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Please note that the Voodoo Festival takes place in Ouidah annually on the 10th of January. If you are interested in being on tour when this festival takes place, please book the January 3rd departure in 2026 and 2027.



Togo and Benin: Local Markets, Koutammakou and Voodoo Traditions

9 days, Lomé to Cotonou

Trip code DVLC

What's included

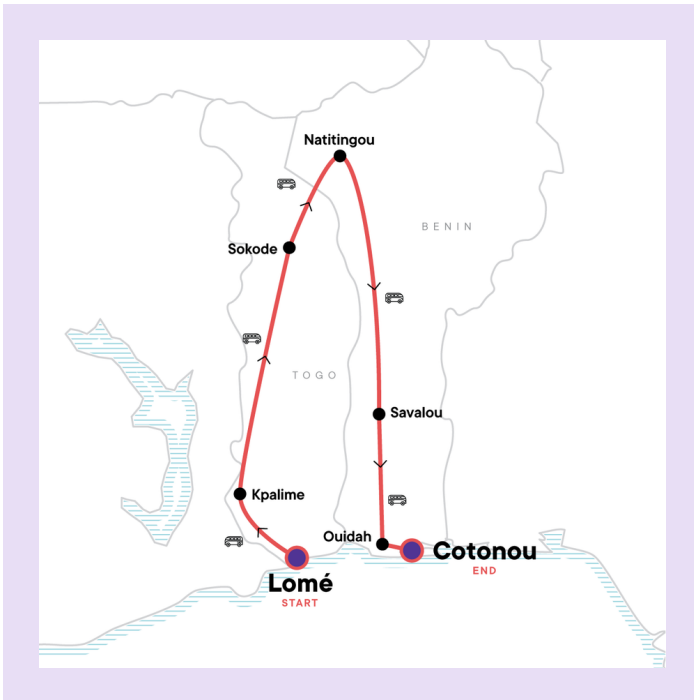
- Your Hands-On Moment: Atitovou Community Visit & Kente Cloth Weaving, Atitovou
- Arrival transfer
- Grand Marche and German Cathedral Visit
- Atitovou Community Visit & Kente Cloth Weaving
- Mount Kloto Visit & Hike
- Atakpame Markets
- Sokodé Horse Dance
- Sokodé's Traditional Fire Dance
- Traditional Fugu Weavers of Bafilo
- Iron Smelting at Tsare Community
- Koutammakou UNESCO World Heritage Site Visit
- Fulani Village Visit
- Tata Somba Village Visit & Walk
- Organic Shea Butter Process with a Local Family
- Visit the Regional Museum in Natitingou
- Teneka Beri Mountain Community Visit
- Dankoli Shrine Visit
- The Gelede Masked Dance
- Visit the Underground Dwellings
- Chameleon Temple Visit & Private Palace Walkthrough
- Kokou Ceremony & Lake Nokoue Visit
- Amazone Statue in Cotonou
- Walking tour of Grand Marché du Dantokpa
- 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 17th, 2025 and onwards

Itinerary



Itinerary Notes

IMPORTANT ITINERARY UPDATE:

Ouidah Voodoo Festival 2027. Please be advised that the annual Voodoo Festival in Ouidah, typically held on January 10th, has been moved to January 8th, 2027. As a result of this date change, there will be necessary modifications to the itinerary for the January 3rd, 2027 departure. Normal operations for the Voodoo Festival departure will resume in 2028.

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. Your transfer to the hotel is included as part of your tour. Upon arrival take some time to get settled and opt to have dinner at the onsite restaurant. The adventure begins tomorrow.



Accommodation

ONOMO Hotel Lome (or similar)

Hotel



Today's Activities

Arrival Transfer

Lomé-Tokoin Airport - Lomé

30m

8km

Settle in and enjoy an included arrival transfer to the start hotel in Lomé.

Free Time

Lomé

Spend the evening at your leisure and get settled. Opt to grab a bite to eat at the restaurant on the property and rest up after a successful arrival to Togo.

