

## Senegal | Practical Information

### Accommodation

On our trip through Senegal we stay in clean thoroughly selected 2-3-stars-hotels. The rooms have en suite facilities, electricity and water supply, hot water and air condition or fan. In Lompoul we have an overnight in traditional Moorish tents. Simenti camp in the Niokolo Koba National Park has simple huts with mosquito nets, shower, toilet and fan. One night you'll spend on the ferry from Dakar to Ziguinchor in standard cabins. Most of the hotels have clean swimming pools.

Here is a selection of the hotels used on our tour:

[www.lac-rose-palal.com](http://www.lac-rose-palal.com)

[www.hotel-kadiandoumagne.com](http://www.hotel-kadiandoumagne.com)

[www.horizons-bleus-senegal.com](http://www.horizons-bleus-senegal.com)

[www.keursaloum.com](http://www.keursaloum.com)

[www.lescordons-bleus.com](http://www.lescordons-bleus.com)

[www.hotelmermoz.com](http://www.hotelmermoz.com)

### Airlines

Airlines with scheduled flights from Europe to Dakar include Turkish Airlines, Air France, Brussels Airlines, British Airways, TAP Portugal and Ethiopian Airlines.

For more information please consult the following websites:

[www.turkishairlines.com](http://www.turkishairlines.com), [www.brusselsairlines.com](http://www.brusselsairlines.com), [www.airfrance.com](http://www.airfrance.com), [www.britishairways.com](http://www.britishairways.com),  
[www.flyethiopian.com](http://www.flyethiopian.com), [www.flytap.co](http://www.flytap.co)

If you book a tailor-made trip with us you can fly the airline of your choice and we can coordinate your flight arrangement with the land itinerary. We will be pleased to provide you with our consultation and support.

### Clothing

Light short-sleeved cotton clothing is recommended for the days and a long-sleeved shirt and trousers for the evenings which will help you to fend off mosquitoes and face the cooler temperatures in the winter months from November to February. Although Senegal is very tolerant, shorts and short skirts are ill-advised for women. It is also unusual for men to wear shorts. In the rainy season you need a waterproof jacket and/or an umbrella. (see chapter "when to go"). In some hotels there is a laundry service on offer, so you can get your washing done. As for footwear, you should carry with you a good pair of walking shoes for our hiking tours and a pair of sandals. Thongs are useful in shower and pool areas. Don't forget your swimwear! You will have the opportunity to swim in the sea, relax on beautiful beaches and bathe in the pools of your hotels.

## Communication

International and national calls can be made from post offices and hotels. The prefix for UK is 0044, for USA and Canada 001, for Senegal 00221. In major cities you can make phone calls with your mobile phone. As in many other African countries, the mobile industry in Senegal is booming, and coverage is excellent across the country. For detailed information please contact your provider prior to departure. If you have a GSM phone and it has been „unlocked“, it is possible to buy a local SIM card for about 4 US-\$ and buy top-ups.

A number of cyber cafés are located in the capital, Dakar, and other cities and prices are not expensive. Please note that most of your hotels have internet access.

## Electric Supply & Plugs

220 volts alternating current. Generally, you can recharge your batteries in your hotel room without a problem. Senegal uses two-pin continental-style plugs, so you will probably need an adapter. In the Lompoul desert they have a generator which is working in the evening so that you can charge your batteries at the reception. Remember to charge your batteries wherever you have the opportunity. Please note that power cuts are frequent. You will need to bring a good torch with you.

## Food and Drinks

In the itinerary we state which meals are included on each day.

Food included in the breakfast varies according to hotel standard. Most hotels serve bread, butter, jam, sometimes honey and processed cheese or omelette for breakfast. It also includes tea or coffee.

Upmarket hotels usually serve buffet breakfast. Dinner we usually take in the restaurants of our hotels or in clean, thoroughly selected restaurants in town. In many places international cuisine is served.

