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Sorry! There are no remaining departures for "The Voodoo Trail" (DVVT), [but here are some similar trips](#).



## **The Voodoo Trail**

16 days, Lomé to Ouagadougou

Trip code DVVT

### **What's included**

- Your Welcome Moment: Meet Your CEO and Group
- Arrival transfer

- Lomé city tour
- Voodoo ceremony experience
- Kpalime guided nature walk
- Slave route guided walk (Ouidah) with Python Temple visit
- Ganvié stilt village visit (Lake Nowke)
- Porto-Novo city tour
- Audience with Yoruba king (if his schedule permits)
- Abomey palace guided tour
- Egun dancing mask ceremony
- Fulani tribe visit
- Moba tribe visit
- Somba and Tamberma adobe castles visit
- Gurunsi tribe visit and traditional dance ceremony
- Dagarti and Lobi tribes visit
- Loropeni visit
- Guen king and tribe visit
- Senoufo village visit
- Banfora town tour
- Bobo city tour
- Bwa mask ceremony
- Craft market visit
- All transport between destinations and to/from included activities

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**VERY IMPORTANT:** Please ensure that you print a final copy of your Trip Details to review a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans.

**VALIDITY:** Valid for all trips departing January 1st, 2015 and onwards

# Itinerary



**NOTE:** Accommodations vary per departure and are subject to change until tour start date; they are not final and should be used as examples only. Travellers may login to the G Adventures App to view accommodations specific to their departure.

Day 1

## Lomé

Arrive at any time, arrival transfer included.

There are no activities planned until an evening welcome meeting.



## Today's Activities

Private Vehicle

Lomé-Tokoin Airport - Lomé

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

### ACTIVITY

Your opportunity to meet your CEO and fellow travellers, and learn more about your tour. Opt to join the group for a local meal afterwards. Don't forget to see the notice in the lobby (or ask reception) for the official time and place to meet up with the group.

Enjoy a city tour of Lomé, including the fetish market. Encounter voodoo firsthand at a local celebration en route the forested area around Kpalimé.

Enjoy a city tour including visit to the central market, colonial buildings, and the fetish market.

The central market is home to the 'Nana Benz', selling the colourful fabric synonymous with West Africa. Visit the fetish market for an eclectic assortment of ingredients for love potions and magical concoctions.

Later, travel to the Kpalimé region. Join a voodoo ceremony in one of the local villages.



## Meals included

Breakfast



## Today's Activities

Lomé City Tour

Lomé

Explore the vibrant seaside capital of Togo— Lomé. The only African town to have been colonized by Germans, British, and French, and one of only a few capital cities on a border with another country, Lomé is a crossroads for trade and people from many cultures, cosmopolitan despite its small size.

Visit the central market with its famous “Nana Benz,” and their near-monopoly on expensive European pagne (cloth), sold all over West Africa. The colonial buildings in the administrative quarter are a photographer’s dream, and retain a flavour of earlier times.

Not to be missed is the “fetish market,” with its eclectic assortment of ingredients for love potions and magical concoctions. Locals head here to buy ingredients for amulets, sacrifices or treatments of diseases. Visit with a guide to help interpret the use of the various goods in traditional African religions.

Private Vehicle

Lomé - Kpalimé

140km

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Voodoo Ceremony

Kpalimé

Join a Voodoo ceremony in one of the local villages. The compelling rhythm of the percussion and the chants of the participants help to invoke the voodoo spirit, which takes possession of some of the dancers who fall into a deep trance.

The traditional religion on the Gulf of Guinea coast, all along the coast of Benin and Togo, Voodoo is an animist religion, passed down through generations and still practiced today. Voodoo practices are not a form of black magic; to millions both here and abroad, Voodoo represents a religion that gives meaning and order to their lives.

Day 3

## Kpalimé/Ouidah

Take a guided forest walk in Kpalimé, then travel back through Lomé before crossing the border to Ouidah, Benin.

Enjoy time in the Kloto forest learning more about indigenous plants and how the locals use them.

Continue back towards Lomé and stop for lunch before heading to Ouidah. Here, learn about the history of the slave trade in the area and follow the sombre slave route to the sea.



### Meals included

Breakfast



### Today's Activities

Kpalimé Guided Nature Walk

Kpalimé

With its lush green vegetation, the Kloto forest is the perfect place for a short hike to start the day. Begin near a small village with a local ethnologist guide, and continue on some paths in search of some of the many types of butterflies, while learning a bit about the region's flora.

Private Vehicle

Kpalimé - Savekondj

It's a full day of sightseeing from Kpalimé to Ouidah, jumping in and out of the van along the way.

Border Crossing (Togo - Benin)

Savekondj - Hillakondj

8h

280km

Ready for a little more ink in your passport? Grab your bags and get ready to check another country off your bucket list.

Private Vehicle

Hillakondj - Ouidah

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Day 4

## Ouidah/Porto-Novo

Take a guided walk along the slave route in Ouidah and visit to the Temple of the Python. Take a boat across Lake Nokwe, stopping en route to visit the Ganvié stilt village.

Visit more sights around fascinating Ouidah before crossing Lake Nokwe. Stop at the unique Ganvié stilt village, built completely in the middle of the lake.

Continue on to the capital of Benin, Porto-Novo. With time, visit some of the city.



### Meals included

Breakfast



### Today's Activities

Slave Route Guided Walk

Ouidah

Learn about the Slave Route in Ouidah, a town where it is believed that thousands of slaves passed through en route to the Caribbean and the Americas. Understand the impact the slave trade had on the region and culture.

