TRIBES & THRONES OF WEST AFRICA

19 October 2027 - 13 November 2027

Tour Cost ($AUD): $24,950

Tour Duration: 26 days

Single Supplement ($AUD): $3,800





OVERVIEW

Embark on a cultural and spiritual odyssey through the extraordinary West African nations of Ghana, Togo, Benin, Senegal, and The Gambia. From royal courts to sacred shrines, this extraordinary journey invites you to experience the spiritual and cultural heartbeat of West Africa. We begin in Ghana, where the legacy of the powerful Ashanti Kingdom is still felt in gold-adorned festivals, ancestral palaces, and the rhythms of traditional drumming. Walk the storied streets of Elmina and Cape Coast, confronting the deep memory of the Atlantic slave trade while honoring the resilience of African spirit. Crossing into Togo and Benin, we enter the world of Voodoo—not as myth, but as an honored spiritual path. Witness authentic ceremonies, meet local priests and priestesses, and explore the vibrant temples and fetishes that pulse with ancient wisdom. In Ouidah, follow the Route of the Slaves, where history, spirit, and sea converge. The journey ends in Senegal and The Gambia, where the voices of storytellers – known as ‘griots’ – carry centuries of stories, and the cultural blend of Islam, animism, and vibrant music. From bustling markets to quiet coastal villages, this is a voyage through rhythm, ritual, and royalty—perfect for the seasoned traveller seeking meaning, mystery, and connection with age-old cultures.

Tour Fitness Level: Active

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TOUR MAP



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ITINERARY

19/10/2027 Australia – Dubai

Depart from your chosen Australian airport on the flight to Dubai.

20//2027 Dubai – Accra (D)

On arrival in Dubai we connect with the flight to Accra.

Depart Dubai Emirates EK 787, 07.25

Arrive Accra 12.30

Founded in the 17th century, the city of Accra was formally the capital of the British Gold Coast between 1877 and 1957, Accra has transitioned into a modern city that reflects its history through architecture that ranges from 19th century buildings such as the National Theatre to modern skyscrapers and apartment blocks. On arrival into Accra we transfer to our hotel.

La Villa Boutique Hotel

Accra

21/10/2027 Accra - Elmina (BLD)

This morning we explore James town, the historical area of Accra – with some structures even predating the colonial era. The walk through this fascinating neighborhood provides a perfect picture of old Accra, distinguishing between the British and Dutch eras. We also visit a workshop that specialises in Fantasy Coffins. These unique handcrafted coffins can reflect any shape, ranging from cars, cocoa pods, cigarette packets and airplanes to crocodiles, shoes, bottles of beer and boats. Started in Accra, these flamboyant designs are now collected worldwide and showcased in museums. Next stop is the National Museum, which gives an introduction to the history and culture of Ghana. After lunch we continue to the historic coastal town of Elmina.

Coconut Grove Beach Resort

Elmina

22/10/2027 Elmina (BLD)

Elmina Castle is the oldest European building in Africa, and this morning we explore this UNESCO World Heritage site that once played a part in the Atlantic slave trade. Outside the castle lies an authentic fishing village that provides insight into the local maritime culture, contrasting with the dark history of the nearby castle. A few kilometres north, in the middle of a rainforest, lies the Kakum National Park, famous for its canopy walkway which is the longest and highest rope bridge in the world. Walking between 120 to 150 feet above the ground, we enjoy incredible views of the rain forest canopy.

23/10/2027 Elmina - Kumasi (BLD)

Today we cross a region of tropical forest to arrive in Kumasi, the historical and Spiritual capital of the old Ashanti Kingdom. The Ashanti people were one of the most powerful nations in Africa until the end of the 19th century, when the British annexed Ashanti Country to their Gold Coast colony. We visit the central market, one of the largest in Africa and discover every type of Ashanti craft along with every kind of tropical fruit and vegetables. We also visit the

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Ashanti Cultural Centre before participating in a traditional Ashanti funeral, attended by mourners wearing beautiful togas to celebrate their ancestors. The chiefs arrive surrounded by their courts under the shade of colourful umbrellas while drums give rhythm to the dancers.

Lancaster Kumasi City Hotel

Kumasi

24/10/2027 Kumasi (BLD)

Sunday morning Kumasi wakes up slowly, with much less traffic, which allows us to have a good look at the colonial buildings and hand painted signs, and watch the devoted faithful on their way to church, dressed in their Sunday best. We also visit the Royal Palace Museum with its unique collection of gold jewels worn by the Ashanti court before attending the Akwasidae festival at the Ashanti Royal Palace. This is an extraordinary experience as we witness a great traditional ceremony in one of the last African Kingdoms, which still practises its ancient rituals in full. The king sits under a large colourful umbrella, adorned in vivid cloth and massive ancient jewellery, considered masterpieces of African art. The ceremony starts with a procession of story tellers, drummers, trumpet players, sword bearers, high fetish priests and dancers, and attendants bearing gifts.