Have breakfast at the hotel and enjoy a welcome briefing this morning with your CEO before heading to the biggest market in Lomé and one of the most vibrant markets in all of West Africa. Immerse yourself in the daily life of the locals and learn more about the history behind various churches and monuments in the city from your CEO. Then, travel onwards to the community of Atitovou. Here, witness how generations have been weaving traditional Kente cloth for centuries. Walk through the community, observe the (mostly men) weaving the beautiful cloth and sit down with a local family to learn more about the importance of this piece of their heritage. Transfer to the hotel in Kpalime for lunch and then visit Mount Kloto for an afternoon hike amid the stunning natural scenery and abundance of colourful butterflies that reside here. The remainder of the evening will be spent at your leisure.



Meals included

Breakfast | Lunch



Accommodation

Hotel Parc Residence (or similar)

Hotel



Today's Activities

Grand Marche and German Cathedral Visit

Lomé

45m

Grand Marché, also known as Big Market, is one of the must-see highlights while in Lomé. Become easily immersed in daily local life and explore this outdoor market with your CEO. Initially, it may seem chaotic, but there is an orderliness amid the hectic pace that will surprise you. The surrounding streets overflow with vendors selling everything imaginable. Your senses will rush into overdrive, but it's a worthwhile experience at one of the most vibrant markets in all of West Africa. The Sacred Heart or German Cathedral is located next to the market and you'll visit here to learn more about the history of this imposing piece of Gothic architecture built in 1905, even stepping inside to admire its beauty. If one of the religious leaders is available the group will have the chance to meet them and ask a few questions.

Private Vehicle

Lomé - Atitovou

1h15m

60km

Settle in and scan the scenery from the comfort of your private vehicle between Lomé and the community of Atitovou.

ACTIVITY

Togolese people are passionate about preserving their culture and history, and you'll see evidence of this today when you meet the people of Atitovou, whose community has been weaving traditional Kente cloth for centuries. Take a walk past their family homes and witness weavers, who are mainly men, creating beautiful traditional cloth using looms and methods that have been passed down through generations. The group will sit down briefly with one of the local families and learn how weaving still benefits the community as their main source of income. You'll be shown the entire process and will even have the chance to try weaving yourself. The different designs of the cloth all have traditional meanings which will be explained during your time here. Should you wish to further support this thriving community, you will be able to purchase your own Kente cloth during your visit.

Private Vehicle

Atitovou – Kpalimé

1h15m

60km

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

Mount Kloto Visit & Hike

Kpalimé

1h30m

Enjoy a visit to the beautiful landscape of Mount Kloto and stretch those legs on a short hike here. A great way to become immersed in life within the rural mountains of Togo, this area offers dense forest trails, cascading waterfalls and over 500 different species of butterflies. Your local guide will identify the different medicinal plants found here and explain the ways in which the nearby communities use them. Keep searching for the colourful butterflies and enjoy stunning views across this unique habitat.

Free Time

Kpalimé

Enjoy a free evening at your leisure back at the hotel.

In the morning the group will begin the journey to Sokode with stops along the route to a few local markets where you'll experience the sounds and smells of these colorful spaces. Stretch your legs, witness vital trading points for rural farmers selling their items, and feel part of the fabric of local life. Arrive in Sokode around lunch where you'll witness the spectacular horse dance here. This spectacular event dating back centuries is hardly experienced by any outsiders and involves a festive community atmosphere you will never forget. Later, attend the ancient fire dance which is traditionally performed at festivals and special occasions in this remote northern part of Togo. Spend the remainder of the evening at your leisure back at the hotel and reflect on the beautiful cultural experiences of your day.



Meals included

Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner



Accommodation

Nassam's Hôtel (or similar)

Hotel



Today's Activities

Private Vehicle

Kpalimé - Sokodé

5h30m-6h

285km

Settle in and scan the scenery from the comfort of your private vehicle. There will be stops along the way to break up the journey between Kpalimé and Sokodé.

