfiguela waterfalls (100 km).

(B/D), Overnight at Banfora, Hotel Canne à Sucre or similar

Day 4: Banfora

Day excursion to the village of Sindou, reached by a newly improved road, which we follow from Banfora for about 50 km. The area is known for its craggy chain of castle-like rock formations, left behind when the surrounding softer rocks eroded away. Spend 3 to 4 hours walking through this tranquil wonderland of rocks. In the afternoon boatmen take us out on to the lake Tengrela, a great location for hippo-spotting and bird watching (100 km).

(B/D), Overnight at Banfora, Hotel Canne à Sucre or similar

Day 5: Banfora - Gaoua

Heading east to Gaoua, we reach the land of the Lobi and spend the day with a local guide to learn more about the profoundly animistic culture of this tribe. En route, explore the mysterious ruins of Loropeni, a UNESCO World Heritage site since 2009. In the nearby village of Obiré you'll meet the local king of the Gan people. The Gan are one of the six Lobi sub-ethnic groups and the only one to have a king. One of the king's wives will show you the memorial for the deceased kings and queens. This afternoon you'll reach Gaoua. Before check-in at the hotel, get a final glimpse of Lobi artifacts and historical photographs at the well-kept museum of Gaoua, set up by French anthropologist Madeleine Père. (approx. 250 km).

(B/D), overnight at Gaoua, Hotel Hâla or similar

Day 6: Gaoua

Today you will spend some time in a Lobi settlement to meet the locals and explore their fortress-like houses. In the afternoon we experience the secret and sacred world of a féticheur, a traditional healer at the small village of Kouekouera (approx. 100 km).

(B/D), overnight at Gaoua, Hotel Hâla or similar

Day 7: Gaoua - Léo

In the morning we leave Gaoua and visit the Dagara and the Birifor, who like the Gan belong to the Lobi, near Diébougou. In the afternoon we reach the town of Leo. Enjoy the last rays of sunshine of the day at the magnificent pool of our hotel. (approx. 205 km).

(B/D), Overnight at Leo, Hotel Sissilis or similar

Day 8: Leo - Ouagadougou

This morning you'll return to Ouagadougou, Burkina's modern and vibrant capital. In the afternoon, explore Manega museum, in a rural setting about 50 km north of Ouagadougou, hosting one of the country's best ethnological collections including centuries-old masks and musical instruments as well as items of clothing from Burkina Faso's various ethnic groups. In addition, traditional dwellings of the Mossi, Kassena, Peulh and Bobo have been reconstructed in an open-air museum.

(B/D) Overnight at Ouagadougou, Hotel Le Grand Calao or similar

Tag 9: Ouagadougou: excursion to Tiébélé

Today, embark on a new journey through farmlands and lush woodland savannahs to reach Tiebéle, a Kassena village famous for its fortress-like, windowless houses. Visit the Royal Court decorated in geometrical patterns of red, black and white by the Kassena women. Every year at the beginning of the dry season, they renew the expressive paintings. Each of the patterns holds a symbolism, the most popular symbol being the calabash. We'll return to our hotel at Ouagadougou in time for dinner. (approx. 380 km).

(B/D) Overnight at Ouagadougou, Hotel Le Grand Calao or similar

Day 10: Ouagadougou - end of tour

On your last day, you will visit the small village of Laongo just outside the capital. Here you will find the Sculpture Park, where internationally renowned artists have engraved their works in granite, and the Opera Village project of the late German film director Christoph Schlingensief, two important cultural centres of the country. In the afternoon, you'll set off for a sightseeing tour of Ouagadougou. Visits include the 1930s cathedral and a traditional lost-wax bronze workshop. Before returning to your hotel, you'll visit the Village Artisanal, an artisan centre on the outskirts of the city, dedicated to the skill and artistry of hundreds of local craftsmen. Here you can buy some last souvenirs. (approx. 70 km).

(B/-), Day-use rooms at Le Grand Calao or similar

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