



# Ghana

**Planning a trip to Ghana? Then you should talk to us...** We know this country exceptionally well. We offer independent expert advice and the ability to deliver top quality itineraries with the best tour operators that are exceptional value for money. Arranging your travel through The Specialist Travel Consultancy also reduces the time you have to spend researching and planning your trip. And our service is completely free!

**We arrange tailor made trips:**

- Cultural tours
- Adventure travel
- Partnership school visits
- School & Scout Expeditions

Contact us to discuss your travel requirements on **0845 838 7667** or for more information on the service we offer please visit our website: [www.thestc.co.uk](http://www.thestc.co.uk)

## Facts & Highlights

**Full Country Name:** The Republic of Ghana

**Area:** 238,538 sq. km

**Population:** 21.82 million (2005 est)

**Capital:** Accra (pop. c. 5 million)

**People:** Ethnic groups include the Akan, Mossi, Ewe, Fante, and Hausa

**Languages:** English is official language plus up to 70 local languages.

**Religions:** Mainly Christian and Muslim, although there are many local / traditional beliefs as well.

**Currency:** Cedi

**Government:** Republic, independent since 1957.

**Electricity:** 220 volts AC, 50Hz. Three-pin plugs.

**Time:** GMT

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**Life:** Like much of west Africa, Ghana has rhythm. Most Ghanaians are poor but their dance, drumming, culture and vibrant traditions make them amongst the happiest people you will ever meet.

**Foot Safaris:** Come face to face with big game and small mammals on a foot safari in Mole National Park.

**Slave Trade:** Explore the history and ruined forts of the slave trade that left its mark across the country.

**Haggle:** Authentic markets are everywhere: get ready to haggle hard!

**Rainforest walkways:** Explore the sounds of lush rainforest on an aerial walkway high in the canopy.

**Meet a Chief:** Tribal village life is still very much in existence and village elders will treat you as welcome guests.

**Chill:** Relax to the sound of waves and falling coconuts on the beautiful palm fringed beaches of the Gulf of Guinea.

Since independence in 1957, and despite years of corrupt governments and military coups, Ghana has established a unique, colourful identity. It is a quintessential West African country offering vibrant tribal cultures, a rich history, enchanting rhythms and beautiful, smiling people - all the ingredients for adventure travel at its very best.

The majority of our clients visiting Ghana have curriculum links with Ghanaian schools. Most look to combine a visit to their school with a tour or expedition in the country, and we can tailor-make a trip or expedition to your exact requirements.

School links aside, Ghana is an exceptional destination for an educational adventure trip in its own right. The country has an amazing mix of history, wildlife, geography and culture and provides an experience for teachers and pupils like no other.

The capital, Accra, is a typically chaotic and bustling West African city, but not far away are idyllic palm fringed beaches and the UNESCO Gold Coast Castles - brimming with evidence of the slave trade and past influences including the Dutch, French, Portuguese, British and Danish.

Heading inland, if time is short we can usually arrange internal flights to Tamale in the north of the country. Otherwise, we recommend travelling overland to fully appreciate the sights and sounds of rural West Africa at its very best. In places the travel can be rough, but it is not without its

rewards - here we look at some of the highlights of the interior:

Not too far from the coast lies the Kakum National Park and the opportunity to discover the delights of the rainforest at canopy level on an aerial walkway. Geographers will also delight at the crater lake at Bosumtwi, and the world famous Akosombo Dam holding back Lake Volta - the largest man-made lake in the world.

On the northern shores of Lake Volta lies the infamous Salaga Slave Castle and the remains of what was once the largest inland slave market in the country. A little north of here is the regional capital, Tamale, surrounded by tropical savannah.

On the border with Burkina Faso, lies the frontier town of Bolgatanga, a Talensis tribal area that largely resisted the efforts of the slave traders and is home to the "whispering rocks" and Tenzug shrine.

Also in the north lies the fantastic Mole National Park, the largest in Ghana. Here you can embark on a foot safari amongst wild bush and many different animal species, including elephant, buffalo, antelope, warthog and numerous bird species. Other animal encounters can be had at the Boabeng-Fiema Monkey Sanctuary, just north of the absorbing city of Kumasi, capital of the Ashanti region.

Awaiting you at all these highlights and everywhere else in the country is perhaps the greatest highlight of them all - the legendary Ghanaian welcome. The country, its culture, music and its people will get under your skin and remain with you long after you have returned home.



## Suggested Itineraries

We can tailor-make itineraries in Ghana to fit your requirements. Please contact us to discuss any ideas you may have.

