



## Trip Details

# Ghana | Afrochella & New Year's Celebration

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## What's Included

- Arrival and departure transfers
- 5 nights in Accra at Alisa Hotel North Ridge or similar
- 2 nights in Elmina at Coconut Grove Hotel or similar
- 17 meals: 7 breakfast, 7 lunches, 3 dinners
- Attend Afrochella Festival
- Visit Assin Mans & Cape Coast Castle
- Traditional Naming Ceremony in local village
- Visit Kakum National Park
- Elmina city tour including visit to Elmina Castle
- New Year's Celebration
- Accra city tour
- Mineral water, snacks, and fruits
- Transportation in air-conditioned cars
- All park entrance and excursion fees
- Expert guide



## Not Included

- International flights
- Visa
- Soft and alcoholic drinks during meals
- Any optional excursions
- Tips
- Anything that is not specified as included

## Day by Day

### Day 1

Finally, you have arrived. Time to relax and take it all in as your senses go into overload. Africa is special and over the coming days, we hope your experiences will help cement your connection to your culture and heritage. Your guides and driver are excited to meet you on your arrival at the Kotoka International Airport Accra, which is situated on the beautiful gold coast of Western Africa.

Make yourself known to your guides who will be accompanying you for the duration of your trip and they will take care of you from here. You will be transferred to the hotel for check-in for you.

A private Akwaaba (welcome) dinner has been arranged at your beautiful beachfront hotel. A perfect time to officially offer you all Akwaaba (welcome) and brief you on all aspects of your trip. After our meal, you can choose to relax at your hotel after the flight and rest up in preparation for the following day's activities.

If you are too excited to rest and would like to experience Accra nightlife, no problem, your guides and driver will be more than happy to head into town with you to check out some bars and nightclubs!

**Hotels:** Overnight in Accra

**Meals:** Dinner



## Day 2

After breakfast, our focus will be on pre-Afrochella shopping as we set off to the cultural center in Accra. The cultural center is an ideal place to pick up traditional materials, clothes, crafts, and art but be prepared to barter. It is important to bear in mind that if you pick up material to be made into dresses, shirts, trousers, and skirts during your time here your guides can arrange for them to be sewn into outfits for you before your departure. During our time in the city this morning, it will be possible to pick up any other items we may need before setting off for the Afrochella celebrations.


The excitement builds as we enjoy our lunch before heading to Afrochella. The lineup has not yet been published, however, if it is half as good as the previous lineups, we are in for a real treat! The El Wak Stadium in Accra will be buzzing and a hive of activity as we enjoy Ghana's best artists from a wide range of music that includes Highlife, Hiplife, Ragga, and many more. The best DJs from all over the country and continent will also be on hand to ensure we keep moving to the beat. A captivating experience in the heart of West Africa, we can also enjoy the many artists, fashion outlets, and traditional cuisine all around us during an epic day in Ghana's capital. Our night is not over as the festival draws to a close as we are just starting, you can choose to head into Osu to continue our celebrations long into the night and head to some of the many nightclubs for an Afrochella afterparty if you wish.

**Hotels:** Overnight in Accra

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## Day 3


This morning we take a leisurely breakfast before setting off Westwards to Elmina in the central region of Ghana. The town of Elmina was given its name by the Portuguese due to the abundance of Gold found in Ghana, translated Elmina means The Mine. Gold is of such importance to Ghana today and historically that we were previously known as the Gold Coast before independence. Ghana's gold is of



the highest quality and we are the 8th largest exporter in the world and the second-largest exporter in Africa behind South Africa.

An emotional stop at Assin Manso, a prominent town along the enslaved African trade route where so many of our ancestors from the northern parts of Ghana, Burkina Faso, and Niger were marched barefoot in shackles heading towards the coast. The town surrounds the Ndonkor Nsuo (Slave River). This river is where enslaved Africans were checked for fitness and bathed before being transported to Cape Coast for shipment to the Americas. They would have walked hundreds of kilometers from Northern Ghana through thick forests in shackles and chains, many being in poor health once they reached Assin Manso. Once bathed and rested they would continue the final 32-mile march to the dungeons of Cape Coast or Elmina Castles where they would remain for up to 6 weeks before being shipped to the Americas. In 1998, a symbolic gesture was made when the bodies of two free (previously enslaved) Africans, Samuel Carson from New York U.S.A and Crystal from Kingston Jamaica were returned to Cape Coast Castle and symbolically passed through the “Door of no Return” before being transported to Assin Manso for re-internment.