Temple of Python Visit

Ouidah

The Temple of the Python in Ouidah is an important centre for voodoo activity.

Private Vehicle

Ouidah - Ganvié

Drive from Ouidah to the port. Change to boat for a 20 min ride to the stilt village.

Ganvié Stilt Village Visit

Ganvié

Visit the intriguing stilt village of Ganvié, which is the largest and most beautiful stilt village in Africa. The approximately 18,000 inhabitants of the Tofinou ("water people") ethnic group build their huts on teak stilts over the water and cover the roofs with a thick layer of leaves. The entire community is situated in the middle of Lake Nokwe for various reasons: as the inhabitants live exclusively on fishing, this puts them closer to the deepest parts of the lake where fish are plentiful.

A local guide from the village will show us around, and give us a bit of perspective on what life is like for the villagers.

Boat

Ganvié - Porto-Novo

Climb aboard and get your float on.

Day 5

## Porto-Novo/Bohicon

Enjoy a Porto-Novo city tour with visits to the Ethnographic Museum, religious centres, and herbal market. Visit a genuine Yoruba king, the Abomey Royal Palace, see the colourful Egun Dancing Mask celebration, and visit the Savalov.

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### Meals included

Breakfast



## Today's Activities

Porto-Novo City Tour

Porto-Novo

See more of the capital city of Porto-Novo. The Portuguese town has beautiful antique architecture and a colourful traditional market. Visit the ethnographic museum to view tribal masks and statues.

Private Vehicle

Porto-Novo - Bohicon

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Audience with the King of the Yoruba of South Benin

Kétou

Kétou is said to have been founded by Ede, son of Sopasan and grandson of Oduduwa, who ruled the Yoruba kingdom of Ile-Ife. The dynasty in Kétou is directly tied to the Ife Kingdom.

The present king of Kétou is the 50th Oba and he has been in power since 2005. He will receive us at his royal palace, surrounded by his court (if his schedule permits). We will be granted the honour to speak with him and get to know a little more about his role of traditional chief in a modern state.

Abomey Palace Guided Tour

Bohicon

Visit the Abomey Royal Palace. The walls of the palace are decorated with bas-reliefs representing symbols of the ancient Dahomey kings. Listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the palace displays the items belonging to the ancient kings: thrones, ancient cult alters, statues, costumes, and arms. Learn about this kingdom whose economy was based on the slave trade for many years.

In the middle of the royal courtyard is a temple built with a mixture of clay and human blood. At the height of their power there were up to 4,000 women in the palace harem. The previous splendor of the court is quite apparent.

Attend a performance of Egun masks; this is a traditional celebration of the Fon and Yoruba of South Benin. Travel to Dassa and see the sights.

Attend a performance of Egun masks; this is a traditional celebration of the Fon and Yoruba of South Benin. Egun masks represent the spirits of the deceased, and according to the local population, they “are” the deceased.

Visit some remains of the capital city of an ancient kingdom in Dassa. Stop at the wooden horse walk up the Royal Hill, where the kings used to be buried.



## Meals included

Breakfast



## Today's Activities

Private Vehicle

Bohicon - Dassa-Zoumé

415km

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Egun Mask Performance

Dassa-Zoumé

Attend a performance of Egun masks; this is a traditional celebration of the Fon and Yoruba of South Benin. Egun masks represent the spirits of the deceased, and according to the local population, they “are” the deceased.

Wooden Horse Visit

Dassa-Zoumé

Stop at the wooden horse, given by Portuguese merchants in 1903 to the chief who complained that four of his horses had died from a mysterious disease.

Royal Hill Walk

Dassa-Zoumé

Walk up the Royal Hill, where the kings used to be buried. As we are now in the voodoo world, be sure to notice how the site is “protected” by many statues and the remains of recent rituals.

Day 7

## Dassa-Zoumé/Natitingou

Stop at the fetish of Dankoli en route to a Fulani encampment. Witness their nomadic culture firsthand.

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### Meals included

Breakfast

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### Today's Activities

Private Vehicle

Dassa-Zoumé - Natitingou

1h-2h

50km

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Dankoli Fetish Visit

Savalou

Stop at the fetish of Dankoli, the gateway to the Voodoo world. Pilgrims plant thousands of wood sticks to testify their prayers to the fetish priest. When they are satisfied, they come to sacrifice the promised ransom: a goat, a chicken, or a cow. A mound of blood, palm oil, and sodabi (local liquor) are presented to the long line of pilgrims, all looking for a solution to their problems.

Fulani Tribe Visit

Travel to a Fulani encampment to spend time with locals and learn about their traditions. The Fulani people are one of the largest nomadic groups in the world and are known for being the first group to convert to Islam in Western Africa. The word "Fulani" means beauty.

Enjoy a day of walking in the land of the Somba people. Learn about the unique architecture and meet the locals.

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## Meals included

Breakfast

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## Today's Activities

Private Vehicle

Natitingou - Atakora Department

80km

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Somba Villages Visit

Atakora Department

Walk through Somba land. Somba in the local language means nude. In certain isolated villages people still dress in a simple cloth and the women are covered with only amulets. These traditions, due to the geographic isolation of the tribe, have not yet been contaminated by outsiders.

The Somba architecture is characterized by small castles three stories high that serve as the families' dwellings. These beautiful fortified dwellings are separated from the others for reasons of ownership determined in accordance with the size of the cultivable land and also to guarantee the privacy of a group of people who are, by nature, individualists.