Atakpame Markets

Atakpamé

30m

During today's long journey there will be a stop along the way to the markets in Atakpame offering a glimpse at life in the more rural village settings of Togo. Here you'll find a vibrant hub of social interaction and cultural exchange, offering unique souvenirs, fresh produce, and a chance to experience the local culture firsthand. These markets are vital trading points for subsistence farmers and other traders selling items like yams, plantain, fruit and vegetables grown on their farms, to clothes, local herbs, medicines and electrical goods. As the group explore the market you'll gain a sense of its crucial importance to the region and daily life compared to the more populated cities in the south.

Sokodé Horse Dance

Sokodé

1h

Experience a key aspect of Togo's cultural identity during the Sokodé Horse Dance that showcases equestrian traditions with horse races, dances, and parades. This beautiful event dates back centuries and is seldom experienced by many outsiders. The community will gather together and the excitement builds as the horsemen arrive. It's known that only the finest warriors can parade and dance with their horses during this energetic performance. It's a time to showcase triumphs over enemies and honour the community's forefathers. It's a passionate display of locals preserving their culture and getting to witness this side by side with them will be a true privilege and a lasting memory for even the most seasoned of travellers.

Sokodé's Traditional Fire Dance

Sokodé

45m

Get ready to experience the epic and ancient fire dance, traditionally performed at festivals and on special occasions in this remote northern part of Togo. Leave the hotel as the sun sets and set off on the short 30 minute journey to a local market where locals have gathered around a fire. The fire has been set in anticipation of the arrival of the spiritually powerful men from within this rural community who wish to showcase their strength. Mingle with the locals and take your places around the flames to witness this unique and important part of their culture. Watch as the community members dance to the rhythm of the drums and use their spiritually gifted steps to stand, eat, and lay in the fire. This experience offers fabulous insight into an ancient ritual and the importance of cultural preservation for future generations.

Your first immersive experience today will be a visit to the traditional Fugu weavers of Bafilo. This traditional cloth in northern Togo has been woven and worn for generations in this northern community. Witness the skilled process of making the intricate designs and style your own before continuing on to Tsare. In this remote community the group will observe the ancient method of iron smelting under the guidance of a local family. You'll hear about the family's daily routine and learn more about the harsh conditions they often work under. After an included lunch the group will transfer to the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Koutammakou, a seldom visited wonder in northeastern Togo. Here the traditional mud homes of the Batammariba community reflect their spiritual beliefs of Voodoo. Transfer across the border to Natitingou and spend a night of leisure at the hotel there.



Meals included

Breakfast | Lunch



Accommodation

Hôtel Totorà (or similar)

Hotel



Today's Activities

Private Vehicle

Sokodé - Bafilo

1h

52km

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

Traditional Fugu Weavers of Bafilo

Bafilo

30m

Start the morning with a visit to the Fugu weavers of Bafilo. This traditional cloth in northern Togo differs from the Kente cloth which originates from the southern parts of the country. The group will be greeted by one of the resident families in the community that have been weaving Fugu for generations. Enjoy a demonstration of this skilled process and watch the effort it takes to create these many beautiful designs. The different style, colour, and designs are unique to this region and here is a great place to support the culture of the local community and purchase some of the traditional cloth for yourself.

Private Vehicle

Bafilo - Tsare

45m

35km

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

Iron Smelting at Tsare Community

Tsare

45m

Venture to further remote parts of Togo to a community that still practices the ancient and traditional method of iron smelting. Visit a local family here and watch as they go through the process of making iron products, something that has been part of their daily life for generations. The techniques have not changed and the group will witness the entire process from ground extraction to the making of the iron tools. Observe the how harsh conditions can be while they work and gain an authentic immersion in local life as you hear about daily routines here amid the villagers.

Private Vehicle

Tsare - Koutammakou

1h30m

68km

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

Koutammakou UNESCO World Heritage Site Visit

Koutammakou

1h30m

In the afternoon experience the seldom visited Koutammakou. This unique wonder has been named a UNESCO World Heritage site and is one of the most stunning African landscapes. Take in the beautiful changing scenery, local villages, and people assuming their daily tasks. Quality time will be dedicated to interacting with and learning from the locals of this ancient community. You'll visit their traditional homesteads and learn what it's like to live in these unique structures. The mud houses, known as Takienta are home to the local Batammariba community. They are only found in this region of West Africa and they reflect the social structure of the community as well as their traditional spiritual beliefs of Voodoo. You'll gather with locals while here and learn more about their history, customs, and how they conduct special occasions like weddings, naming ceremonies, and yearly festivals. It's the perfect afternoon stop with the people of this rural community while travelling to Benin.