After learning the history, having time to reflect, and visiting the river we continue to Cape Coast. On arrival in Cape Coast, we stop for lunch at the Ridge Royal Hotel which is one of the best establishments to eat in the town. Our afternoon is dedicated to honoring our ancestors at arguably the most significant edifice remaining along the West African coastline. Cape Coast Castle is an emotional, thought-provoking monument to a harrowing period in our region’s history. Quality time will be dedicated here on an educational and spiritual journey visiting all corners of this castle that kept more enslaved African’s captive than any other in West Africa. Located below the governor’s place of worship and castle church we find the dungeons where up to 1300 African men, women and children were kept at any one time in atrocious conditions until being taken through the infamous “Door of no return” to waiting for ships. There is the opportunity to pay our respects at a local shrine in the end dungeon where a tunnel led to the door of no return. An informative and educational museum explains the entire history of the castle and Cape Coast itself, as well as a shop selling literature on all



of Ghana's forts and castles, as well as the cultural history and traditions of Ghana. Many African Americans have relocated back to their ancestral home here in Ghana, setting up businesses and purchasing homes in Cape Coast and Elmina.

After an educative, emotional, and spiritual day, we check into our beautiful beachfront hotel to freshen up for dinner and relax around the pool and bar. For those who are up for it tonight, we can head into town to one of the nightspots and bars.


**Hotels:** Overnight in Elmina

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

#### **Day 4**

A relaxed breakfast at our beachfront hotel before an incredibly special time arrives as we prepare for your official Naming Ceremony. We set off to visit a local village to pay a courtesy call on the chiefs, queen mothers, and community elders. As tradition dictates, they start with the pouring of libation to officially welcome you home, to the land your ancestors were forcibly taken from, and where your heritage and culture live on. Drumming and dancing are all around us as you get an in-depth feel of traditional village life here in Ghana. The time has finally arrived for you to be given your true African name during your traditional naming ceremony in your honor. Chiefs and elders of the community officially welcome you as they lead you through the ceremony which has been performed by your ancestors through history. You will finally have the chance to adopt your African name based on the day of the week you were born or the numeric order of your siblings. This would have been your actual name if you were born in Ghana and has an emotional attachment to many when they receive them. A major highlight of your time here, after a morning of celebrations we head to Hans Cottage Hotel for lunch in a unique location over a lake containing Nile Crocodiles.

An action-packed fun afternoon lies ahead as we set off to Africa's world-famous rainforest canopy walkway at Kakum National Park which is a semi-deciduous upper guinea rainforest. This is an incredibly beautiful, tropical guinea rainforest and the canopy walkway is sure to be one of the highlights of your time in Cape Coast. This National Park protects the original habitat that was found in this location and was the major source of food for locals before it became a National Park. The walkway consists of 7 bridges, attached to 7 emerging trees, 40 meters above the rainforest floor. Prepare to take a deep breath as you walk the suspended bridges. You will marvel at the outstanding views that stretch for miles across this breathtaking rainforest as you rest on the viewing platforms that are attached to the emerging trees between the bridges. We are sure you would agree that this is an exciting excursion never to be forgotten.



We return to the park headquarters where we find an excellent information center that offers a highly informative overview of the park's flora and fauna. Over 40 different mammal species have been recorded within the park, which includes forest elephants, leopards, and 6 primate species to mention just a few. From Kakum, we return to your hotel to freshen up, relax and enjoy our evening meal. The evening is time to celebrate you all receiving your true African names as we head into town to check out local nightlife and the best bars and clubs. If you would prefer to hang out at your hotel this is also an option.

**Hotels:** Overnight in Elmina

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## **Day 5**

Enjoy a relaxing breakfast and some time for a swim and to enjoy the beach before your guides and driver collect your bags from your room and bring them to our vehicle to load as we set off back to Accra. On route to Accra, we pass through the fishing town of Elmina. During our time in Elmina town, we visit the Castle of St. George, the oldest extant colonial building in sub-Saharan Africa, dating from 1482. This castle is steeped in history and played a prominent part during the tragic, transatlantic slave trade era. There is an informative museum inside which concentrates on local history and this now silent monument to the pain and suffering our ancestors endured has been formally designated a World Heritage site by UNESCO.

After an informative tour, we can visit the local fishing market and walk a short distance to visit the boat builders in this community. Almost all the fishing boats used in this bustling fishing community are traditional wooden boats. Their design has not changed in centuries and neither have the tools and methods used to build them. Whilst we take in the sights of the many colorful fishing boats bringing their daily catch into the harbor, it is important to understand Elmina has hardly changed since the days our ancestors were forcibly taken through this community to the Americas. Our journey continues and we stop at Anomabo Beach Resort for our lunch in a beautiful setting on the Gold Coast of West Africa. On arrival back in Ghana's capital Accra, we check into our hotel to freshen up in preparation to visit some of the best nightspots in Accra to celebrate New Year's Eve.



**Hotels:** Overnight in Accra

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## **Day 6**

A relaxed breakfast gives us time to recover from the New Year celebrations before we head to TK beads after lunch.


