

MALI

Mali and Burkina Faso
(15 days)

Combine 2 beautiful countries and travel from the “land of adobe” (Mali) to “the land of honorable men” (translation of Burkina Faso). Visit ancient Kingdoms and sleepy desert villages before reaching the “Venice of Mali”, Mopti. Here village life remains at the heart of society and the traditions of the forefathers are still practiced today. Via a boat trip along the mighty Niger River, winding its way among the desert landscape where no river of this magnitude should reasonably exist, we will reach the most remarkable and remote of these towns in Timbuktu. Its reputation was forged by 19th Century explorers with stories of camel caravans and a great seat of learning. We will trek through the wonderful Dogon area and sleep with local families in order to learn about traditions and ways of life. There will be plenty of time to interact with our hosts, visit local markets, see arts and craft people at work, buy their carefully prepared items and of course we will visit one a National Park where we hope to spot the rare Sahel elephants.



Recommended fitness level: intermediate

DAY 1:

Arrival in Bamako, Mali

DAY 2:

Bamako - Segou (Sekoro Village, Bambara Kingdom, Pottery Market)

DAY 3:

Segou - Mopti (Sudanese style Mosque, bustling commercial port, sunset “cruise” in pirogue, visit Bozo villages)

DAY 4:

Mopti - Djenne (UNESCO world heritage site surrounded by the Niger and Bani Rivers, adobe architecture and colorful market)

DAY 5:

Mopti - Timbuktu (landscapes of the Sahel reaching the Sahara’s gateway, Peul nomad camps)

DAY 6:

Timbuktu (exploration of the old town, camel ride through the desert, meet a Tuareg tribal group)

DAY 7:

Timbuktu – Bandiagara Escarpment (Dogon Animistic Culture, traditional villages and breathtaking landscapes)

DAY 8:

Dogon country (trek around the Bandiagara escarpment to discover daily life of the Dogon people)

DAY 9:

Dogon country - Ouahigouya, Burkina Faso (trek in the morning, visit onion fields, and cross border to Burkina)

DAY 10:

Ouahigouya - Ouagadougou (get to know the ancient Katenga Kingdom, sacred crocodiles)

DAY 11:

Ouagadougou (exploration of the town with special visit to the craft area)

DAY 12:

Ouagadougou - Deux Bales National Parc - Bobo Dioulasso (wildlife spotting – Elephants especially)

DAY 13:

Bobo Dioulasso – Sikasso, Mali (get to know Bobo merchants and local artisans and their work)

DAY 14:

Sikasso - Bamako (visit Mali’s Green Belt and get to know the local Senufo culture – peasants and wood-carvers)

DAY 15:

Bamako (fetish market, traditional medicines, shopping and relax). In the evening: final departure

Several routes are available, either combining both countries or go for a deeper exploration into only 1 of them. Treks through the Dogon country can be extended up to 5 days and in that case will require a medium level of fitness. Lodging will be in home-stays.

Recommended period: all year (minor rainfall between July and October).

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