

16 DAY
WONDERMENTS OF WEST AFRICA
including **Benin, Togo & Ghana**



\$4,997.00

October 19 – November 3, 2024

**\$500.00 Non-refundable Deposit
Required to Reserve your Spot!**

This exclusive itinerary is roundtrip from Atlanta, GA
Price is based on double occupancy
Price includes
Hotel Accommodations
Ground Transportation & Transfers
Most meals – Daily Breakfast & Dinner

READ ON to get the details...

General Information

1. Initial deposits are nonrefundable, unless stated otherwise. They are paid to the appropriate vendor to secure your spot.
2. Trip Protection IS NOT included in the trip/tour package for the unforeseen event that you cannot make the trip.
3. When you purchase your trip protection, ensure your flights are included.
4. All posted trip costs are based on double occupancy. If you do not have your own roommate, one will be assigned. Single supplements are available at \$1,120.00pp.
5. Payment plans are based on your schedule with no less than quarterly payments totaling no less than \$500. Total final payment to be made no later than June 15, 2024. After July 31, 2024 all paid monies will be forfeited and your trip will be cancelled. No exceptions.
6. Every effort will be made to accommodate reasonable personal requests e.g., dietary restrictions, health concerns. However, it is up to you and/or your doctor to determine if the trip will not put you and other travelers in harm's way.
7. It is your responsibility to report any disability requiring special attention at the time you are ready to make your reservation. Reasonable attempts to accommodate your such needs will be made, but we make no guarantees. We are not responsible for any denial of services by airline carriers, hotels, transportation agencies and other independent suppliers. We regret that we cannot provide individual assistance for walking, dining, getting on and off motor coaches, boats and other transportation vehicles, etc. Should you need such assistance, you must be accompanied by a qualified companion, who is also traveling with our tour group.
8. It is required that you provide emergency contact information and medical concerns, and sign a waiver for our trip.
9. All international trips require a valid passport, for your protection, and *you must have at least 6 months left before the expiration, after the trip end date.* This tour requires Visas.
10. *A requirement on all trips is a friendly disposition, a cooperative spirit, pleasant attitude, and the ability to be flexible. While we do our absolute best to adhere to the posted itinerary, on rare occasions, usually beyond our control, things change.*

Trip Coordinators:

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Make checks payable: Lifestyle Management, LLC
And contact me for specific directions.

Please include the name of the trip for which you are submitting payment on your check

16 DAY
WONDERMENT OF WEST AFRICA
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Package Includes Escorted, Private Bi-lingual Speaking Guide

- Intra & inter transportation: Benin; Togo, Ghana
- 13 nights accommodations
 - 3 nights Benin
 - 1 nights Togo
 - 9 nights Ghana
- All transfers and hotel portorage
- 26 meals: 13 breakfasts, 12 dinners, 1 evening snack*
- Sightseeing in modern air-conditioned motor coach
- English-speaking tour manager throughout
- All applicable entrance fees per itinerary
- Visa for entry into Benin, Togo and Ghana

**Includes late evening snacks upon initial arrival in Benin*

SPECIAL NOTE

This tour is scheduled for October 2024 because the future date provides you the opportunity to establish a payment schedule that best suits your financial position. This whole tour is the culmination of a long sought after, affordable itinerary for this once in a lifetime adventure! The price quoted is based on 2023 prices with no increase if secured with your non-refundable deposit as indicated. Also, we have not included airfare because airlines do not post any airfares more than 11 months in advance.

With all of that said, the cost of the trip is \$4,997.00 after May 15, 2023.

To secure your spot a **\$500.00 non-refundable deposit** is required. After which, you can set up a payment plan to best accommodate your financial schedule with payments made no less than \$500 quarterly. All monies due ***must be paid in full no later June 15, 2024.***

Spectacularly Adventurous & Exciting Itinerary

Day 1 **Depart for Benin, West Africa** from Atlanta on overnight flight, connecting in Paris on Air France.

Day 2 **Arrive in Cotonou.** On arrival at Cotonou Cadjehoun International Airport, proceed through immigrations, claim luggage and clear Custom procedures, exit and meet our expert cultural tour guide who will meet, assist and transfer us to our hotel in a private air conditioned vehicle.

Check in and refresh. Once we have checked in, our Bilingual (English/French speaking) guide, who will be with us throughout our stay and will brief us on what to expect during this tour. Late evening snacks will be provided at the hotel. Enjoy a restful evening at your leisure and get ready for an indelible West Africa Diaspora experience.