Walk from village to village through a hilly landscape. Our day will be enriched by friendly meetings with locals along the path.

Cross back into Togo and visit Tamberma and Moba villages.

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## Meals included

Breakfast

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## Today's Activities

Private Vehicle

Atakora Department - Datori

Spend a full day visiting villages, hopping in and out of the van.

Border Crossing (Benin - Togo)

Datori - Nadoba

Ready for a little more ink in your passport? Grab your bags and get ready to check another country off your bucket list.

Private Vehicle

Nadoba - Dapaong

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Moba Tribe Visit

Dapaong

In Northwest Togo, encounter the region of the Moba people, the most populous tribe of the Savanes region, the northernmost of the five regions of Togo.

Visit small villages spread over the desolate landscape, which, depending on the season, can be lush green or the colour of earth. See what agricultural products these communities farm, perhaps try some of their produce, and learn a bit about the Moba's round clay homesteads, which are topped with a conical straw roof typical of the area.

Tamberma Villages Visit

Dapaong

The Tamberma tribe live in fortified dwellings, similar to the Somba. The houses are built by hand, layer by layer, putting round balls of mud and shaping them following the design of the house. We visit these homes to get a better sense of life in this region.

All the family, food, and the animals are kept in the house, for the survival of the family group in case of attack of enemies. And also, in order to defend themselves, as well as a desire to escape all external

influences, these people have for centuries sought refuge in the hard to access Atakora mountain chain.

Day 10

## Dapaong/Pô

Cross into Burkina Faso. Visit the Mossi people then stop in the towns of Bagre and Zabre. See the Gurunsi tribe's fresco houses.



### Meals included

Breakfast



### Today's Activities

Private Vehicle

Dapaong - Sinkassé

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Border Crossing (Togo - Burkina Faso)

Sinkassé - Bittou

Ready for a little more ink in your passport? Grab your bags and get ready to check another country off your bucket list.

Private Vehicle

Bittou - Pô

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Gurunsi Tribe Visit

Nahouri Province

Meet the Gurunsi people, who live in colourfully decorated fortified houses built of dung. Gurunsi society is organized around gender: men do the building, while women are in charge of painting and decorating the home.

Day 11

## Pô/Gaoua

Travel through the savannah to the Dagarti region and Gaoua. Explore the Dagarti tribe's villages.

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### Meals included

Breakfast

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### Today's Activities

Private Vehicle

Pô - Gaoua

360km

Travel time includes stops.

Dagarti Tribe Visit

Gaoua

Stop at the villages of the Dagarti peoples, made in a fortified style similar but distinct to the Lobi style. Here we may take a walk through a number of villages, viewing many aspects of the culture and agriculture.

Day 12

## Gaoua

Explore the fascinating Lobi tribe's villages with a local Lobi guide. Meet a traditional healer and have a peek inside his home.

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### Meals included

Breakfast

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### Today's Activities

Private Vehicle

Gaoua

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Lobi Tribe Visit

Gaoua

We head out to visit the shy, traditional Lobi people of Burkina Faso: men still carry bows and arrows, and old women wear lip disks, while wooden statues are carved for an ancient cult. Visit their unique villages with a Lobi translator. Each family lives in a large, clay fortified building.

Traditional Healer Visit

Gaoua

Meet also a traditional healer. Traditional religion is still very strong among the Lobi. He will receive us in his house, surrounded by fetishes and shrines.

Explore the Loropeni ruins, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Later, visit the Guen people and their king and gold diggers in Senoufo village.

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## Meals included

Breakfast

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## Today's Activities

Private Vehicle

Gaoua - Banfora

10h

220km

Travel time includes stops.

Ruins of Loropéni Visit

Loropéni

Stop at the Loropéni ruins, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The ruins are surrounded by mystery. The property is made up of an array of stone walls, one of the best preserved examples of fortified settlements in West Africa. The area is linked to the tradition of gold mining, which seems to have persisted for at least seven centuries.

Meet with Chief of Obiré in Kingdom of Guen

Obiré

Meet the chief of Obire, the 29th of his dynasty. This long lasting kingdom is deep-rooted in West African history. This is where the Guen settled centuries ago. The meeting will be a great opportunity to learn more about the traditions of these people.

Gold Diggers in Senoufo Village Visit

Banfora

Meet the local gold diggers. Men dig deep holes and bring out clay which is washed and filtered by the local women to turn into gold dust. This is reminiscent of the times when caravans were carrying gold to the north, only to return later with caravans of salt.

Visit sights around the Banfora region, like the Pics of Sindou. Hike to the top for breathtaking views. Take a boat excursion on Lake Tengrela and keep your eyes peeled for hippos. Continue on to Bobo.

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## Meals included

Breakfast

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## Today's Activities

Private Vehicle

Banfora - Bobo-Dioulasso

95km

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Pics of Sindou Visit

Sindou

The Banfora region is home to some of the country's most spectacular natural sites, such as the enigmatic Pics of Sindou. Walk to reach the top of one of these pics -- the view is absolutely stunning.

Lake Tengrela Boat Excursion

Tengréla

Take a boat excursion on the lake of Tengrela. It's not uncommon to spot wildlife here, including the famous hippopotamus.