Private Vehicle

Koutammakou - Natitingou

3h

55km

Settle in and scan the scenery from the comfort of your private vehicle. There will be a border crossing into Benin along this route.

Border Crossing (Togo - Benin)

Grand-Popo

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

Day 5

Natitingou

After breakfast the group will have the rare privilege to visit a local Fulani village and gain insight into the lives of these normally nomadic people. Their communities are seldom observed by outsiders and the local culture differs greatly from other communities in this part of Benin. Learn about their family structures and experience cheese-making alongside members of this remote place. Then, transfer to Tata Somba and learn more about their traditional body scaring rituals that are used to denote which tribe you belong to, before walking to a local lunch spot. Later walk to a local family's home where they are producing organic shea butter and be taken through the entire process. After quality time here the group heads back towards Natitingou for a visit to the Regional Museum Natitingou Market. Enjoy free time in the evening to rest and recharge for tomorrow's adventures.



Meals included

Breakfast



Accommodation

Hôtel Totorá (or similar)

Hotel



Today's Activities

Private Vehicle

Natitingou

1h30m

Settle in and scan the scenery as the group drives around to important sites and villages within the Natitingou area. The max drive time today will not be more than 2hrs total and it's broken up throughout the stops.

Visit the Regional Museum in Natitingou

Natitingou

1h

After a day spent immersed in the incredible cultures of this region, the group will pay a visit to the Regional Museum to add more perspectives and knowledge regarding the history, traditions, and life of the Somba people that reside in this area. You'll find an abundance of artifacts like jewelry and musical instruments that provide a deeper understanding of the tangible culture and traditions you observed today.

Fulani Village Visit

Natitingou

This morning you'll have the rare privilege to visit a local Fulani village and gain insight into the lives of these normally nomadic people. Fulani communities are seldom visited and the local culture differs greatly from other parts of Benin. Meet one of the resident families and spend the morning listening to how they came to settle here and tour their homesteads to learn more about the family structure and roles divided between women and men. You'll also witness some local cheese making for a full sense of daily life in this remote community.

Tata Somba Village Visit & Walk

Tata Somba Village

Head to a Tata Somba village and meet the Tata Somba and Ditamari people who live in this region of northwest Benin. The locals here still live in their traditional homesteads that have not changed in centuries. Entire families have remained in these remarkable buildings that were built as fortresses to keep out intruders and wild animals. During your time here, you'll meet the locals and learn more about their daily life away from the pressures of modern society. Walk through the village and observe traditional body scarring on the village inhabitants. This practice has long been the way in which the markings represent which tribe the individual belongs to. Additional scarring is given later in life to indicate readiness for marriage, reaching puberty, and after childbirth.

Organic Shea Butter Process with a Local Family

Tata Somba Village

45m

1km

The group will walk a short distance to visit a local family that produces organic shea butter. The head of the family will greet you before taking everyone to where they process the shea nuts. Meet other family members and be welcomed into their home. The local shea nut trees are traditionally used for many different things in this region from cooking oil to body cream, hair cream, and healing cuts or reducing scarring. Learn about the entire process from harvesting to producing the butter and extracting the oil. This tree is an important source of income for so many people in this area and your quality time here will showcase that sentiment within the village.

Turn towards the mountains today and visit the local communities in Teneka Beri and the nearby Taneka Coco. Visit the family homesteads, meet the spiritual leaders, and gain valuable insight into daily life here. Soak in the gorgeous surrounding landscape with its mountain views and continue on to visit the sacred Dankoli Shrine. This shrine is believed to be the most powerful of all shrines in Benin, and it's a place many go to speak directly with the Gods. Learn about the shrine's history while here and its importance as a space to pray and as for help. Finish the day in Savalou and spend time at your leisure this evening in the hotel.



