



Benin - 15-day itinerary 'medium'

Ségou, 28 October 2017

expected dates: to be determined

group size: to be determined

rooms: to be determined

Welcome to Benin!

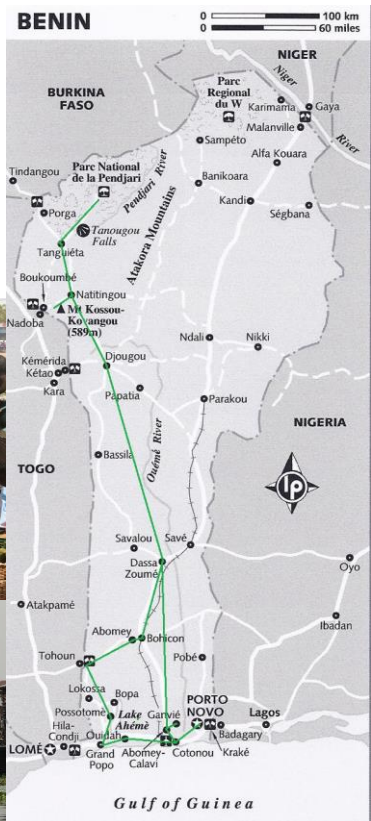
Nature, culture, traditional architecture and a diverse population; Benin offers something for every traveler.

In two weeks we take you on a trip along some of the country's highlights and every now and then we take you off the beaten tourist paths. The nights are spend in hotels and B&Bs.

From the South to the North and back we take you on a journey to remember!

In short

1. arrival - Cotonou
2. Cotonou - Porto Novo
3. Porto Novo - Dassa
4. Dassa - Natitingou
5. Somba country
6. Natitingou - Pendjari Park
7. Pendjari Park
8. Pendjari Park - Natitingou
9. Natitingou - Abomey
10. Abomey - Possotomé
11. Possotomé - Grand Popo
12. Grand Popo
13. Grand Popo - Ouidah
14. Ouidah - Cotonou
15. Cotonou - departure



Itinerary

day 1: arrival Cotonou

The day is dedicated to the journey to Benin.

Arrival at Cotonou's international airport.

Transfer to the accommodation.

night in: Cotonou



day 2: Cotonou - Porto Novo (85k)

The morning is used to take care of practical issues such as money exchange and arranging a local sim card and / or an introduction to Cotonou.

After lunch the journey goes by road to Abomey-Calvi, where you go aboard of a boat for a trip on Nokoué Lake. The lake is known for the stilt villages of which Ganvié is by far the best known. The trip on the lake takes you to Ganvié for an impression of daily life in the village.

Return to the shore and continue in the afternoon to Porto Novo, the capital of Benin.

night in: Ganvié - Porto Novo

**day 3: Porto Novo - Dassa (235k)**

Porto Novo is explored in the morning. Visits are made to the botanical garden, the ethnographical museum, the place of the nine-headed phantoms, the old market, the mosque and the Songhaï centre.

Road trip to Dassa in the afternoon with a visit to the underground village near Bohicon. The village was only recently discovered when a road construction truck disappeared in a hole in the ground. Research showed it was a well-hidden underground house and more of them were afterwards discovered in the surroundings. It is still unknown who created and inhabited the underground village.

night in: Dassa

day 4: Dassa - Natitingou (360k)

Morning visit to Dassa's sacred hills and to the Maria cave of Notre Dame d'Arigbo. When talking about hills, the population uses the sacred voodoo number of 41. In reality there are more hills. In former times the hills were inhabited. People had sought shelter to protect their families against hostile tribes and slave hunters. To guarantee their well-being voodoo masters protected the area with sacred ceremonies. Up till today a voodoo palace is in use on one of the hills. Climb a hill with your guide and be introduced to the past and present of the sacred hills.

The visit is followed by the road-trip to Natitingou, with stops along the way, according to your liking.

Late afternoon visit to the regional museum and to a tchouc (local beer) distillery. Tchouc and banana fritter tasting.

night in: Natitingou

**day 5: Somba country (100k)**

A the trip is made to Somba country. This area of Benin, situated on the border with Togo, is known for its traditional architecture. The mud-built two-story houses, locally called tata's, are well-worth a visit.



Descend the Atakora mountain range to get a good impression of the magnificent scenery of the Boukoubé area.

Lunch is eaten in a traditional maquis - a kiosk, where regional dishes like fonio are being served.

Continue to Koussougouingou village in the afternoon for an introduction to the architecture, culture, traditions and customs of the Ottamari people, including visits to traditional tata's - the local name for the adobe houses typical for the Ottamari people.

Return to Natitingou for the night.

night in: Natitingou

day 6: Natitingou - Pendjari Park (360k)

The journey continues, destination Pendjari Park in the North of the country. Pendjari Park is listed as a UNESCO world heritage site and often referred to as the best park in West Africa. For good reason!

It is home to a multitude of animals, including: elephants, warthogs, buffalos, multiple gazelle species, crocodiles, hippos, lions, baboons, red monkeys, hundreds of bird species and even leopards.

The day is spent in the park and game drives are made.

night in: Pendjari Park

day 7: Pendjari Park (100k)

Another day is spent in the park, where the (early) morning and late afternoon are used for game drives to the different viewpoints and lakes. With a bit of luck you'll see some animals you had not yet seen yesterday.

night in: Natitingou

day 8: Pendjari Park - Natitingou (360k)

One more early morning game drive in the park. This time the drive takes you towards the park exit and from there on to Tanougou for a visit to the Tanougou falls, where a refreshing bath can be taken.