Bobo City Tour

Bobo-Dioulasso

The town of Bobo-Dioulasso is the greenest in Burkina Faso. Several quarters in Bobo have kept their colonial atmosphere. The train station was built in Neo-Moresco style. In sharp contrast is the old Mosque and surrounding quarter, which was built in the Sudanese style.

Although Bobo is the second largest city in the country, life still moves at a slow pace here. Bobo's sweeping avenues lined with mango trees, the Sudanese style colonial buildings, and the rich mixture of people give the city a texture all its own.

Witness a Bwa mask celebration before continuing to the capital of Ouagadougou.

Arriving in the capital in the late afternoon, and enjoy a final night out with the group recounting unforgettable experiences from the trip.

En route to the Ouagadougou, we search out a Bwa ceremonial dance. This dance uses wooden masks, with each mask representing characters in family myths. Some masks represent animals, other represent bush spirits; particularly striking are the “plank” masks, featuring a stylized face surmounted by a tall, rectangular plank. Plank masks tend to be two-dimensional with impressive geometrical patterns. These masks are predominantly white, red, and black.

The traditional dance ceremony is an important aspect of village life, and masks are considered the spirits of the village, providers of the agricultural bounty that the village depends on. As such, the spirits are to be appeased through cult offerings. Masks are symbols relating human beings, nature and spirits. With the start of a drumbeat, the spirits arrive in shape of wooden owls, butterflies, antelopes, buffaloes, and hyenas; spectators participate with songs, comments and laughter. The dance is a form of street theatre that melds sacred, traditional and entertainment elements.

Ouagadougou, the capital of Burkina Faso, is seen as part village, part town. Life in the city plays out in the streets, in a unique fusion of village and town ambiances: old taxis, bicycles, scooters, donkeys pulling carts, porters carrying loads on their heads. Streets are lined with informal traders offering colourful goods, small open-air restaurants serve beer, music blares, and everywhere chickens and goats run free. Street barbers shave their clients in the shade of mango trees, while in the street markets the colours and smells assault the senses. On the outskirts a large area is dedicated to craftsmen displaying their wares—a great chance to appreciate the skills and the products of African artisans.

Arriving in the capital in the late afternoon, enjoy a final night out with the group as you share stories of the many unforgettable experiences that you have had in this part of West Africa where very few other foreigners travel.



## **Meals included**

Breakfast



## Today's Activities

Private Vehicle

Bobo-Dioulasso - Ouagadougou

10h

385km

Travel time includes stops along the way.

Bwa Ceremonial Dance

Houndé

Watch a Bwa ceremonial dance. This dance uses wooden masks, with each mask representing characters in family myths. Some masks represent animals, other represent bush spirits; particularly striking are the "plank" masks, featuring a stylized face surmounted by a tall, rectangular plank. Plank masks tend to be two-dimensional with impressive geometrical patterns. They are predominantly white, red and black.

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Day 16

## Ouagadougou

Depart at any time.



## Meals included

Breakfast

## What's included

- Your Welcome Moment: Meet Your CEO and Group
- Arrival transfer
- Lomé city tour

- Voodoo ceremony experience
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- Craft market visit
- All transport between destinations and to/from included activities

## What are the main highlights of this trip?

Witness authentic voodoo ceremonies and dances, explore the forests of Kpalime, meet African spiritual leaders and even royalty, attend a traditional Bwa mask ceremony, visit ancient mosques and modern cities, learn about the slave trade in Ouidah.

## What are the main highlights of this trip?

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## **Is there a disclaimer I should read before booking this trip?**

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## **Is there a travel disclaimer for my itinerary I should review before booking this trip?**

While it is our intention to adhere to the route described below, there is a certain amount of flexibility built into the itinerary and on occasion it may be necessary, or desirable to make alterations. The itinerary is brief, as we never know exactly where our journey will take us. Due to our style of travel and the regions we visit, travel can be unpredictable. The Trip Details document is a general guide to the tour and region and any mention of specific destinations or wildlife is by no means a guarantee that they will be visited or encountered. Aboard expedition trips visits to research stations depend on final permission.

Additionally, any travel times listed are approximations only and subject to vary due to local circumstances.

## **What important notes should I be aware of before the trip?**

### **1. ACCOMMODATION AND TRAVEL**

This tour goes to some very basic, undeveloped areas of Africa, which is the least developed continent. This means that standards of roads, food, hygiene, and customer service will be far from what you are used to. Accommodation is rustic and basic in many places.

### **2. ITINERARY CHANGES**

The Itinerary can be modified because of changes in traditional festivals, roads conditions, or major causes or events. We travel through this region in order to meet many local people and visit many villages, and part of this cultural journey through these very non-Westernized places is being flexible enough to make changes that will benefit the tour. If we learn of something interesting happening in the area, your CEO may decide to make adjustments to the itinerary, but this will always be to given you the best, most unique experience.

### **3. POLLUTION**

We do not give away to local people any kind of plastic; gifts are offered to chiefs and teachers; no photos are permitted of police stations, borders crossings, and airports.

## What is the group leader like?

All G Adventures group trips are accompanied by a Chief Experience Officer (CEO). The aim of the CEO is to take the hassle out of your travels and to help you have the best trip possible. They will provide information on the places you are travelling through, offer suggestions for things to do and see, be your conduit to the local culture and experiences of this tour, recommend some local eating venues, help the group with translation when visiting local communities, and introduce you to our local friends. In West Africa, we actually use the term "guide" more than Chief Experience Officer (CEO), as it comes from the equivalent word in French, which is used regularly there.