### 16 day adventure / highlights tour

**DAY 1** Fly London/Accra.

**2** Arrive Accra; tour Accra.

**3** Drive Lake Bosumtwi; cultural visit to Adanwomasi village.

**4** Morning at Lake Bosumtwi; drive Atebubu.

**5** Local boat to Makongo and drive to Bolgatanga.

**6** In Bolgatanga; optional visit to Tengzug shrine; visit to Paga crocodile ponds and Sirigu village.

**7** Drive to Mole National Park.

**8** Elephant search on foot in Mole; optional visit to Larabanga mosque.

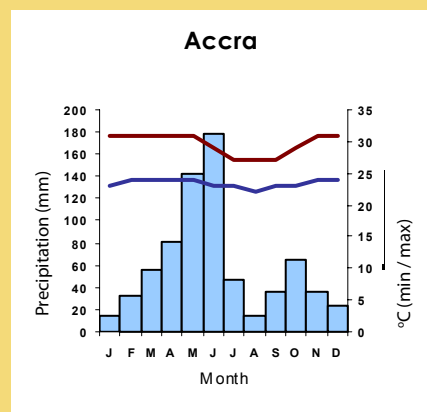
**9** Visit Boabeng Monkey Sanctuary en route to Techiman.

## Geography & Climate

Ghana has a wide variety of geography. In the south and also in the west are areas of dense tropical rainforest. This gives way to large expanses of savannah and scrub as you head north. In the far north of the country this becomes very arid savannah interspersed with forested hills. Two major rivers, (The Black and White Voltas) combine and drain into Lake Volta - the largest man-made lake in the world, whilst in the centre of the country lies Lake Bosumtwi, a crater lake 10 km wide and estimated to be over 1 million years old.

Ghana is typically tropical with much of the country being hot and humid, although there are regional variations.

In the south there are two main rainy seasons, running from March to July and September to November. In the north the gap between these two seasons blurs resulting in one rainy season that starts in March and continues until September. Between December and March the north is affected by the Harmattan, a dry desert wind which lessens the humidity, but increases the heat during the day.



**10** Drive Kumasi; sightseeing.

**11** In Kumasi; Free.

**12** Drive to Axim beach.

**13** Beachcombing; optional visit to stilt village.

**14** Drive to Cape Coast; visit Elmina and Cape Coast castles.

**15** Visit Kakum NP (for canopy walk); drive Accra.

**16** Fly London.

## National Holidays

**1 Jan:** New Years Day.

**6 March:** Independence Day

**March / April:** Easter - Good Friday and Easter Monday.

**1 May:** Labour Day.

**25 May:** Africa Day

**1 July:** Republic Day

**5 Dec:** Farmers Day (date varies each year)

**25/26 Dec:** Christmas.

**31 Dec:** Revolution Day

**Other:** Ramadan, Eid al-Kebir, Eid al-Fitr, (dates vary according to Islamic calendar).

## Customs

Clothing for women should be reasonably conservative; avoid skimpy shorts or tops. When in the presence of elders, it is considered bad form to sit cross-legged, or not to remove your hat as a sign of respect. Left hands are often considered 'unclean' in African cultures. Offering money with the left hand is especially insulting. The Muslim month of Ramadan (dates vary) involves fasting from dawn until dusk. Foreigners and non-Muslims are exempt, but consideration should be shown by not eating in public between these times.

## Festivals

In typical west African spirit, Ghana is alive with music, dance and festivals throughout the year. Wherever you travel it is likely that you will encounter some form of festival. One of the more famous festivals, Homowo, is celebrated in the south of the country by the people of the greater traditional region of Accra in August and September. The festival is dedicated to food and the harvest and after a month of drum "silence" the streets become awash with music, drumming, processions and merriment.

## Regulations & Red Tape

A full passport, valid for 6 months after your return date, is required for travel to



Ghana. British passport holders need a visa (approx £30) which must be arranged prior to arrival in Ghana.

## Useful Addresses

### Ghanaian Ministry of Tourism

PO Box 4386, Accra, Ghana

Web: [www.ghanatourism.gov.gh](http://www.ghanatourism.gov.gh)

### Ghana High Commission

104 Highgate Hill, London N6 5HE.

Tel: 0208 342 7500 (visas)

Web: [www.ghanahighcommissionuk.com](http://www.ghanahighcommissionuk.com)

Opening hours: Mon-Fri 0930-1300.

## Price Guide

Prices vary enormously depending on the length and style of trip required, as well as the number of participants involved and the time of year of travel.

An in-depth 2 week tour, allowing time to visit a link school is likely to cost in the region of £1,900 per person. A tailor-made 3 week tour or expedition should cost around £2,300 - £2,800 per person, dependent on itinerary.

## More Information

To discuss the travel, tour and expedition possibilities that Ghana offers in greater detail, and to get free, impartial advice on suitable tour operators please contact:

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