- **Senegal**

Among West African cuisines, Senegalese cuisine is considered to be the most influenced by foreign cultures. North-African, French, Portuguese and lebanese influences can be seen in many of the country's dishes. Senegal's main staple food is made of millet, rice, couscous and plantain served with groundnut or onion sauces. Dubbed as the national dish of Senegal, *Thieboudienne*, a rice dish, consisting of flavoursome fish and tomato paste, is served primarily on festive occasions. Another traditional dish is *Yassa Poulet* or *Poisson*, a chicken or fish dish characterized by its spicy marinade made from oil, lemon juice, onions, garlic and mustard. *Mafe*, a lamb or beef stew cooked with a sauce based on groundnuts, is very likely to be found on the menus. There are several variations of this stew including chicken, fish or guinea-fowl recipes. The popular couscous-type millet dish *Chere* originates from the Sérèr people but it is also common to Mauretanie and Gambian cooking. Due to Senegal's location on the ocean, seafood and fish are a diet mainstay. Sole, tuna, bream, barracuda, and also prawns, shellfish, lobster and crayfish are very popular. In the interior of the country, freshwater fish like perch is commonly eaten.

Tap water should be boiled or filtered before you drink it. In all bigger cities you can buy mineral water in bottles. A typical thirst-quenching drink is bissap, a tea-like drink made of hibiscus petals which is usually served cold. Or try other tasty juices such as tamarind or ginger juice and depending on the season baobab juice. Soft drinks like Coca cola, Sprite and Fanta are available throughout the country. Tea is very important in the Senegalese culture, but also beer is produced, the most popular brand is La Gazelle.

## Health

A Yellow Fever vaccination and certificate is not longer a compulsory requirement for entry into Senegal, unless you have come from a yellow fever infected country within six days of your arrival (see visa requirements).

Immunisations against tetanus, diphtheria, polio and hepatitis A are recommended by the World Health Organization, regardless of your destination. For other vaccinations and prophylactic measures please consult your doctor, travel clinic or tropical medical bureau before departure. For further information please consult our Infoportal.

To prevent traveller's diarrhoea, peel fresh fruits before eating them and avoid fresh salads and ice cubes in basic restaurants. Be careful and very selective when eating or drinking in street stalls and make sure that meat is always well cooked and plates and serving utensils are clean. Don't drink hastily ice-cold drinks. Consult your doctor before departure for appropriate medication and rehydration mixtures.

The best prevention of malaria is to avoid being bitten. The evening wear clothes covering your entire body and use mosquito repellent. Sleep under a mosquito net and/or turn AC or fan on. For further prophylactic measures consult a specialist for tropical diseases.

Keep away from street dogs, monkeys and other mammals that could carry rabies. Avoid bathing in standing bodies of water because they are high-risk areas for bilharzia.

## Literature

### Travel guides:

- West Africa, Lonely Planet, 9th edition, published September 2017
- The Gambia & Senegal, Lonely Planet, 4th edition, published October 2009
- Senegal, Bradt Travel Guide, 2nd edition, published February 2019
- The Rough Guide to West Africa, 5th edition, published June 2009

For those, who speak French:

- Senegal, Le Petit Futé, edition 2020

### Novels and biographies:

- So Long a Letter, Mariama Ba, Pearson Education Limited, 2008
- The Beggar's Strike, Aminata Sow Fall, Longman edition 1986
- God's Bits of Wood, Sembene Ousmane, Pearson Education Limited, edition 1995

## Money

The CFA franc (Communauté Financière Africaine) represented on international banking systems by XOF, is the common currency of Benin and Togo. Exchange rates are \$1 = 602 CFA, £1 = 789 CFA, 1 CAD = 468 CFA (as of March 2022), €1 = 655.95 CFA. The CFA franc is pegged directly to the Euro. Notes are in denominations of CFA 10,000, 5,000, 2,000 and 1,000, coins come in CFA500, 250, 200, 100, 50 and 25. Coins of CFA 10 or 5 exist, but they are extremely rare.

Please note that finding change can be very difficult at times, particularly in small shops, restaurants, taxis and street stalls, so you should always have a good supply of cash money in small denominations or coins.