Hotel: Best Western, Nobila

Day 3 Explore **Cotonou & Vicinity.** After a leisure morning, we embark on a tour of the capital city Cotonou. Some of the sites we will visit include;

- The 'Esplanade des Amazones', a public square which is home to the 'Amazon', a 98+ foot high statue built in homage to the world's only all female army. These Amazons belonged to the Kingdom of Dahomey, a West African empire that existed from 1625 to 1894.
- The Remembrance Square which reveals the splendor and fascinating historic works of the capital city of Cotonou.
- In Cotonou we will visit the Mathieu Garden, the former home of the late President of the Republic, Mathieu Kerekou, now transformed into a flowery area with a pleasant scent for visitors.

Following lunch (on your own) at a local restaurant, we return to the hotel for dinner and to enjoy the rest of the day at our leisure.

Day 4 After breakfast, drive to Ouidah the spiritual capital of *voodoo religion, and what was once a major slave-trading post. We will visit the Voodoo Museum, the Sacred Forest, and the Temple of the sacred Pythons where we will see the 41 writhing pythons (41 is voodoo's magic number).

**Vodun* is an ancient religion practiced by some 30 million people in the West African nations of Benin, Togo and Ghana. With its countless deities, animal sacrifice and spirit possession, voodoo — as it's known to the rest of the world — is one of the most misunderstood religions on the globe.



**Elements of the Vodun West African religion, also spelled voodoo, survived slavery and evolved into the current forms of religions with similar names that are found in the [New World](#) among the [African diaspora in the Americas](#).*



Following our cultural and insightful experience, we depart Cotonou for Ganvie.

One of the highlights of any trip to West Africa is Ganvie, the African Venice. In ancient times people took refuge on Lake Nokoué from the attacks of the feared Dahomey warriors who were forbidden by a deep belief to fight on water. The Ganvie people over time developed this unique lake culture and way of life which has made them famous.

Our boat cruise takes us along tranquil waterways and fish farms to the lake community of Ganvie. We discover these curious built-on-stilts dwellings, small floating markets and different aspects of the local daily life.

We will return to the hotel for dinner and to enjoy the rest of the day at our leisure.

Day 5 Today, we'll visit the slave house in Agbodrafo. From there we will easily travel by shared boat to Togoville, a red-earth village that was the homeland of numerous slaves taken to Haiti, who were members of the voodoo cult. Here we will find magic remedies and voodoo charms used to cast powerful spells. We are invited to sample some potent herbal teas prepared by a village herbalist.



After lunch (on your own), we make our way to Lomé, Togo's capital. Check-in at Hotel Sarakawa to rest, relax or explore Lomé. We will have dinner and an evening of leisure.

Day 6 **Today our exploration takes us for a Lomé City tour in Ghana.** After a well-deserving breakfast, we check out of our hotel for departure to Ghana. Embark on



a panoramic sightseeing tour of the city's main features such as the Independence Square, National Museum, Craftsmen Village, Central market where traditional articles can be found, the fishing harbor, Fetish market where sacred magic products are sold and the Grand Marche where pearls are sold.

After lunch on your own, we continue to Ghana crossing the border at Aflao.

We follow the coast dotted with Ewe villages, tranquil lagoons and tropical vegetation to our next destination. In Ghana we will check into the Volta hotel, in Lomé for dinner and a restful leisure evening.

Day 7 After a refreshing night and a good breakfast, we will enjoy a scenic drive to the small

village of **Krobo Odumase** to have a firsthand experience of beads making from specially crafted glasses at the **Cedi Beads Factory**. We will have the opportunity to design our own beads using the traditional Krobo technique. The bead-making craft has a long history in Ghana. Beads have been used in ceremonies of birth, coming of age, marriage, or death for the past 400 years. We will watch and participate in the whole bead-making process from beginning to end.

After lunch, on your own, we embark on a *spectacular boat cruise* on the Volta Lake. Following our enjoyable day, we return to our hotel and relish the events of the day and chill for the rest of the evening after a filling dinner, at your leisure.

Day 8 Following breakfast, we depart on our longest drive of the tour to **Kumasi, the seat of the Ashanti Empire** to explore the legends of the famous Ashantis, whose legacies are still evident today.

Enroute to visit the **FairAfric Factory** which offers a farm-to-factory tour and chocolate making; a thrilling experience for individuals who want to learn and understand the procedure called "From Bean to Bar."

