

BENIN

DISCOVERING BENIN'S CULTURAL WONDERS

(14 DAYS)

Benin's relatively small size means that in two weeks one can discover the whole country without speeding from one place to another. The itinerary starts in Ganvié, also referred to as the 'African Venice' where you can discover the way locals live and trade on the water. Afterwards the route will continue to the Slave Coast where one can walk in the footsteps of all those who were led to their new destinations. We will also attend some interesting Voodoo rituals and Guedé dances after which we will continue to the North to admire the adobe architecture of the Taneka and Somba tribes.

Central axes of this trip are the home-stays, interaction with the local people and getting to know the history of slavery and ancient rituals.

Fitness level required: basic



DAY 1:

Arrival in Cotonou in the afternoon

DAY 2:

Cotonou – Calavi - Lake Nokoué at Ganvié (explore Cotonou, its markets and monuments, pirogue through Africa's Venice)

DAY 3:

Ganvié – Porto Novo – Yoruba Country - Ketou (observe Toff ladies selling their goods in the morning and visit by foot of the interesting town, trade heart between America and Europe in its times of splendor, lively markets on the way to Ketou)

DAY 4:

Ketou – Gbaname (visit the King of Yoruba, chat with him and observe the ancient wooden pillars, UNESCO Heritage, visit the Coranic School and the local market, drive to remote Gbaname village)

DAY 5:

Gbaname – Peul nomadic camp – Assiagbome - Gbaname (explore the village and trek through the savannah to reach the nomadic Fulani people, get introduced to their culture and daily life and stop at artisan village, in the evening impressive Guedé dance)

DAY 6:

Gbaname – Cove – Bohicon – Abomey (fetish market, visit by foot Benin's Royal Capital, Palace Museum where some parts have been restored by UNESCO)

DAY 7:

Abomey – Save – Parakou (interesting rock formations, Christian sanctuary, discover the Bariba culture around Parakou and explore the secrets of the city's covered market)

DAY 8:

Parakou – Taneka Koko – Djougou - Natitingou (adobe and stone stunning mountain villages. The Tanekas are Animists very attached to the old African way of life, visit on foot of the area)

DAY 9:

Somba country - Parakou (explore the old quarter, visit the local monarch in the Bariba Sultanate, near the central market)

DAY 10:

Parakou – Abomey (eventual horse riding exhibition in Parakou before heading south)

DAY 11:

Abomey – Slave Route – Ouidah (visit on foot of the slave trail, Ouidah's Voodoo temples, sacred forest and old colonial afro-brazilian manors; nice seafood on the beach)

DAY 12:

Ouidah – Grand Popo (experience an early morning Voodoo ritual in Ouidah's old town, drive to Grand Popo, colonial fishing town, sunset at the beach and freshly grilled fish)

DAY 13:

Grand Popo – Cotonou (beach and relax). In the evening: final departure.

DAY 14:

Arrival to European airport in the evening (if travelling with Royal Air Maroc one can visit Casablanca City Centre).

Recommended period: All year round

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