In addition to managing the tour itself, you can expect your CEO to have a broad general knowledge of the countries visited on the trip, including historical, cultural, religious and social aspects. We also use local guides where we think more specific knowledge will add to the enjoyment of the places we are visiting, but compared to many places, the quality of local guides in this region is low. (Remember very few tourists actually visit these areas. Your leader will speak English, but often English is the 3rd, 4th, or 5th language of our guides. As such, please be patient - English speakers in the French speaking countries is rare.

We also have drivers and a cook, all of whom are an integral part of the team, and add their own contributions to the success of the trip. Often these members of our crew will have limited English language skills.

## How large will the group be?

Max 16, avg 8

## What meals are included in this trip?

15 breakfasts

## What are the meals like on this trip?

When an evening meal is not included, your hotel will have a restaurant or you will be advised of a good local restaurant. Breakfast in the hotels are usually French style: coffee or tea, and bread with butter and jam. Vegetarian meals and other dietary requirements need to be specified prior to arrival.

Please note all bottled drinking water and other drinks will be at your own expense. Often, in rural areas, especially during days 6 to 12, bottled drinking water is not always available. In addition, small notes and coins for change is very sparse in the regions we travel. As such, often the only way possible for each individual person to buy their own drinks is to pool money together, from which drinks and common items may be purchased.

## What are the modes of transportation on my trip?

Minibus, walking.

## What transportation will we take on this trip?

We use a minibus for this tour, normally Toyota Hiace, or for large groups Toyota Coaster.

With a small group of up to 3 travellers, we may use Toyota Land Cruiser. The 4WD is not compulsory in our itinerary, apart in rainy season when in the convoy we use also at least one 4WD (just in case)

With sliding windows, bench seats, and an aisle on one side, these vans that we use are common in the region and comfortable.

Road conditions can run the full range of conditions from relatively new in the cities to old, deteriorating, very poor, and even almost non-existent. During dry seasons, the roads can become very dusty.

This style of travel is by no means luxurious, but the seats are comfortable and having our own private vehicles allow us the flexibility of making stops when needed and visit far out of the way destinations.

Please note for your own safety it is mandatory to wear your seat belt at all times when in a vehicle.

## Is there an extra cost for travelling solo?

We believe single travellers should not have to pay more to travel so our group trips are designed for shared accommodation and do not involve a single supplement. Single travellers joining group trips are paired in twin or multi-share accommodation with someone of the same sex for the duration of the trip. Some of our Independent trips are designed differently and single travellers on these itineraries must pay the single trip price.

## Where will we stay during the trip?

Simple hotels/guesthouses (15 nts).

## Will I get my own room?

Please note that if you have booked the "My Own Room" option for this tour, you will receive your own single room for all night stops

## What kind of accommodation can I expect on this trip?

West Africa is one of the poorest areas of the world, and as such, basic infrastructure such as sealed roads, reliable electricity, constant access to tap water that you will find in other areas of Africa and the world are less common in West Africa.

The hotels and accommodation venues that we use on this trip are unfortunately no exception. Most hotels advertise hot water, but if the electricity is working at the time we are there to heat and pump the water is another question. All hotels and accommodation that we use are simple and basic, but clean and safe.

The nature of the destination means that there is very little choice of accommodation venues. There is little to no local and foreign tourism or travel demand to justify the existence of the hotels that you, as a foreign traveller has come to expect in less developed countries. Choices are thus limited in many of our destinations, so we try to choose the best or most appropriate accommodation in each area.

## What is the joining hotel?

For details of your joining hotel please refer to your tour voucher, G Account, the G Adventures App or contact your travel agent.

## What are the joining instructions?

An arrival transfer is included in your tour, when you arrive on Day 1, or when you arrive up to three days prior to the tour, provided that you have booked your pre-accommodation through G Adventures in our joining hotel.

G Adventures is only able to pick you up at the airport if you inform us in advance of your arrival flight's details. If this has not been done, please make your way to the joining hotel. A taxi just outside of the airport terminal costs approximately 5-6€ (3000-4000 CFA) to the Joining Hotel. **DO NOT GIVE YOUR PASSPORT TO ANYBODY APART FROM THE POLICE** if asked. Take care of your luggage personally and ignore all the people ready to help you (apart from official representative of airport officials).

If you have provided your arrival flight details for your complimentary transfer, please look for the driver, who will be holding a sign with the G Adventures logo on it. For security purposes, your name will not be on the G Adventures sign. As well, please do not tell the driver your name straight away, but rather ask the driver first to tell you who they are meant to pick up. This will ensure that you go with the right driver. Note that the driver may have limited English skills.

Please note that Day 1 is an arrival day and no activities have been planned, though a brief departure meeting will be held in the hotel reception area in evening of Day 1, or on the morning of Day 2. Here you will meet other tour participants and receive information about general and specific aspects of the trip. Upon arrival to the hotel, look for a notice from your CEO with information regarding this group meeting. If you arrive late and miss the meeting, s/he will leave you a message detailing what time and where you should meet the next morning.

The tour departs Lome in the morning of Day 2.

## What happens if I experience problems when arriving?

We don't expect any problems, and nor should you, but if for any reason you are unable to commence your trip as scheduled, as soon as possible please contact your starting point hotel, requesting that you speak to or leave a message for your CEO (if you are not on a group tour please refer to the emergency contact details provided in this dossier). If you are unable to get in touch with your leader, please refer to our emergency contact details. If you have pre-booked an airport transfer and have not made contact with our representative within 30 minutes of clearing customs and immigration, we recommend that you make your own way to the Starting Point hotel, following the Joining Instructions. Please apply to your travel agent on your return for a refund of the transfer cost if this occurs.