Meals included

Breakfast | Lunch



Accommodation

Hotel F&F Savalou (or similar)

Hotel



Today's Activities

Teneka Beri Mountain Community Visit

Tanéka-Béri

1h30m

In the morning the group will visit the community of Teneka Beri in the mountains of Benin. The locals here practice the animist religion, in which it is believed that everything has a soul. Their customs and traditions remain strong today and during your visit you'll gain further insight into daily life here. Spend time at a family homestead and meet one of the spiritual leaders within the community. Pass by their traditional shrines and learn how these remote settlements migrated here several hundred years ago while trying to escape slave raiders in the southern part of Benin. Enjoy the surrounding mountainous landscape and the natural beauty of this area few travellers ever reach.

Dankoli Shrine Visit

Savalou

45m

Enjoy an afternoon visit to the sacred village of the Dankoli and the Dankoli Shrine. It's believed this site is the most powerful of all shrines in Benin and people travel from all over West Africa to speak directly with the Gods of the Dankoli Shrine seeking guidance and help for personal life. Locals must return with their promised sacrificial offering once the Gods have answered their prayers. Take in the enormity of this spiritual place, and learn a bit of the shrine's history and importance within society.

Private Vehicle

Natitingou - Savalou

6h

Settle in and enjoy the scenery from the comfort of your private vehicle during today's journey. There will be a few different stops along the way to break up the length of the drive.

Travel to Cove where the group will be welcomed by the local community for a special ceremony known as the Gelede Masked Dance in celebration of all mothers and elderly women, iyami, and especially the Great Mother (Iya Nia) of the Yoruba religion. The group will gain authentic insight into the culture and traditions of the people in this region and witness first-hand the respect they have for women in their communities. From here, move on to the Underground Dwellings outside of Abomey. The dwellings are believed to date back to the 16th century and are only now still being discovered and studied. Explore some of the dwellings during your visit and see where locals lived and felt protected from slave raiders and tribal conflict. Travel onwards to Abomey where you will visit a private palace in the area modeled after the Royal Palace, and then stop at the spectacular Temple of the Chameleo with a deep history in the West African religion of Vodun. Spend the evening at your leisure upon arrival to Ouidah.



Meals included

Breakfast | Lunch



Accommodation

La Casa Del Papa (or similar)

Hotel



Today's Activities

The Gelede Masked Dance

Cové

1h

In Cove the group will witness the excitement and spiritual performance of the Gelede Masked Dance. After being welcomed by the local community by the vehicle, the group will walk with everyone to an open area outside one of the family compounds. Here, elders and traditional leaders will be present and as custom, you will greet them before being seated. Here, the Yoruba and Nago people migrated from Nigeria several centuries ago. Everyone gathers and the drums start their rhythmic tune before the unforgettable performance begins. The masked dance is a celebration of all mothers and elderly women in the community and especially the Great Mother known as Iya Nia in the Yoruba religion. Simply enjoy being in the moment and witness the heart of this culture, their important traditions in the region, and the respect they have for the women in their community.

Visit the Underground Dwellings

Abomey

45m

Right before reaching the town of Abomey for lunch, the group will visit the recently discovered underground dwellings of Agongointo-Zoungoudojusta. In 1998 they were found during road construction in the area and are believed to date back to the 16th century during the reign of King Dakodonou. It's believed there are several hundred of these built 10 metres underground, and the locals used them as homes in order to find protection from slave raiders and tribal conflict. Explore some of the discovered dwellings during your time here and listen as a local expert discussed the history of the area.

Chameleon Temple Visit & Private Palace Walkthrough

Abomey

1h15m

The Royal Palace is currently under renovation so the group will enjoy a brief visit to one of the private palaces in the local area. The structures are built in the same style as the Royal Palace and a representative of the property will share the local history, customs, and various traditions as you walk through the palace. Then, it's onward to the Chameleon Temple. Here, you'll learn about the interesting history of Vodun, and the sanctuary with its unique shape of a giant chameleon to symbolize adaptability and patience in the local culture. It is also a place of worship for followers of the Tohouiyo divinity.

Private Vehicle

Savalou - Ouidah

5h45m-6h

Settle in and scan the scenery from the comfort of your private vehicle. There will be various stops along the way to break up the long drive between Savalou and Ouidah.