You can change cash money in banks, some hotels and foreign exchange bureaus in Dakar and other major cities. Banking hours in Senegal vary according to the bank and its location. The main banks like Ecobank, SGBS, BICIS and others are open from 08.00 am to 04.00 pm Mondays through Fridays, and from 09.00 am to 12.00 pm on Saturdays. Some of them close for a lunch break and reopen in the afternoon. However, banks exchange money usually at a lower rate than foreign exchange bureaus. In foreign exchange bureaus all widely used currencies like euro, US dollar, Swiss franc, British Pound Sterling are easy to be exchanged. In all larger cities there are banks equipped with ATM machines,

allowing you to withdraw money using your Visa card. Cashpoints are often not working or malfunctioning, so do not count on them. Please note, that most banks and cashpoints only accept Visa card. Mastercard, American Express or other credit cards are generally not accepted. In Senegal it is practically impossible to use the credit card as a means of payment, only some international hotels, shops and large restaurants it is possible to pay with credit card. EC Maestro card is an absolute no-go everywhere in Senegal. Travellers' cheques are accepted, but only in banks. Commission is extremely high and you will get a low exchange rate. You will be asked to produce both your passport and the receipt you get from your bank when purchasing them.

## Photography

Senegal is a real treasure trove for passionate photographers. Whether the magnificent bird sanctuaries of Djoudj, Langue de Barbarie and Saloum, the bustling fishing port of Saint-Louis, the Mediterranean style architecture on Gorée Island or the Great Mosque in Touba: there are countless photographic subjects.

Before you snap people please ask permission. A small friendly conversation can help you to break the ice and win your subject's sympathy. Taking pictures is not allowed inside the museums. It is strictly forbidden to take pictures of military buildings and people wearing uniforms, airports, dams, bridges, power plants, police stations, control posts along the roads and border posts!

## Safety

The danger most likely to affect a tourist is pick-pocketing, particularly in busy markets, bus stations, in crowds in the streets or in shared taxis. Bag snatchers are few, but can occasionally strike, speeding past on mopeds. Do not wear expensive jewellery or carry large amounts of cash or expensive items such as cameras. You should keep belongings close when walking down streets. We recommend you to keep your documents, cash money, credit card and cheques in a skin-hugging hidden money-belt or a button-up chest pocket. Always travel with photocopies of your documents and keep them in a separate bag. Avoid walking around the streets at night, especially alone. During late evening or around/after midnight, we recommend you to use a taxi.

For up-to-date information and safety and security advice about your destination please check your government's travel advisory: [www.fco.gov.uk](http://www.fco.gov.uk), [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov), [www.voyage.gc.ca](http://www.voyage.gc.ca)

## Senegal

In case of emergency please contact your embassy or representation in Senegal:

### For UK citizens:

- **British Embassy in Dakar**  
20, rue Docteur Guillet  
BP 6025  
Dakar, Senegal  
Tel: +221 33 823 26 66 or +221 33 823 73 92  
Fax: Fax +221 33 823 27 66  
Emergency Consular assistance (24 hour) Tel: + 44 (0) 207 008 1500 or +221 33 823 73 92,  
e-mail: [britembe@orange.sn](mailto:britembe@orange.sn)  
For further information click here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/world/senegal>

### For US-citizens :

- **Embassy of the United States of America, Consular Section**

Route des Almadies  
Dakar, Senegal  
Telephone: (221) 33-879-4000  
e-mail: DakarACS@state.gov  
For further information click here: <http://dakar.usembassy.gov/>

**For Canadian citizens :**

- **Embassy of Canada to Senegal**

Rue Galliéni x Amadou Cissé Dia

P.O. Box 3373

Dakar, Senegal

Telephone: +221-33-889-4700

Fax: + 221-33-889-4720

E-Mail: [dakar@international.gc.ca](mailto:dakar@international.gc.ca)

For further information click here: [www.canadainternational.gc.ca/senegal/](http://www.canadainternational.gc.ca/senegal/)

## **Time Zone Difference**

Senegal's time zone is UTC/GMT + 0. As it does not observe daylight saving time it is one hour behind in summertime.

