

Mali - Senegal Gambia - Guinea Bissau

FROM DESERT TO OCEAN; VIBRANT CULTURES,
AND RICH HISTORIES

18-DAY TRIP

BY WEST AFRICA TRACKS



Including:

All overnight accommodations as described, breakfast, dinners at the tented camps, all transportation (and fuel), visits mentioned in the programme, tourist taxes and fees & an English speaking guide.

More information: www.westafricatracks.com

Contact us: info@westafricatracks.com



DAY 1: ARRIVAL IN BAMAKO

Today we will all arrive in Bamako, the capital city of Mali. Depending on what time you arrive, you have some free time in Bamako after you settle in your hotel. We will all meet for dinner to get to know each other and to get to know the guide.

Overnight: Tamana Hotel or similar



DAY 2: BAMAKO TO SÉGOU

After breakfast we will depart, with Ségou as the end destination for today. Our first stop will be in Bambara, without a doubt one of the most pleasant cities in Mali. It has tree-lined avenues, colonial neighborhoods and a decently sized river port. Along the way we can admire the enormous baobabs. Today will take us along magnificent views, with enough time to stop and visit some towns that we will find along the way. In the late afternoon, we will take a walk along the river to admire the sunset followed by a millet beer distillery

Overnight: Djoliba hotel.

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**DAY 3:
SÉGOU TO MOPTI**

After breakfast, we hit the road towards Mopti. The road from Segou to Mopti offers a scenic journey through the heart of Mali's diverse landscapes and rural communities. After we leave the city behind us, the road soon transitions into a winding route that meanders through the picturesque countryside. Along the way, we are treated to views of fertile farmlands, traditional mud-brick villages, and the majestic Niger River, which flows gracefully alongside the road for much of the journey. All the small towns and settlements offer each a unique charm and character. Finally, after several hours of travel, the road arrives in Mopti, a bustling port city that serves as a gateway to the legendary Dogon Country and the majestic Bandiagara Escarpment.

Overnight: Kanaga hotel



**DAY 4:
MOPTI**

Today we will spend our day in and around Mopti. We will start at the riverbanks, catching glimpses of local fishermen and bustling riverfront communities. We will visit the "Women's Village" or "Nder". This village is exclusively inhabited by women and their children, as it serves as a sanctuary for women who have faced various challenges. For a deeper dive into Mali's rich heritage, visit the iconic Komoguel Mosque, an architectural marvel that stands as a symbol of the city's Islamic traditions. Finally, we round off our day with a visit to the lively Fulani quarter, where you can sample delicious local cuisine and experience the warm hospitality of the Malian people.

Overnight: Kanaga hotel



**DAY 5:
MOPTI TO BAMAKO**

Today we are having a long day on the road back to Bamako. The road trip from Mopti to Bamako is an immersive and memorable experience. The road initially winds through the flat plains and savannahs of central Mali, dotted with small villages and agricultural fields. As we progress westward, the landscape gradually transitions into rolling hills and rocky outcrops, providing scenic vistas along the way. The road passes through several towns and settlements, before eventually reaching the sprawling metropolis of Bamako. Throughout the day-long trip we will encounter herds of livestock, bustling roadside markets, and friendly locals going about their daily lives.

Overnight: Tamana Hotel

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**DAY 6:
BAMAKO TO
KENIEBA**

Today we go further into west Mali, another long but exciting day on the road. We leave after a very early breakfast and as we leave Bamako behind, the scenery gradually transitions into rolling hills and fertile farmlands, with occasional views of the mighty Niger River. Finally, as the road approaches Kéniéba, the landscape becomes more rugged, with rocky terrain and sparse vegetation characteristic of the Sahelian region. The town is known for its rich cultural heritage and warm hospitality, with friendly locals eager to share their traditions and way of life. One of the highlights of Kéniéba is its vibrant market, where bustling stalls offer a colorful array of goods, from fresh produce and spices to traditional crafts and textiles.

Overnight: Kenieba Motel



**DAY 7:
KENIEBA TO
KEDOUGOU**

We enjoy our breakfast and then continue to the nearby Faleme River Valley where we will explore the stunning landscapes, ancient rock formations, and remote villages tucked away in the wilderness. Then we continue our road passing through the rugged terrain characterized by rocky hills, sparse vegetation, and occasional clusters of acacia trees. As the road crosses into Senegal, the landscape becomes more lush and verdant, with rolling hills, dense forests, and cascading waterfalls dotting the countryside. Along the way, we may encounter remote villages and traditional settlements, where we can experience the rich culture and hospitality of the local communities. Finally, as we approach Kédougou, the landscape transitions into the lush foothills of the Fouta Djallon mountains, offering breathtaking views.

Overnight: Badiar hotel



**DAY 8:
KEDOUGOU TO
DINDEFELO**

After breakfast we head out to spend our days in the mountainous region. We will visit the Bedik and Bassari ethnic groups, which are indigenous communities residing in the southeastern region of Senegal. They are known for their distinctive architecture as their intricately crafted wooden homes built into the hillsides, blending seamlessly with the natural landscape. These communities maintain rich cultural traditions, including vibrant festivals, traditional music, and spiritual practices deeply rooted in their connection to the land. In the afternoon we will go on a scenic hike through the verdant forest to reach the Dindefelo waterfall, where we can swim in the refreshing pool at its base and marvel at the beauty of the surrounding landscape. We will enjoy dinner in our tented camp

Overnight: Dindefelo Camp

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**DAY 9:
DINDEFELO TO
TAMBACOUNDA**

After breakfast we will cross to the Niokolo Koba Fauna Reserve. This reserve is a UNESCO World Heritage Site renowned for its diverse wildlife and pristine natural habitats. We might spot iconic African species such as lions, elephants, and chimpanzees in their natural environment. Then we continue our route towards Tambacounda, we will have to navigate winding roads that meander through dense forests and rolling hills. As the journey progresses, the landscape gradually transitions into open savannah, with expansive vistas stretching as far as the eye can see. Along the way, we will encounter remote villages and wildlife roaming freely.