Today's adventures begin with a visit to Ganvie, known as the Venice of West Africa. This ancient community of over 30,000 people is living on structures built on stilts over Lake Nokoue. Transfer to traditional wooden boats waiting at one of the jetties and watch as local fishermen go about their daily tasks on your ride through the water village. The group will dock at one of the structures and experience the personal and important Kokou Ceremony. Participants fall into a deep trance-like state during the proceedings and it's said this is the powerful local spirits taking over their followers. After lunch, transfer back to Ouidah and attend the annual Voodoo festival in the precise place where this spiritual practice was born. This public holiday in Benin is a truly authentic experience where the community gathers together in expectation for the arrival of Zangbeto. Spend time soaking up this unique atmosphere and incredible festival. The remainder of this evening will be at your leisure.



Meals included

Breakfast | Lunch



Accommodation

La Casa Del Papa (or similar)

Hotel



Today's Activities

Private Vehicle

Ouidah - Ganvié

1h30m

52km

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

Kokou Ceremony & Lake Nokoue Visit

Ganvié

2h30m

Enjoy a special visit to Ganvie, dubbed the Venice of West Africa. An ancient community of over 30,000 people all living in structures built on stilts over Lake Nokoue. Established in the 16th century by the Tofinu people who were fleeing from slave raiders. Meet your wooden boat at one of the jetties and watch as other locals move about the water in their boats trying to collect goods while the fishermen continue to reel in their daily catch. Ganvie is the largest community living on water in western Africa. Tour the community by boat before heading to one of the structures on dry land. Here, experience the powerful Kokou Ceremony. It's one of the most powerful ceremonies in which the local spirits are said to take over its followers, who typically fall into a deep trance-like state during the festivities. A truly unique encounters with the local population in a very unique place within Benin.

Private Vehicle

Ganvié - Ouidah

1h30m

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

The Annual Voodoo Festival of Ouidah

Ouidah

1h30m

Ouidah is regarded as the Voodoo center of West Africa. It was once the only port in the country and so this is where enslaved Africans were shipped from. Most of them were shipped to Brazil, Haiti, and the Caribbean Islands. This is why there is such a strong Voodoo presence in these parts of the world. It's estimated that more than 75% of the population of Benin still actively practice the religion. The annual festival serves as a public holiday un the country and is celebrated on the 10th of January each year. Visit one of the communities around Ouidah to experience it for yourself. Community members will be gathering in anticipation Zangbeto arriving. They are traditional Voodoo guardians of the night. Over the next hour you will be immersed in the culture and history of the local people, heir community, and their spirituality.

Enjoy some breakfast and free time at the hotel this morning before travelling to Cotonou. Upon arrival, pay a visit to the 30m tall Amazone Statue honouring the female warriors of the ancient kingdom of Dahomey. Then, check out the longest graffiti mural in the world and its beautiful art celebrating the ancient kingdom of Dahomey. Walk along the entire stretch of wall coming in at 940m, and get a feel of this vibrant city. Today's final stop is to the Grand Marché du Dantokpa, one of West Africa's largest outdoor markets and located in the throbbing heart of Cotonou. The market sells everything you could imagine and is a major contributor to the economy of Benin. Attend a farewell dinner in the late afternoon before the group heads together to the Cotonou airport where your tour comes to an end.

Please do not book onward travel before 9pm.



Meals included

Breakfast | Dinner



Today's Activities

Private Vehicle

Ouidah - Cotonou

1h-1h15m

42km

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

Amazone Statue in Cotonou

Cotonou

30m

Enjoy a half hour visit to the 30m Amazone Statue in Cotonou. This statue honours the female warriors of the ancient kingdom of Dahomey. Walk around the square, take in daily life, and listen as your CEO discusses the history of this impressive structure.

Graffiti Wall Visit

Cotonou

30m

Walk along the graffiti mural in Cotonou that holds the record for the longest graffiti wall in the world. The art here celebrates the Dahomey Kingdom and offers some beautiful pieces of art as the group strolls along the wall's 940m. Gain a true sense of the city's daily atmosphere and enjoy the colourful depictions before you.