25/10/2027 Kumasi – Akosombo (BLD)

This morning we start our drive to the Volta Region where we visit Krobo tribe. This artisan community is known for its glass beads which are produced for ceremonies and aesthetic purposes. The craftsmen have been producing beads following the same long-lasting traditional technique for centuries. Scrap glass and recycled bottles are ground into a fine powder then poured into clay mounds. These are then cooked and the finished beads are then decorated, washed and strung.

Royal Senchi Resort

Akosombo

26/10/2027 Akosombo – Kpalime (BLD)

After a boat ride on the Volta River we say goodbye to Ghana and drive to the border, crossing into Togo. Our destination is Kpalime, a beautiful town that lies in a mountainous area important for the cultivation of coffee, cacao and oil palms. We visit a handicraft center, specializing in all kinds or products from paintings to wood carvings.

Hotel Parc Residence

Kpalime

27/10/2027 Kpalime - Lome (BLD)

Today we take a walk in the hills surrounding Kpalime, and under the guidance of a local entomologist, we learn about the plants, butterflies and colorful insects that thrive in the area. Later we continue by road to the vibrant capital of Togo, Lome.

Hotel 2 Fevier

Lome

28/10/2027 Lome (BLD)

Lome is the only African city which has been colonized by Germans, British and French which has led to a unique identity reflected in the lifestyle of its inhabitants and the architecture. Lomo is indeed a crossroads of people, trade and cultures. Today we visit the central market known for the ‘Nana Benz’,

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women who control the market of the expensive ‘pagne’ cloths – colourful wax printed designs – which are sold worldwide. We also visit the the colonial buildings in the administrative quarter and the largest fetish market in Africa, which sells an eclectic assortment of ingredients for love potions and magical concoctions.

29/10/2027 Lome - Ouidah (BLD)

Along the coast of Togo and Benin, voodoo is a religion that has been passed on by the ancestors and is still fervently practised. In fact voodoo is far richer and more complex than thought by most westerners. Today in a remote hidden village, we are privileged to join a Voodoo ceremony and witness the frenetic rhythm of the drums, the dancers, and the chants that call in the spirits. In this small village, surrounded by the magic of the ceremony, we will understand what people mean when they say “in your churches you pray to God, in our voodoo shrines we become gods”. Later we cross the border into Benin and continue driving to Ouidah.

Hotel Casa del Papa

Ouidah

30/10/2027 Ouidah (BLD)

Ouidah was conquered by the Dahomey Kingdom during the 18th century to become one of the main slave trading ports. It is regarded as the Voodoo centre of West Africa and during the 17th and 18th centuries enslaved Africans from Benin, Togo and other West African countries were shipped from Ouidah to Brazil, Haiti and the Caribbean Islands, hence the strong Voodoo presence in these parts of the world.. We also visit the sacred python’s temple which houses pythons which are revered by the locals; indeed no one is permitted to harm, capture or keep any of the snakes which live in the temple. We also follow the ‘slave road’ to the beach, the point of ‘no return’ where slaves were shipped to the new world. Later we visit a remote village and attend a Zangbeto Mask dancing performance. The maskwearers belong to a secret society and their identity is unknown to the uninitiated. Zangbeto – which means ‘night watchmen’ – are highly revered, and act as guardians of law and order for the village.

31/10/2027 Ouidah - Cotonou (BLD)

Today we cross Lake Nokwe in a motorized boat to reach Ganvie, the largest and most beautiful African village on stilts, known as the ‘Venice of West Africa’. This stilt settlement, located in the lagoon of Lake Nokwe, was created for the Tofinu people 500 years ago, to stay safe from slave hunters. Today the community of over 30,000 inhabitants occupy teetering houses, schools, churches and other structures, forming a ramshackle village that exists almost exclusively from fishing. The villagers travel only by dugout canoes, and the few domesticated land-animals they maintain live on plots of grass that have sprung up from the water. Returning to the mainland, we continue on to Abomey and meet the community of ‘forgerons’ who have served Dahomeny kings for centuries with the production of weapons and other tools. Later we drive to Cotonou.

Hotel Maison Rouge

Cotonou

01/11/2027 Cotonou – Dakar (BD)

This morning we enjoy a city tour of Cotonou, before transferring to the airport for our flight to Senegal.

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Depart Cotonou Air Senegal HC306, 15.15

Arrive Dakar 19.30

Upon arrival into Dakar, the vibrant cultural and intellectual capital of former French West Africa we transfer to our hotel. Dakar is located at the end of the Cape Verde Peninsula, the western-most point on the African continent with a population of around 2.4 million people. The city blends cosmopolitan energy with rich history.