## **Tipping**

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized part of life in Africa. In the more well-to-do restaurants you can tip 5 – 10% if you were satisfied. For hotel tipping guidelines are as follows: for porters 200 - 300 CFA for one piece, for housekeeping 300 - 500 CFA per person per night. At your discretion you might also consider tipping your driver, tour guide and local guides in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

## **Visa Requirements**

Please note that an international Certificate of Vaccination is no longer compulsory for visitors to Senegal unless you have come from a yellow fever infected country within six days of your arrival (see chapter "Health").

Visas are not required by UK, US and Canadian citizens. Passports valid for a minimum of six months beyond date of departure with at least 1 blank page for the stamp are required by all. All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related issues with the relevant embassy or consulate prior to departure.

**For UK citizens:**

- **Senegalese Embassy in London UK**

39 Marloes Rd,

London W8 6LA

Tel.: +44 20 7937 7237 or :+44 20 7938 4048

fax: +44 (0) 20 7938 2546

For further information click here: [www.senegal.embassyhomepage.com](http://www.senegal.embassyhomepage.com)

**For US citizens:**

- **Embassy of Senegal in the United States**  
2215 M street, NW,  
Washington DC 20037  
Telephone: (202) 234-0540  
Fax: (202) 629-2961  
Email: [contact@ambasenegal-us.org](mailto:contact@ambasenegal-us.org)  
For further information click here: [www.ambasenegal-us.org](http://www.ambasenegal-us.org)

**For Canadian citizens:**

- **Embassy of Senegal in Ottawa**  
57 Marlborough Avenue  
Ottawa, ON K1N 8E8, Canada  
Téléphone : +1 613-238-6392  
Fax : +1 613- 238- 2695  
For further information click here: <http://www.ambsecanada.org/>.

**What to take**

- Passport
- Air ticket
- International yellow vaccination card
- Photocopies of your documents (it's good to keep them in a separate bag)
- Cash money, credit card
- Hard top suitcase or tear resistant travel bag + day bag
- Protective cover for your suitcase
- Swimwear
- A pair of flip flops (for shower and pool etc.)
- A pair of sandals
- Comfortable footwear, non-slip hiking boots
- Long lightweight trousers, shorts, long-sleeved shirt for the evening, light thin cotton clothing
- Sunhat and sunglasses
- Suncream
- Umbrella and/or waterproof jacket
- Towel
- Toilet paper, tissues, wet wipes
- Torch with spare bulb and batteries
- Swiss knife
- Personal first-aid kit
- Insect repellent
- Photographic equipment, memory cards/film rolls, batteries
- Binoculars

**When to go****Climate**

**Senegal** has a primarily tropical climate with two alternating seasons: In the north of the country a long dry season from November to May influenced by the harmattan, a desert wind bringing dust from the

Sahara alternates with a short rainy season from June to October dominated by strong southeast winds. Average annual rainfall measures around 350mm, whereas the rainy season continues longer in the South receiving an annual rainfall of about 1.500 mm. Winter temperatures from December to February range from 22-27°C on the coast, interior temperatures can reach as high as 40 °C. Temperatures in Dakar are usually mild, moderated by sea breezes, ranging between 18 - 26 °C in January and 24 - 32 °C in July.

**Best period for this trip:** from November to April

### **What you should know before you go**

... Senegal is a wonderful country to visit, but remember that Africans have a different perception of time. A trip through West Africa requires a high degree of flexibility, patience and tolerance, western standards regarding service, punctuality, comfort and hygiene cannot be applied here. Although we thoroughly choose our vehicles and use only vehicles in good condition, flat tires or other car breakdowns can happen. The road conditions in African countries can change unexpectedly due to heavy rainfalls requiring a detour or bridges can suddenly become impassable. We do our utmost best to ensure a smooth journey but please understand that delays may occur. Technical defects or service inconveniences in the hotels such as the lack of towels can often be rectified within a few minutes. In case of any inconvenience please contact your tour guide!

All information, opinions and advice contained on our Website are provided without any guarantees, conditions or warranties as to its accuracy and for general information only.