## Who should I contact in case of an emergency?

Should you need to contact us during a situation of dire need, it is best to first call either the G Adventures Local Representative (if one is listed below) or our G Adventures Local Office. If for any reason you do not receive an immediate answer, please leave a detailed message and contact information, so they may return your call and assist you as soon as possible.

### AIRPORT TRANSFER

If you have purchased an arrival through G Adventures or if an arrival transfer is included in the cost of your tour, please note that:

Your arrival transfer has been arranged based on flight information provided to us. If you are advised of a flight schedule change within 48 hours of your scheduled arrival time, we will do our best to rearrange your arrival transfer however we cannot guarantee this. If your arrival transfer does not arrive within 30 minutes after you have exited the arrivals area please take a taxi to your start point hotel.

### EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

G Adventures Local Representative (Lome, Togo)

During office hours, Mon-Fri, 8:30am-12:30pm, 2:30pm-6:00pm, Local Time, Saturday: 8:30am-12:00pm, Local Time

From outside of Lome: +228 2221 6823

From within Lome: 02221 6823

After hours emergency telephone

From outside Lome: +228 9074 0561

From within Lome: 09074 0561

G Adventures Local Office (Nairobi, Kenya)

Emergency number:

From outside Kenya: +254 727 208 832

From within Kenya: 0727 208 832

If you are unable for any reason to contact our local office, please call the numbers listed below which will connect you directly with our Sales team who will happily assist you. Hours of operation by region can be found [here](#).

Toll-free, North America only: 1 888 800 4100

Calls from UK: 0344 272 0000

Calls from Germany: 0800 365 1000

Calls from Australia: 1 300 796 618

Calls from New Zealand: 0800 333 307

Outside North America, Australia, New Zealand, Germany and the UK: +1 416 260 0999

## What information should I be aware of as the itinerary draws to a close?

The hotel has a free shuttle bringing guests to the airport upon request. The airport is approx. 10 minutes away.

## Are there any additional packing suggestions I should consider?

You will be on the move a lot, so our advice is to pack as lightly as possible. Your baggage should be clearly labeled and restricted to one soft compact suitcase, or sports bag, maximum 15kg, plus a daypack. Luggage limits on airlines are strictly enforced and space on vehicles is limited. Porters are not often available, so be prepared to carry your own bags. It is important to pack clothes for warm days and cool evenings.

## What should be on my packing list?

### Health & Safety:

- Face masks (Clients will be only be required to wear a face mask where it is mandated by local regulations.)
- Hand sanitizer
- Pen (Please bring your own pen for filling out documents.)

## When can I do my laundry on this trip?

We change hotels every night so this will be very limited. Best to bring clothes that can be hand washed on the go.

## What are the visas and entry requirements for my trip?

All countries require a valid passport (with a minimum 6 months validity). Contact your local embassy or consulate for the most up-to-date visa requirements, or see your travel agent. It is your own responsibility to have the correct travel documentation. Visa requirements for your trip will vary depending on where you are from and where you are going. We keep the following information up to date as far as possible, but rules do change and sometimes without warning. While we provide the following information in good faith, it is vital that you check the information yourself and understand that you are fully responsible for your own visa requirements.

Visa information specific to your destination and nationality can be found in our Important Pre-Departure Information page [here](#)

## What should I consider when planning my personal expenses and discretionary spending for this itinerary?

Every traveller is different and therefore spending money requirements will vary. Some travellers may drink more than others while other travellers like to purchase more souvenirs than most. Please consider your own spending habits when it comes to allowing for drinks, shopping and tipping. Please also remember the following specific recommendations when planning your trip.

## What should I know about currency, credit cards, and exchanging money while on this tour?

The CFA Franc, the common currency in many West African countries, is the currency of Togo, Benin, and Burkina Faso, among others.

The CFA Franc has a fixed rate exchange with Euro: 1EUR = 655.957 CFA.

Cash is the best method of money in West Africa. Travellers cheques are not accepted. Credit and Debit cards are not useful in all but on in Lome and Ougadadougou, and even then, it is not guaranteed that the machines will accept your card, work, or have money.

Again, cash is the best method of money in West Africa.

ATMs are rare and where available, often don't work or don't have money, and credit cards (VISA only) are not accepted out of the capital cities, and even rarely in the capitals.

Please bring cash money, in foreign currencies (EURO is best), to change for CFA locally at the start of the tour.

Large denominations are better, as they receive better rates. If you have USD, new bills from the year 2000 or more recent are best, as older bills may not be accepted.

Foreign currencies are rarely accepted outside of the capital cities, and as such, you will need CFA for your tour. And, your tour visits primarily rural areas. As such, it is advisable to change your foreign currency to CFA in Lome, and as soon as possible upon arrival.

At the airport in Lome upon arrival, you can change EURO or USD into CFA if the money exchange office is open at the time when you arrive, and if they have money on hand at the time. You may have to pay a commission on changing money at the airport or at banks.

When changing money, please ask for small notes, as small denominations are important, as local vendors rarely have change. You should ask for "monnaie" (pronounced "mah-nay") in order to ask for smaller bills. Notes of 1,000 and 2,000 are important.

On the morning of Day 2 (which is a Sunday, and banks will be closed), your CEO will ensure that you are able to change money before departing Lome, with local money-changers, though possibly at a lower rate than the official one.