Hotel Terrou

Dakar

02/11/2027 Dakar - Goree (BLD)

This morning, we visit the Musée des Civilisations Noires, a striking modern museum that celebrates the art, culture, and heritage of Black civilizations across Africa and the diaspora. We also stop at the Cathédrale Notre-Dame des Victoires, one of Dakar's prominent colonial-era landmarks. Later, we board a ferry to Gorée Island, once a major centre of the Atlantic slave trade. After the trade's decline, the island transformed into an important port for the export of peanuts, gum arabic, ivory, and other goods. Today, Gorée is a UNESCO World Heritage site known for its charming colonial architecture, art galleries, and tranquil seaside atmosphere.

Boutique Hotel Keur Louis

Goree

03/11/2027 Goree – Saint Louis (BLD)

After a morning stroll through the stone-paved alleys of the historic settlement of Gorée Island, we take the ferry back to Dakar. From there, we drive to Lac Rose (Lac Retba), a shallow, salt-rich lake, separated by narrow dunes from the Atlantic Ocean. This stunning lake owes its colour to a salina bacteria that thrives on the high salt content. These bacteria produce a red pigment with which absorbs the sunlight and thereby giving Lake Retba its unique pink colour. The lake is also famous because it is the finish point of the Paris to Dakar Rally. We visit Senegal's largest fishing village located near the lake, where more than 4,500 brightly painted wooden pirogues land their catch of the day. We then continue by road to Saint Louis, arriving in the evening.

Hotel de La Residance

Saint Louis

04/11/2027 Saint-Louis (BLD)

Today we visit the Djoudj National Bird Sanctuary, a vast UNESCO World Heritage Site located north of Saint Louis. This natural oasis of wetlands and shallow lakes is home to more than 400 bird species, the most common of which are pelicans and flamingos. In the afternoon, we explore Saint Louis, known to the locals as Ndar. Once the capital of French West Africa (1673-1902), this charming island town is set between the Senegal River and the ocean, serving as a bridge between the savanna and the desert. With its colonial architecture, narrow streets, and unique identity, Saint Louis offers a unique blend of history and culture.

05/11/2027 Saint Louis - Touba - Kaolack (BLD)

Leaving Saint Louis behind, we drive to Touba, Senegal's holiest city and the spiritual center of the Mouride brotherhood. Renowned for its impressive Great Mosque, Touba is unique as an autonomous

religious city. The Mourides play a major role in Senegalese society, known for their emphasis on spiritual devotion, discipline, and community-driven economic development. After exploring Touba, we continue south by road to Kaolack.

Relais de Kaolack

Kaolack

06/11/2027 Kaolack - Banjul (BLD)

An early departure today, as we head south towards The Gambia, stopping en route to visit the megalithic site of Sine Ngayene, a UNESCO World Heritage site. Part of the Senegambian Stone Circles, that lie in central Senegal and The Gambia, this is the largest concentration of stone circles seen anywhere in the world, offering an insight into a mysterious and ancient civilization. After our visit here, we continue south to the Gambian border and drive to the Banjul region.

Coco Ocean Resort

Bijilo

07/11/2027 Banjul (BLD)

Banjul is on St Mary's Island where the Gambia River enters the Atlantic Ocean. This morning we visit the National Museum and the Royal Albert Market - named after Queen Victoria's husband - made up of three distinct and fascinating markets. The Gambia is renowned as an exceptional bird watching destination, and today we explore the habitats of a wide variety of African bird species, accompanied by an expert ornithological guide.

08/11/2027 Banjul - Ziguinchor (BLD)

Today we travel south into Senegal’s Casamance region, leaving the main road to enjoy a traditional lunch in a local village, a chance to experience authentic regional cuisine and hospitality. Late afternoon, we arrive at our hotel overlooking the Casamance River.

Kadiandoumange Hotel

Ziguinchor

09/11/2027 Ziguinchor – Cap Skirring - Saly (BLD)

This morning, we leave the main road to visit a traditional Diola impluvium house—a fortified adobe structure made of clay and wood, still inhabited by a large patriarchal Diola family. Light filters in from a central opening in the roof, and the structure once served to protect residents from outside attacks. We will be received by the king of a Diola Kingdom, who will share insights into Diola traditions and answer any questions about their customs and rules. Later, we drive to Cap Skirring to board a scenic flight to Dakar, soaring above winding river estuaries and the dramatic Atlantic coastline. Upon arrival, we continue by road to Saly.

Movenpick Resort Lamantine

Saly

10/11/2027 Saly (BLD)

Today, we visit the Bandia Reserve, where we encounter some of Africa’s iconic mammals, including white rhinoceroses, giraffes, and zebras, roaming amongst majestic baobab trees, thorny acacia bushes and tangled lianas. In the afternoon, enjoy free time

to relax by the beach or pool before our farewell dinner.

11/11/2027 Saly - Dakar – Dubai (BL)

This morning is at leisure or time for last minute shopping. After lunch we drive to Dakar and transfer to the airport for our flight to Australia via Dubai.

Depart Dakar Emirates Airlines EK 797, 18.35

12/11/2027 Arrive Dubai 07.50

On arrival in Dubai connect with your flight back to Australia.

13/11/2027 Dubai – Australia

We arrive back in Australia today.