Continue to Natitingou for the night.

night in: Natitingou

day 9: Natitingou - Taneka country - Abomey (410k)

At only about 50k South from Natitingou Taneka country is visited. Courtesy visits are made to the King and the Spiritual Leader. Both men play an important role in everyday life of the Taneka people, who are true to their culture. You're introduced to daily life, customs and culture of the population group.

A visit is made to the cultural bank, which looks like a museum. With the difference that none of the items belong to the museum. They all serve as a pledge for a microloan that was granted to the owner to start or expand his business. When the loan has been paid off, the item returns to the owner. A lunch stop is made in Djougou, where some craftsmen - weaver, smith, leather worker - are visited.

Continue to Abomey for the night.

night in: Abomey

day 10: Abomey - Possotomé (120k)

In the morning Abomey's museum is visited. In former times Abomey was the capital of the Dahomey Kingdom. The museum is housed in one of the former palaces. It is the only palace that survived, after the last Dahomey King set all 12 palaces on fire, before leaving the town, saving himself from being captured by the French colonizers.

Optional: visit a voodoo village near Abomey.

After lunch the journey goes to Possotomé. Even though Possotomé on the shore of Lake Ahémé is not on most visitor's itinerary it is well-worth a visit as you'll find out today. Village visit in the afternoon. Possibility to take a thermal bath in the evening.

night in: Possotomé



day 11: Possotomé - Grand Popo (60k)

Morning boat trip on Lake Ahémé followed by the road trip to Grand Popo on the ocean.
 Afternoon visit to a sea turtle conservation project and a walk on the beach to the King's Estuary.
night in: Grand Popo

day 12: Grand Popo (0k)

Enjoy a day off in Grand Popo to relax or to get an impression about daily life on the oceanfront, where fishermen use the beach to land the catch of the day.
night in: Grand Popo

**day 13: Grand Popo - Ouidah (50k)**

Early morning departure for Ouidah on the ocean. The town is known for both the voodoo religion and the slave history. In the morning you visit the pythons' temple and the basilica. Walk the 4k long slave route taking you along landmarks such as the well, where people had to wash off their African sins, and the Tree of Forgetfulness to the Port of No Return at the ocean, from where people were boarded to faraway unknown destinations.

Lunch is eaten at the Zinsou Foundation.

In the afternoon the village of Ouakpè is visited, where you are introduced to the process of salt making.

night in: Ouidah

**day 14: Ouidah - Cotonou (65k)**

Travel back to Cotonou via de Route de Pêche, the coastal road. Lunch is eaten in a traditional maquis on the oceanfront.

Afternoon visit to the Dantokpa market, the largest market of West Africa.

night in: Cotonou

day 15: Cotonou - departure (40k)

The last day of the trip through Benin has arrived.

Visits are made to a handicraft market, to the square of the red star and to the square of the martyrs.

Relaxing afternoon at a restaurant at the ocean.

Transfer to the airport, according to the departure time of your flight.

possibility to shower before departure

Information regarding itinerary

This trip can start on any day of the week.

Specific interests for your trip? Do not hesitate to ask us to adapt the trip to your liking.

Rainy season

When traveling during the rainy season itineraries may need to be adjusted to the weather circumstances. The above itinerary is the guideline. Your guide will suggest adjustments if necessary.

Suggested accommodations

Cotonou	La Maison de Canelya - room with air-conditioning and private bathroom
Porto Novo	Centre Songhaï - room with fan and private bathroom
Dassa	Auberge de Dassa - room with fan and private bathroom
Natitingou	Le Béliér - room with fan and private bathroom

Pendjari Park	Pendjari Lodge - safari tent with private bathroom
Abomey	Auberge d'Abomey - room with fan and private bathroom
Possotomé	Chez Theo - room with fan and private bathroom
Grand Popo	Auberge de Grand Popo - room with air-conditioning and private bathroom
Ouidah	Hôtel La joie, room with air-conditioning and private bathroom
Cotonou (last day)	possibility to shower before departure

Accommodations mentioned above are suggestions. The final choice depends on availability. If any of the above mentioned accommodations is not available, the best possible alternative is chosen.

Prices

Depending on the number of participants; [available upon request](#).

Included

- 🍷 **private transport:** as described in the above itinerary, including all costs related to the transport, such as driver, fuel and toll - vehicle adapted to the number of participants
- 🍷 **guide:** accompanying English or French spoken guide, traveling with the party and local guides and assistants
- 🍷 **activities:** all costs related to the activities mentioned in the above itinerary, including entry fees, tourist taxes, tokens of respect to village chiefs and elders, as well as transport if applicable
- 🍷 **accommodation:** as described above
- 🍷 **meals included:** breakfast day 2-15, lunch day 5 and 14
- 🍷 **fair payment:** for products and services to all we do business with

Exclusive

- 🍷 air fares and / or transport to the start of the journey and from the end
- 🍷 visa, vaccinations
- 🍷 personal insurances, such as travel, cancellation and medical insurances
- 🍷 additional and optional side trips and/or excursions, as well as activities on days off
- 🍷 upgrade for rooms and/or accommodations
- 🍷 additional days
- 🍷 drinks and other meals
- 🍷 tips, souvenirs and personal expenses

Required visa(s)

Benin single entry visa, to be applied for through a Beninese embassy
the letter needed for the visa application is upon booking provided by us

General conditions

Papillon Reizen's [general conditions](#) apply to this offer.

Papillon funds

Papillon values taking on social responsibility. To create a balance between giving and receiving we have created the Papillon funds. By traveling with us you contribute to making a difference.

Payment conditions

Down payment upon booking: 25%.

Payment of the remaining sum six weeks prior to the start of the trip.
Full payment upon booking, when six or less weeks are left to the start of the trip.

Information

Extensive travel and country information is provided upon booking.