Although 70% of the world's cocoa comes from West Africa, less than 1% of the world's chocolate is made in that region. We will experience the processing stages a coco pod goes through after harvesting and how it is made into local chocolates. FairAfric, a young progressive enterprise, is changing this system – its premium-quality organic chocolate is produced from tree to bar in rural Ghana, greatly increasing Africa's share of the value chain in the chocolate industry.

(There will be stops on the way for snack/lunch and bathroom breaks)

Upon our late afternoon arrival we will enjoy a drive through the city to view monuments dedicated to the memory of the great Ashanti people.

At the end of our adventurous day, we will check into the Lancaster Kumasi hotel and prepare for a delicious dinner, and a relaxing evening.

Day 9 After a good breakfast at the hotel, we will further explore the Ashanti Kingdom which is rich in culture and traditions. Today will mark a well celebrated **Festival of the Ashanti Empire**.

Visit the **Manhyia Palace Museum, official residence of Ashanti Kings** (Asantehene) until 1974, now a museum containing treasured items relating to the Ashanti Kingdom.

We will join in the celebration of the **Akwasidae Festival**; the pomp and pageantry of the Ashanti Kingdom. The King riding in a palanquin and adorned with all his gold ornaments comes out to receive the homage of his sub-chiefs and people, it is a spectacular sight to watch the colorful canopies and umbrellas, the skillful drummers, dancers, horn-blowers and praise-singers at these regular festivals, held in honor of their ancestral spirits.



After this fun and exciting day, we will return to our hotel for dinner as we share the enjoyment of the events of the day!

Day 10 Another long ride today, after breakfast as we depart for another adventure of **the Coastal Islands of Ghana; Elmina and Cape Coast**. We will make a short detour to visit the **Adanwomase Kente Village** where we will see various Kente weavers creating colorful Kente cloth in various styles and we will have an opportunity to try a hands-on experience in this special process.



After this fun time, we continue to Cape Coast, making a stop at the **Assin Manso Slave River**.

(There will be stops on the way for snack/lunch and bathroom breaks)

This is the burial site of two former slaves from the USA and Jamaica whose remains were re-interred in August 1998 during Ghana's first Emancipation Day Celebration. A visit to "the Slave River or "Donkor Nsuo" offers the chance to see the place where captured Africans were washed before being conned in the Slaves Castles to await shipment to the Americas and Caribbean.

Our hotel tonight is the Coconut Grove Beach Resort. Where we will have dinner and enjoy the evening!

Day 11 After breakfast, the highlights for today include the **Cape Coast Castle** and the **Fihankra (Naming) Ceremony**. The Cape Coast castle, is a UNESCO world heritage site. The castle is a thought-provoking monument to a harrowing period in the region's history. We will take an emotional journey through the castle which held more enslaved Africans than any other in the region, viewing the dungeons and the infamous **"Door of No Return"**. There is a significant historical museum inside, which explains the history of the castle and of Cape Coast itself. We will have an opportunity to purchase literature on Ghana's forts and castles, as well as the cultural history and traditions of Ghana.

Late this afternoon we will go through the **"Fihankra."** This is a ceremony which seeks to reconnect people of African descent, who have been lost due to the transatlantic slave trade, to the Motherland. This ceremony reconnects returnees with the cultural and spiritual ties that had been denied them for centuries. The final part of Fihankra includes a **naming ceremony**.

2024 will mark the 405th year the first slave ships left the shores of the West Coast of Africa to bring their strange cargo to the Americas! The country of Ghana has been welcoming the descendants of these enslaved Africans back home with a new fervor! You will see where you came from and have an opportunity to participate in a naming ceremony to be named as your ancestors were!

Return to our hotel for dinner and relish in the day's activities as you rest and relax.

Day 12 This morning after breakfast we will head out to visit **Kakum National Park**, one of Ghana's most famous parks. Take a brief walking tour on the forest floor; see birds, butterflies and perhaps catch a glimpse some of the forests more than 40 species of mammals, including monkeys and the reclusive forest elephant. We will then proceed to the **canopy walkway. Kakum is home to Africa's only aerial walkway** through the treetops, a 1000-foot-long and seven-bridge walkway with viewing platforms that reach heights of over 150 feet above ground.



We return to Accra after lunch (on your own). Where we can explore the capital city of Ghana, and get ready for a delicious dinner at our hotel, the Accra City Hotel and have a restful evening.