Walking tour of Grand Marché du Dantokpa

Cotonou

45m

Enjoy time to stroll through the Grand Marché du Dantokpa, one of West Africa's largest outdoor markets coming in with an area of over 20 hectares. Your walking tour allows you to witness the day to day experiences of the traders here and gives the chance to see just how much is sold here. The wax print section of the market is a must for anyone looking for fabric souvenirs from your time in Benin. As a major contributor to the country's economy, this market stands as a testament to the importance of community and coming together to share different goods and services. Through the labyrinthine streets there is also the Fetish Market selling anything associated with Voodoo and a memorable area to walk through.

Free Time

Ouidah

Spend a slow free morning in Ouidah. Have breakfast at your leisure and maybe choose to enjoy the hotel pool before embarking on your drive to Cotonou, Benin's largest city.

Departure Day

Not ready to leave? Your CEO can help with travel arrangements to extend your adventure.

What's included

- Your Hands-On Moment: Atitovou Community Visit & Kente Cloth Weaving, Atitovou
- Arrival transfer
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- Amazone Statue in Cotonou
- Walking tour of Grand Marché du Dantokpa
- All transport between destinations and to/from included activities

What are the main highlights of this trip?

Enjoy a traditional weaving experience of Kente cloth led by members of the Atitovou community, Visit Mount Kloto for a nature hike and to learn about how locals use the medicinal plants in the area, Witness the community come together for the unforgettable Sokode horse and fire dances, Head off the beaten track to experience the seldom visited wonder of Koutammakou a UNESCO World Heritage site, Spend time learning from and interacting with locals in their rural communities and connect on a deeper level to the important culture of Benin and Togo

Itinerary Notes

IMPORTANT ITINERARY UPDATE:

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What are the main highlights of this trip?

Enjoy a traditional weaving experience of Kente cloth led by members of the Atitovou community, Visit Mount Kloto for a nature hike and to learn about how locals use the medicinal plants in the area, Witness the community come together for the unforgettable Sokode horse and fire dances, Head off the beaten track to experience the seldom visited wonder of Koutammakou a UNESCO World Heritage site, Spend time learning from and interacting with locals in their rural communities and connect on a deeper level to the important culture of Benin and Togo

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.

Are there Itinerary notes?

IMPORTANT ITINERARY UPDATE:

Ouidah Voodoo Festival 2027. Please be advised that the annual Voodoo Festival in Ouidah, typically held on January 10th, has been moved to January 8th, 2027. As a result of this date change, there will be necessary modifications to the itinerary for the January 3rd, 2027 departure. Normal operations for the Voodoo Festival departure will resume in 2028.

What is the role of the group leader during this trip?

This G Adventures group trip is accompanied by one of our group leaders, otherwise known as a Chief Experience Officer (CEO). The aim of the group leader 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, recommend great local eating venues and introduce you to our local friends. While not being guides in the traditional sense you can expect them 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 - we think it's the best of both worlds.

How large will the group be?

Max 16, avg. 12

What meals are included in this trip?

8 breakfasts, 6 lunches, 2 dinners

What are the modes of transportation on my trip?

Private vehicle, boat, walking

Is there an extra cost for travelling solo?

We believe solo 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 solo travellers on these itineraries must pay the single trip price.

Where will we stay during the trip?

Hotel (8 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 are the joining instructions?

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

An arrival transfer is included when you arrive on Day 1, or if you arrive up to three days prior provided that you have booked your pre-accommodation through G Adventures in our joining hotel. Due to customer experience and quality considerations, all services related to the tour must be continuous.

Our driver will be waiting for you with a G Adventures sign, and they will be waiting for you outside the luggage hall. If for any reason you are not met at the airport, please call our local support line. If you are unable to make contact for whatever reason, please make your way to the joining point hotel via taxi.

Please note that day 1 is an arrival day and no activities have been planned on this day.

