

Ghana: Adventure on the Gold Coast

On this 10-day-journey across Ghana we discover the great diversity of its coastal regions. We visit the impressive Gold Coast castles and the still powerful Ashanti kingdom to learn more about the history of slavery and gold trade. In the little developed hinterland we experience the traditional village life of farmers, artisans and fishermen. We explore the lush rainforest of Kakum National Park, picturesque lagoons, mangrove swamps, fertile cocoa plantations and palm-fringed sandy beaches. This trip takes us on a journey through the natural beauty, rich culture and varied history of one of Africa's most hospitable countries.

Tour Highlights

- Accra: Independence Square, casket shop
- Elmina: Castle and fishing port
- Cape Coast: Slave fortress
- Mesomagor: Typical village life and bamboo orchestra
- Kakum: Canopy Walkway
- Lake Bosumtwi: Sacred lake of the Ashanti
- Kumasi: Culture of the Ashanti
- Bonwire: Kente-weaving village
- Nzulezo stilt village
- Butre: Mangrove boat trip
- Ghana's most beautiful beaches

Day 1: Arrival at Accra Kotoka Airport

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

(-/-), Overnight at Accra, Hotel Paloma or similar

Day 2: Accra - Biriwa

After breakfast we explore Ghana's vibrant capital city. Our city tour includes Independence Square, dominated by the impressive Independence Arch with a black star on the top symbolising freedom and justice. We'll see Kwame Nkrumah Memorial, Ussher Fort where Kwame Nkrumah was imprisoned and James Town, the old part of Accra, characterised by many colonial-era buildings and colourful markets. We should have time to visit the Art Centre Market. This afternoon, we will drive to Biriwa, a small village near Cape Coast. (approx. 135 km)

(B/D), Overnight at Biriwa Beach Hotel or similar

Day 3: Biriwa - Excursion to Mesomagor

Our exploration continues as we turn inland some 50 km, to visit the village of Mesomagor, situated on the eastern border of Kakum National Park. We'll spend the day meeting the local people of Mesomagor and visiting the village with its cocoa and oil palm plantations, cassava and yam fields to learn more about their farming processes. This afternoon we will see the Mesomagor Bamboo Orchestra at their musical best. They perform war dances, story dances, modern and creative dances. Later this afternoon we return to our beach hotel.

(B/D), Overnight at Biriwa Beach Hotel or similar

Day 4: Biriwa: Excursion to Cape Coast and Kakum

This morning we'll visit Cape Coast, the former commercial and administrative capital of Britain's Gold Coast colony and the place where most of the slaves were held before being shipped mainly to the New World. We'll explore Cape Coast Castle with its dungeons, the Door of No Return and its museum giving a good overview of the history of slave trade.

This afternoon, we'll leave the coast heading inland to visit Kakum National Park. There is a canopy walkway some 45 m high consisting of seven narrow bridges suspended between seven huge trees. Here those with a good head for heights have the rare opportunity to see the lush rainforest at the canopy level. You can also take a guided nature walk to see the fascinating rain forest and learn more about the tropical plants and trees and their use in traditional medicine. Later this afternoon we'll arrive back on the Atlantic coast at Biriwa.

(B/D), Overnight at Biriwa Beach Hotel or similar

Day 5: Biriwa - Lake Bosumtwi

Leaving the coast we continue north through a lush forested landscape to the crater Lake Bosumtwi (190 km) which was created as a result of a meteorite impact. The scenery is fantastic: thickly wooded mountains encircle the lake. The lake is held sacred by the Ashanti people. According to traditional belief, the souls of the dead come here to bid farewell to the god Twi, living in this lake. The next two nights we will spend in a guesthouse situated right on the shore of Lake Bosumtwi.

(B/D), Overnight at Abono, Lake Bosumtwi Paradise Resort or depending on group size Cocoa Village

Day 6: Excursion to Kumasi and Bonwire

This morning we will drive to Kumasi, and explore Ghana's second largest city. Founded in 1695, Kumasi is the capital of the Ashanti Kingdom. Here King Osei Tutu I received the Golden Stool, sent to him from heaven. The Golden Stool is believed to embody the spirit and the unity of the Ashanti nation. We'll explore Kejetia, the largest open air market in West Africa and the Cultural Centre which houses an excellent crafts market and the Prempeh II Jubilee museum with a good collection of historical treasures including the fake Golden Stool. This afternoon we'll continue to the village of Bonwire, famous for its traditional Kente cloth. The craftsmen use ancient hand looms producing long cloth strips of various patterns which are sewn together to make the final product. Kente cloth is mainly made by Ashanti and Ewe people in the center and south of Ghana. Initially, kente was the cloth of kings but now it is worn by many different people in Ghana and other West African countries. Later today we'll visit an Ashanti shrine where we'll learn more about the traditional Ashanti architecture (UNESCO World Heritage Site). We'll return to our hotel in time for dinner. (approx. 130 km)

(B/D), Overnight at Abono, Lake Bosumtwi Paradise Resort or depending on group size Cocoa Village

Day 7: Lake Bosumtwi - Axim/Ankobra

Today our journey takes us through the gold towns of Obuasi and Tarkwa where some of the world's largest gold mines are found. In the afternoon we'll 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. We'll continue on to Dixcove with Fort Metal Cross overlooking the picturesque fishing harbour. The former British castle, built in 1696, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1979. Towards evening we'll reach Ankobra and make ourselves comfortable in our charming hotel. (approx. 280 km)

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

Day 8: Axim - Excursion to Nzulezo Stilt Village

Today an excursion 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. (approx. 100 km)

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

Day 9: Axim - Elmina - Biriwa

Continuing east we finally arrive at Elmina. From a bridge over the Benya River you can enjoy a stunning view of the busy life in the harbour of Elmina. Here we'll visit Elmina Castle, founded in 1482 by the Portuguese to protect their merchants and the gold-rich lands they had discovered. Along with Cape Coast Castle and Fort St. Jago, Elmina Castle was recognized by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site in 1972. (approx. 150 km)

(B/D), Overnight at Biriwa Beach Hotel or similar

Day 10: Biriwa - end of tour

After lunch time we drive back to Accra. Transfer to the airport. Our tour ends at the airport (70 km)
(B)

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