Day 13 After breakfast, this day begins with a visit to the **W.E.B DuBois Centre** honoring the life of the prominent Pan-Africanist who chose to live and work in Ghana.

We continue on a scenic drive through the principal streets of Accra and view the Flagstaff House (Ghana's White House) on our way to the **Ghana National Museum**.

Additionally, we will visit the **Kwame Nkrumah Memorial Park**, final resting place of Ghana's first president, driving pass the **Independence Square** where you will see the enclosed flame of African liberation, which was *lit by Dr. Kwame Nkrumah in 1961*. The **Memorial Park** is set in attractive gardens and has a museum which contains photos, artifacts and an insight into Dr. Nkrumah's life.

After having this splendid morning, we have lunch (on your own), will make a picturesque stop at the **Independence Arch** and the **Black Star Square**, that is Accra's ceremonial grounds, and venue for all national events especially their Independence Day celebration. For sure you will want to take some nice photos to add to your picturesque gallery as we are approaching the end of our tour.

We complete the day's exploration with a visit to the **La Township** to see uniquely-designed special caskets at the Teshie and Nungua areas which reflect the beliefs of the people in life after death (i.e. a bus driver may be buried in a bus, a waiter in a large beer bottle etc.).

Day 14 Following breakfast and a leisurely morning, we will visit the **Makola Market**; this is the biggest open market in Accra. This fascinating market has been compartmentalized into various sections to make shopping easy for buyers. You will have the chance to walk through this unusually busy market and even get the chance to bargain for stuff you would like to purchase

We will also visit the **Arts and Crafts market** where you may try out your bargaining skills again on the local vendors and to "shop till you drop".



We will have the chance of spending some ample time at the **Fashionable Oxford street** in **Osu** with its colorful stalls of authentic African wear and the **Woodin Fabric Shop**.

After this full day, we will return to our hotel for dinner and talk about the inspiring, educational and experiential times we have had!

Day 15 Today is our last day. After having breakfast we are at our leisure until we are transferred to the airport for our flight home to Atlanta.

We believe ... After this trip you will forever view the Motherland in the positive light it so well deserves!

Day 15 Arrive back home in Atlanta.

Is this Exciting & Adventurous Trip Right for You?

PLEASE review the info in this packet carefully to make the right decision

This active program covers a good amount of ground transportation once we land in Benin. There will be walking involved on most touring days. While the pace will be considered easy and possibly moderate, there is a possibility you will encounter some uneven surfaces, stairs, steps and maybe some slopes. Please be aware that there may be a few required early wake-ups to assure we get in all we can on our exceptional tour itinerary. I have not listed all of the spots we plan to touch, depending on how cohesive we are in gathering to move forward on our journey.

A lot of this tour will be spent on a modern air-conditioned vehicle as we travel. As a convenience for comfort, several stops, as needed, will be made along the way including lunch breaks. The majority of our transportation on this tour will be performed in the air-conditioned motor coach.

SPECIAL NOTE: Because we will be visiting Kakum National Park, you are encouraged to consult your health care provider regarding malaria prophylaxis. It is suggested that you check with your health-care provider before signing up for this exciting and adventurous tour.

Trip Preparation ... What to Know Before You Go

The details are handled ... so you don't have to

Although we have taken care of most of the planning and preparation for you, there are still a few things you should know and some details you should take care of to ensure your comfort, safety and peace of mind. Please review the following information before your departure to ensure that any surprises along the way will only be pleasant ones.

Getting Ready To Go

Passports and Visas

It is your responsibility to have a passport that is valid for at least 6 months beyond the dates of travel. Passport applications are available at most U.S. Post Offices. A Visa is required for entry into Benin, Togo and Ghana. The cost of your required Visa is included in the total cost of the trip. You will be informed of the arrangements to secure your Visa. Please ensure that your passport has blank pages, if not, please get a new one.