## How much emergency money should I bring on this trip?

Please also make sure you have access to at least an additional USD \$200 (or equivalent) as an 'emergency' fund, to be used when circumstances outside our control (ex. a natural disaster) require a change to our planned route. This is a rare occurrence!

## Do I need to pay a departure tax?

There is no departure tax for these countries.

## Should I be tipping on my trip?

Tipping during your tour is optional, but the gesture is expected as a way to show your satisfaction with the persons who have assisted you on your tour.

Although it may not be customary for you, it is of considerable significance to the people who will take care of you during your travels, as an important source of income for those in the tourism industry. It is one of the most direct ways that you can have a positive economic impact within the communities that you visit.

Giving a tip should be seen as a formal 'thank you', and the action should in no way be awkward. The best method of tipping someone that has served the whole group is to plan in advance, and not rush when it comes to saying goodbye. A suggestion would be for each group member to contribute anonymously by putting their tip into an envelope. This often works the best and the group as a whole should gather to present the gift to the recipient(s), offering their thanks and showing their appreciation. This method brings the action out into the open, allowing for a friendly and appreciative interaction between the group and the recipient(s).

You may use the following as a guideline, all given in a per client format:

G CEOs and drivers: \$3-4 USD each, per day worked.

Restaurant/Café servers: 10% of cost of bill, especially when in a large group (no envelope required).

Local guides: \$1 USD for every couple of hours

## What activities are optional on this trip?

- No optional activities

# Are there any health considerations I should know before travelling?

We recommend you contact your family physician, or your local travel clinic for the most up-to-date health information at least one month before departure. Travellers should also carry a basic first-aid kit and hand sanitizers/antibacterial wipes on their travels. Medical facilities are basic throughout these countries. For your own safety, we strongly recommend that you advise your tour leader of any medical condition that may affect you while travelling with the group. Your tour leader will be able to inform you of local health advisories (e.g. drinking water quality). Please ensure you have all the inoculations recommended by your doctor.

Yellow Fever Certificate Note: (Updated: May 2017)

It is compulsory to show a valid Yellow Fever Certificate if you are travelling to the following G Adventures-visited countries from a Yellow Fever endemic country:

- Botswana
- Ethiopia
- Kenya
- Madagascar
- Malawi
- Mozambique
- Namibia
- Rwanda
- South Africa
- Swaziland
- Uganda
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe

For some of these countries, proof of Yellow Fever vaccination is also required for passengers who have travelled more than 12 hours through the airport of an endemic country. If other countries not endemic to Yellow Fever have been visited after visiting an endemic country, then a Yellow Fever certificate may still be required on entry. Please check country-specific regulations before your departure.

## Malaria

Malaria is a mosquito-borne disease that is present in some regions in Africa. Risk of malaria can increase during periods of heavy rain, during the rainy seasons, and in densely populated areas of Southern & East Africa. To prevent malaria, we recommend speaking to your doctor about taking preventative medication (prophylaxis), combined with regular use of insect repellent spray/cream. Please check updated travel health advisories specific to malaria before your departure.

## What do I need to know to about safety and security on my trip?

Many national governments provide a regularly updated advice service on safety issues involved with international travel. We recommend that you check your government's advice for their latest travel information before departure. We strongly recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt while travelling, for the safe keeping of your passport, air tickets, travellers' cheques, cash and other valuable items. Leave your valuable jewellery at home - you won't need it while travelling. Many of the hotels we use have safety deposit boxes, which is the most secure way of storing your valuables. A lock is recommended for securing your luggage. When travelling on a group trip, please note that your CEO has the authority to amend or cancel any part of the trip itinerary if it is deemed necessary due to safety concerns. Your CEO will accompany you on all included activities. During your trip you will have some free time to pursue your own interests, relax and take it easy or explore at your leisure. While your CEO will assist you with options available in a given location please note that any optional activities you undertake are not part of your itinerary, and we offer no representations about the safety of the activity or the standard of the operators running them. Please use your own good judgment when selecting an activity in your free time. Although the cities visited on tour are generally safe during the day, there can be risks to wandering throughout any major city at night. It is our recommendation to stay in small groups and to take taxis to and from restaurants, or during night time excursions.

Protests and Demonstrations- Protests and demonstrations, even those that are well intended, have the potential to turn violent with no warning. Counter protests can also turn violent. Action by security forces to disperse demonstrators and protesters may occur at any time. If you are in an area where demonstrators or protesters are gathering, avoid the temptation of staying for a good photo opportunity and leave the area immediately.

Water based activities have an element of danger and excitement built into them. We recommend only participating in water based activities when accompanied by a guide(s). We make every reasonable effort to ensure the fun and adventurous element of any water based activities (in countries with varying degrees of operating standards) have a balanced approach to safety. It is our policy not to allow our CEOs to make arrangements on your behalf for water based activities that are not accompanied by guide(s).

Swimming, including snorkeling, is always at your own risk.

We take all prudent measures in relation to your safety. For ways to further enhance your personal safety while traveling, please visit:

[www.gadventures.com/travel-resources/safety/](http://www.gadventures.com/travel-resources/safety/)

## What rules should I know before joining this trip?

Illegal drugs will not be tolerated on any trips. Possessing or using drugs not only contravenes the laws of the land but also puts the rest of the group at risk. Smoking marijuana and opium is a part of local culture in some parts of the world but is not acceptable for our travellers. Our philosophy of travel is one of respect towards everyone we encounter, and in particular the local people who make the world the special place it is. The exploitation of prostitutes is completely contrary to this philosophy. Our CEOs have the right to expel any member of the group if drugs are found in their possession or if they use prostitutes.