Upon arrival to your Joining Hotel (note that check-in time will be in the afternoon), look for a note or bulletin board in the reception with a note from your CEO. This note will give the details of your Welcome Meeting on day 1 (usually between 5pm and 7pm), where you will get a chance to meet your CEO and other travellers, as well as learn more about how the tour will run. If you don't see a note, please ask reception for details!

If you are arriving later and will miss the Welcome Meeting, your CEO will leave a note at reception for you with any information you may need, and with morning instructions for the next day.

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, please refer to the emergency contact details provided in this dossier and contact us as soon as possible. If you have a pre-booked transfer, and you 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 or flight cancellation within 48 hours of your scheduled arrival time, please call the emergency contact number to advise of your new arrival flight information. If you do not, we will not be able to rearrange your arrival transfer and you will need to make your own way to the starting hotel at your own expense. 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 Office (Nairobi, Kenya)

+254 727 208 832

G Adventures Local Representative (Accra, Ghana)

Tel: +233 (0) 245289736

If you are unable for any reason to contact our local operator or local office, please call the numbers listed below, which will connect you directly with our 24 hour Sales team, who will happily assist you.

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?

Your tour ends on arrival at Cotonou airport. Please do not book onward travel before 9pm.

What should be on my packing list?

Documents:

- Flight info (required) (Printouts of e-tickets may be required at the border)
- Insurance info (required) (With photocopies)
- Passport (required) (With photocopies)
- Vouchers and pre-departure information (required)
- Visas or vaccination certificates (With photocopies)

Essentials:

- Toiletries (required) (Shampoo, bodywash, soap, etc.)
- Binoculars (optional)
- Camera (With extra memory cards and batteries)
- Cash, credit and debit cards
- Day pack (Used for daily excursions or short overnights)
- Ear plugs
- First-aid kit (should contain lip balm with sunscreen, sunscreen, whistle, Aspirin, Ibuprofen, bandaids/plasters, tape, anti-histamines, antibacterial gel/wipes, antiseptic cream, Imodium or similar tablets for mild cases of diarrhea, rehydration powder, water purification tablets or drops, insect repellent, sewing kit, extra prescription drugs you may be taking)
- Flashlight/torch (Headlamps are ideal)
- Fleece top/sweater
- Footwear
- Hat
- Headphones (Noise-cancelling recommended)
- Locks for bags
- Long pants/jeans
- Moneybelt
- Outlet adapter
- Personal entertainment (Reading and writing materials, cards, music player, etc.)
- Reusable water bottle
- Shirts/t-shirts
- Sleepwear
- Small travel towel
- Sunglasses
- Swimwear
- Watch and alarm clock
- Waterproof backpack cover
- Windproof rain jacket

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.)

Warm Weather:

- Sandals/flip-flops
- Sturdy water shoes/sandals
- Shorts/skirts (Longer shorts/skirts are recommended)
- Sun hat/bandana
- Swimwear

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](#)

BENIN:

You can apply for an e-Visa online. For further details, please visit the official Benin eVisa website [here](#)
Proof of Yellow Fever Vaccination is mandatory.

The border crossing between Koutammakou (Togo) and Nattingou (Benin) is called the Hilacondji border crossing.

TOGO:

You can apply for an e-Visa online. For further details, please visit the official Togo eVisa website [here](#)
Proof of Yellow Fever Vaccination is mandatory.

Last Updated, 16th June 2025

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.

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!

What activities are optional on this trip?

- No optional activities

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 group leader has the authority to amend or cancel any part of the trip itinerary if it deemed necessary, due to safety concerns. Your Chief Experience Officer (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 and 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 judgement 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.

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. [Read more about travel safety](#) for ways to further enhance your personal safety while traveling.

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 people in the sex trade 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 utilize the services of paid sex workers, in any capacity.

Is travel insurance required for my trip?

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 leader, who will take note of your insurance details. When selecting a travel insurance policy we require that at a minimum you are covered for medical expenses including emergency evacuation and repatriation. A minimum coverage of USD200,000 is required. We strongly recommend that the policy also covers personal liability, cancellation, curtailment and loss of luggage and personal effects. Some tours include adventure activities that require extra coverage (e.g. crampon use); please review your itinerary and make sure that you are covered for all included activities. 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/

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

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