Pre-Planning, Proper Preparation and Packing

We suggest you do a little pre-planning to help make your West Africa trip go even smoother. Following are some things to take into consideration:

- Make a list of what you will need to take with you.
- Make sure your passport is in proper order.
- As appropriate, ensure you have enough, at least 2-weeks' worth, of prescription medications.
- If you have medications, include a list of them with the dosage and what it is for.
- if you use over-the-counter medications, consider having a small supply with you, i.e., headaches and/or anti-diarrhea pills.
- Make photocopies of your passport and any other personal ID and important travel documents, and pack them separately from your originals.
- Make sure you know how to set the alarm clock on your cell phone, or bring a small alarm clock with you for breakfast and our morning departures.
- Due to security reasons, we may run into restrictions on the size of bags you can carry inside of some places. Backpacks, or large purses may not be permitted. Please bring a small shoulder bag or purse to use in these situations.
- Avoid placing valuables such as cameras in any checked luggage.
- Airplane pressure can cause similar pressure in your body, most notably in ears, as well as liquid tubes and bottles. As a result of my personal experience, you may want to check with your physician for an appropriate medication for decongestion.
- It is suggested that you place liquid containers in Ziploc bags to catch any leaks.
- Due to COID and other airborne infections, please bring masks and consider wearing them while in flight and when riding in the ground transportation.

Travel Protection

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED! Travel protection insurance IS NOT included in your package. It is insurance that helps provide coverage for Trip Cancellation, Interruption, Baggage Loss or Delay, Medical Expenses and more. We suggest you visit www.InsureMyTrip.com to find the best travel insurance for yourself. Be sure to include your air travel in your coverage.

Staying Healthy While Traveling

Following are several practical steps suggested to help assure you stay healthy while traveling and should help you prevent contracting an illness while on your trip.

- Watch what you eat. Try new foods in modest quantities, and you may want to avoid street foods, salad bars, raw vegetables and fruits, unless they have thick peels like bananas or grapefruit.
- *Stay hydrated.* Drink bottled water. Avoid consuming ice cubes made with tap water. Also, consider avoiding tap water when brushing your teeth.
- If you have allergies to foods, medications or insect bites, or have any other unique medical issues, consider a medical alert bracelet and/or a physician's note detailing required treatment should you become ill.
- Wash your hands regularly and carry hand sanitizer.
- When appropriate, use sunscreen and insect repellent.
- You may also want to consider a small first-aid kit with band aids, antibiotic cream, pain killers, bug bite cream, digestive aids like anti-diarrheal or anti-bloat medications, antacids, and cold medicine.

No Smoking & Heavy Perfumes - Please be considerate of fellow travelers and refrain from smoking cigarettes or cigars in the vicinity of the group, including in outdoor areas where smoking may be permitted but may still affect other tour participants. Additionally, please do not wear heavy perfumes, colognes or other heavy cosmetic fragrances.

Climate & Clothing & Getting the Most from Your West African Trip

The month of October is not significantly hotter or cooler than other times of the year, but it is a great deal more comfortable since humidity levels are usually forecast to be lower. Daily high temperatures increase by 3°F, from 85°F to 88°F, rarely falling below 83°F or exceeding 90°F. Daily low temperatures are around 76°F, rarely falling below 74°F or exceeding 78°F.

After you have signed up and paid your deposit, you can expect periodic notes from me with educational insights about our various destinations.

In the meantime, please feel free to share this wonderment of West African Diaspora Tour with your friends, family and colleagues. And, as always, feel free to contact me as necessary at 678.231.4973 call/text and CH@CarolynHartfield.com.

Hotel Accommodations



Best Western Nobila – Cotonou, Benin

The hotel offers 4-star accommodation 10 minutes' ride from Cotonou Central Mosque. Wi Fi is available throughout the property as well as allergy friendly rooms and a restaurant are available on site.



Hotel Sarakawa – Lome, Togo

The hotel is located by the sea in a park of 25 hectares, surrounded by coconut trees and different species of plants in West Africa.



Volta Hotel – Akosombo, Ghana

Overlooks the Volta Lake (the second largest man-made lake in the world) and the Akosombo hydroelectric dam. Volta Hotel is definitely a haven of comfort, hospitality, and natural beauty.



Lancaster Hotel – Kumasi, Ghana

A first class African-style business hotel set in lush tropical gardens at the heart of historic Ashanti Regional capital of Kumasi. The hotel provides a dynamic holiday experience amid the rich culture of the Ashanti Kingdom and an ideal location for the business and leisure traveler.



Coconut Grove Beach Resort - Ghana

The hotel is situated nearby the Melrose Arch Shopping Centre. The rooms are decorated with a contemporary black and white decor scheme and luxurious furnishings. The Johannesburg Zoo and the Apartheid Museum are in close proximity of the hotel.



Accra City Hotel – Accra, Ghana

The Accra City Hotel became Ghana's first international branded Hotel in 1988, and has since gone on to win numerous international awards for its standards of excellence and multiple amenities offered to its guests.