Overnight: Hotel Relais de Tamba



**DAY 10:
TAMBACOUNDA TO
SAINT LOUIS**

After breakfast we hit the road to the holy city of Touba where we will visit the mosque. Which is a magnificent symbol of Mouridism, adorned with intricate architecture and serving as a spiritual center for followers of the Sufi order. We continue our journey and visit a 'baifal' center for marabou apprentices, with a focus on spiritual and academic education, the center cultivates a deep understanding of religious principles, Quranic studies, and practical skills necessary for future leadership roles within the community. We continue once again and upon our arrival in Saint Louis, we will visit the heart of the old quarter of this historic city, founded by Serer fishermen and Marseille merchants who named it Saint Louis in honor of the French monarch in the 17th century.

Overnight: Hotel de la Poste



**DAY 11:
SAINT LOUIS TO
LAKE ROSE**

Departing from the historic city of Saint Louis, the road initially follows the meandering Senegal River, offering picturesque views of the surrounding wetlands and wildlife. As we continue southward, the landscape transitions into open savannah dotted with baobab trees and small villages, providing glimpses of rural life in Senegal. Eventually, the road leads to Lake Rose, a natural wonder known for its striking pink hue caused by high salt content and unique microorganisms. We will pay a visit to the village Kayar, a picturesque and traditional Serer fishing Village.

Overnight: Hotel ChezSalim

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**DAY 12:
LAKE ROSE TO
DAKAR**

Today we will leave for Dakar, the capital city of Senegal. Before we head into the city, we will take the ferry to the island of Gorée. This island off the coast of Dakar holds profound historical significance as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is renowned for its role in the transatlantic slave trade, serving as a departure point for countless enslaved Africans forcibly transported to the Americas. We will explore its well-preserved colonial architecture, including the House of Slaves, a poignant museum that bears witness to the horrors of the slave trade. We will also enjoy the island's stunning ocean views and serene beaches. In the afternoon we head back into the city of Dakar to enjoy the evening in the city.

Overnight: La Madrague Hotel



**DAY 13:
DAKAR TO BANJUL**

After breakfast we start on the scenic journey along the West African coast from Dakar to Banjul. Departing from Dakar, the road initially follows the coastline, offering stunning views of the Atlantic Ocean and sandy beaches. As we cross into The Gambia, the landscape transitions into lush mangrove forests and palm-fringed shores, providing glimpses of local fishing villages and traditional life along the way. Eventually, the road leads to Banjul, the capital city of Gambia.

Overnight: Kajamor Lodge



**DAY 14:
BANJUL**

After breakfast we make our way to the Medina Jambor school, subsidized by an NGO from Girona. We will then continue the road towards Lamin Lodge, a restaurant in the mangroves of a Gambian tributary river, where we will stop for a snack. We will continue to Serekunda, the largest city in the Gambia, where we will have the opportunity to find the most beautiful fabrics in the country. After Serekunda, we will stop for lunch at the Blue Kitchen restaurant, after which we will head to Tanji, the Gambia's stunning and largest fishing village, to watch the arrival of the boats and fish market. We will also visit the fish smokehouses before we return to our hotel in Banjul.

Overnight: Kajamor Lodge

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**DAY 15:
BANJUL TO
BISSAU**

After breakfast we start our journey to Guinea Bissau. Departing from Banjul, the road initially winds through the lush mangroves and coastal scenery, providing glimpses of local villages and fishing communities along the way. As we cross into Guinea-Bissau, the landscape transitions into rolling hills, dense forests, and fertile farmlands, offering picturesque vistas of the countryside. Eventually, the road leads to Bissau, the capital city of Guinea-Bissau, where we will explore its historic city center with Portuguese architecture and its enormous fort dating back to the time of the slave trade.

Overnight: Azalai Hotel



**DAY 16:
BISSAU TO ORANGO**

After breakfast, we will board a boat to reach the Bijagós archipelago, where we will discover remote places, islands and isolated human settlements. The Bijagós archipelago is located about 40 kilometers from the coast and, with its 88 islands (only 21 are permanently inhabited), is the largest archipelago in Africa. Wild and virgin landscapes, authentic tribal culture and unique fauna: Bijagós is a “geographical jewel”. The Bijagós tribal culture gives an important role to women, being a matriarchal society where the rulers are always women. A forty-minute walk will take us to the sacred town of Okinka Pampa, where we can find the tombs of the queens.

Overnight: Orango Park Hotel



**DAY 17:
ORANGO TO BISSAU**

After breakfast, we will sail to the island of Bolama. Once the capital of Portuguese Guinea, Bolama is dotted with colonial-era buildings and historic landmarks, including the grand Governor's Palace, which stands as a testament to the island's colonial past. We will explore its charming streets, relax on its secluded beaches, and immerse ourselves in the unique atmosphere of this tranquil island paradise. It will be a short visit, since access to this area depends on the state of the tide. In the afternoon we head back to Bissau.

Overnight: Azalai Hotel

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**DAY 18:
RETURN HOME**

After breakfast, depart to visit the town of Pepel, famous for being the guardian of the secrets of magic and traditional medicines. After the visit, last purchases and return to the hotel, until the agreed time for transfer to the airport. Our guide will accompany you to the airport.