## Is travel insurance required for my trip?

Travel Insurance: Travel insurance is compulsory in order to participate on any of our trips. When travelling on a group trip, you will not be permitted to join the group until evidence of travel insurance has been sighted by your CEO, who will take note of your insurance details. When selecting a travel insurance policy please bear in mind that all clients must have medical coverage and that we require a minimum coverage of USD 200,000 for repatriation and emergency rescue. We strongly recommend that the policy also covers personal liability, cancellation, curtailment and loss of luggage and personal effects. If you have credit card insurance we require proof of purchase of the trip (a receipt of credit card statement) with a credit card in your name. Contact your bank for details of their participating insurer, the level of coverage and emergency contact telephone number.

## What is Planeterra?

Planeterra International Foundation is a non-profit organization committed to turning travel into impact by helping local communities earn an income from tourism. Planeterra connects underserved local communities to the benefits of tourism by developing and supporting small community-owned businesses. These businesses support Indigenous people, empower women, grant youth access to employment opportunities, and protect the environment. Planeterra also works to ensure these businesses have a thriving customer base by integrating their projects into G Adventures' itineraries globally.

G Adventures is Planeterra's largest corporate donor, covering all operating costs, so 100% of your donation will bring opportunity to people in need.

G Adventures Dollar-a-day Program - Make Every Day Count - Turn your travel into impact with [Planeterra Foundation](#).

Did you know? Most communities around the world do not benefit from tourism. Give back to the places you visit on your travels by creating opportunities for local people to earn an income, and protect the environment.

Make every day count by donating \$1/day for the length of your trip, and join us in empowering the communities you will visit when you travel. 100% of your donation goes directly to Planeterra projects.

## How can I share feedback about my trip experience?

Earn 5% off your next G Adventures Tour (up to \$100 USD)\*

After your travels, we want to hear from you! Your feedback information is so important to us and to thank you for your time, we are pleased to offer a 5% discount (up to a maximum of \$100 USD) off your next G Adventures holiday. All you need to do is submit the form within 4 weeks of the completion of your tour, and you'll be able to join the thousands of travellers who have taken 2, 3, 4 or even 10 or more tours with us!

Discount cannot be combined with other offers or applied to 'Independent' style trips. Maximum discount value is \$100 USD (or equivalent currency). Valid for new bookings only. G Adventures reserves the right to withdraw or modify this offer at any time without notice. Limited to one discount per person.

## Does G Adventures have an email newsletter I can subscribe to?

Our adventure travel e-newsletter is full of travel news, trip information, interesting stories and contests. To avoid missing out on special offers and updates from G Adventures, subscribe at [www.gadventures.com/newsletters/](http://www.gadventures.com/newsletters/)

Stay current on how our company invests in our global community through our foundation – Planeterra. Sign up for [Planeterra's monthly news](#) to learn more about how to give back and support the people and places we love to visit.

## How old must I be to join this trip?

You must be 18 to travel unaccompanied on a G Adventures tour. For minors travelling with a guardian over 21 years old, the minimum age is 12.

## Are international flights included in this trip?

No, international flights are generally not included in the price of your tour.

However, on some combo tours travelling between two different countries, international flights are included as part of the itinerary and price of the tour. Please speak to your GCO or booking agent for further details.

In addition, check-in times and baggage allowances/restrictions vary by airline and can change at any time. For the most up-to-date information for your flight, please contact your airline. We recommend checking in online in advance to avoid potential delays at the airport.

## What should LGBTQ+ travellers know about safety and travel considerations on this trip?

The safety and well-being of all of our travelers is a priority at G Adventures and that includes our travelers who identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community. We recognize that there are specific concerns and questions you may have about your adventure in terms of safety and security. We encourage you to visit our [LGBTQ+ page](#) for useful resources to ensure you feel safe and comfortable throughout the duration of your trip. The Equaldex tool linked on this page can be of particular help when deciding where you may want to visit next.

## Dossier Disclaimer

The information in this trip details document has been compiled with care and is provided in good faith. However it is subject to change, and does not form part of the contract between the client and the operator. The itinerary featured is correct at time of printing. It may differ slightly to the one in the brochure. Occasionally our itineraries change as we make improvements that stem from past travellers, comments and our own research. Sometimes it can be a small change like adding an extra meal along the itinerary. Sometimes the change may result in us altering the tour for the coming year. Ultimately, our goal is to provide you with the most rewarding experience. Please note that our brochure is usually released in November each year. If you have booked from the previous brochure you may find there have been some changes to the itinerary.

**VERY IMPORTANT:** Please ensure that you print a final copy of your Trip Details to review a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans.

## Itinerary Disclaimer

While it is our intention to adhere to the route described below, there is a certain amount of flexibility built into the itinerary and on occasion it may be necessary, or desirable to make alterations. The itinerary is brief, as we never know exactly where our journey will take us. Due to our style of travel and the regions we visit, travel can be unpredictable. The Trip Details document is a general guide to the tour and region and any mention of specific destinations or wildlife is by no means a guarantee that they will be visited or encountered. Aboard expedition trips visits to research stations depend on final permission.

Additionally, any travel times listed are approximations only and subject to vary due to local circumstances.