TK Beads are experts in making beautiful African beads using traditional methods. The Krobo people of Ghana are renowned for their traditional bead jewelry that dates back centuries, and it would be wonderful to see and learn firsthand the historical importance of beads and learn the ancient process used to make them. Your guide will talk you through the skilled process of making the beads and you will see skilled craftsmen at work and can even try your hand. Beads are culturally a symbol of wealth and beauty here in Ghana and are still used during traditional durbars and festivals with most Ghanaian women wearing beads daily. There is a wide selection of quality, beautiful, reasonably priced beads available for purchase at the onsite shop. If the shop does not have your size available, we will order these and they will be dropped off at our hotel before your departure. We will return to Accra after our bead experience to relax at our hotel. The group will head into town for dinner at one of the quality restaurants and to also enjoy another great evening in Ghana together. The perfect time to check out a few bars to chill and enjoy New Year's Day in Accra.

**Hotels:** Overnight in Accra

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## **Day 7**

Memorial Park, National Cultural Centre, and James Town. Most days are glorious here and the sun should be shining as you head down to breakfast at your hotel. An exciting day lies ahead as we set off for our tour of Accra, passing through the economic and administrative districts on our way to the DuBois Center. This is the final burial place and former home of the prominent American Pan-Africanist Dr. William W Burghardt DuBois, who led the Pan-African congress between 1919 and 1927 he was a vocal Anti-Segregationist and prolific speaker and writer. The center now serves as a library and research institute for students of Pan-Africanism. From the DuBois Centre, we visit Black Star Gate symbolizing our freedom, and visit the adjoining Independence Square (Black Star Square) which is Ghana's main ceremony grounds, and where we find the enclosed flame of African liberation, lit by Kwame Nkrumah himself in 1961. A short distance away we find Kwame Nkrumah Memorial Park, the final resting place of our founding father who led the Gold Coast to independence from the British in 1957.



Set in attractive gardens, there is an adjoining museum, containing photos, artifacts, and an insight into this incredible man's life. We will book time at the monuments for private photography enabling participants to get that dream photo. If you are looking to purchase African fabrics and crafts then adjoining the park is the National Cultural Center, Ghana's largest outdoor arts and crafts market selling traditional items from all over West Africa.

Lunch will be taken at the nearby Coco Lounge an excellent restaurant serving a wide selection of dishes in a wonderful environment. James Town and Ussher town are next after lunch as we enjoy a walking tour of these vibrant communities, Accra's oldest suburbs taking in some of the historical structures that predate the colonial era. Residents here are committed to conserving these buildings and have made significant efforts to maintain them, our time here gives us an excellent idea of what it was like pre-independence during the colonial occupation. The 30-meter-high lighthouse built by the British in 1871 is of interest and the attractive colorful fishing boats on the beach are also wonderful to see.

We will continue to Fort James that was built by the British as a trading post in 1673 before it joined the Dutch Fort Crêvecoeur and the Danish Fort Christiansborg. Fort James gave its name to the Jamestown neighborhood in Accra. These areas give us a perfect picture of old Accra, distinguishing between British Accra and Dutch Accra. The community tour would not be complete before seeing the Brazilian stone houses, built by free enslaved African's who reside in Brazil. Africans who made their way home after the slave trade was abolished; their descendants have now integrated with the community here. This part of Accra is one of the poorest and there are many social issues within this community.

Street children, orphans, and child workers are common here and our evening will be dedicated to meeting community members who are trying to change the lives of the youth through boxing. Jamestown is famous in Ghana for producing several World Champion Boxers that including Isaac Dogboe, David Kotei, Joseph Agbeko, Richard Commey and the most famous of all and considered Africa's greatest ever boxer Azumah Nelson. It is believed that this part of Accra produces excellent boxers due to the poverty and hardship faced by the youth. They see boxing as an opportunity for a better life in the future, as you will see this is a part of Ghana that lives and breathes boxing. A successful businessman who hails from this community wants to support the children here by helping some with school fees and he is also sponsoring a weekly boxing event where the boxing clubs put on a show for the locals. Set in the perfect location in the heart of the community overlooking the ocean it could be a wonderful night of entertainment if our dates coincide with an event. If not, we will visit one of the many gyms here to see the youth and professionals in training.

This evening after our dinner we head into town to enjoy Accra nightlife, visiting some of the many bars and nightclubs that are open.

**Hotels:** Overnight in Accra





**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## **Day 8**

Enjoy a relaxing morning at your hotel. Time to re-pack your bag and prepare for your afternoon or evening flight departure.

For those who would like to do some last-minute shopping, we can head to the Cultural Centre. This is your opportunity to also purchase some last-minute souvenirs before your transfer to the airport and departure if you wish.

**Hotels:** NA

**Meals:** Breakfast