

# WEST AFRICAN ATLANTIC EXPLORER, (ZDF)

Freetown to Dakar 23 Days, departing 13th March 2021



## TRIP OVERVIEW

**Trip Style:** Overlanding  
**Route:** Freetown to Dakar  
**Duration:** 23 Days  
**Transport:** Overland Expedition Vehicle, Jeep, Pirogue  
**Accommodation:** Guesthouse 2 nights  
 Camping 4 nights  
 Camping without facilities 3 nights  
 Basic Hotel 12 nights  
 Comfortable Hotel 1 night  
**Meals:** Breakfasts x 22, Lunches x 7, Dinners x 7

**Physical Challenge:** ● ● ○ ○ ○

Your itinerary may include easy-paced day walks, bike rides, and other activities that are not too strenuous.

**Lifestyle Challenge:** ● ● ● ● ○

This is a fairly challenging trip; you may well be travelling at high altitudes, across deserts or through cold and windy or hot and steamy areas. The terrain and roads may be rough and the facilities can be very basic or non-existent. There may be some long drive days followed by wild camps, and physically and mentally it can be tough, but there will be some rest days and time to relax as well.



# DAILY ITINERARY

## Day 1 - Freetown (13th March 2021)

**Border information:** if you are joining in Freetown, you will most likely enter Sierra Leone at Freetown Lungi International Airport (IATA code: FNA).

There will be an important group meeting at 10:00am at the joining hotel - please look out at the hotel reception for a note from your leader with more details about this important meeting. Your leader will collect your kitty and check your passport, visas, and insurance details at this meeting.

The afternoon will be free to explore Freetown and it's surroundings.

Please note that many of the options listed below will only be possible for those with extra time in Freetown before the start of your trip with us - please contact the Sales team if you would like to book pre-tour accommodation with us to have extra time exploring Freetown.

*The fastest and most reliable way to Freetown from the airport is by water-taxi, as Lungi is across a bay from the city. The departure times for the water-taxis are linked to each flight in and out of the airport, so there will be transport available for you when you land. Exit the airport and walk to the right, and you'll see the water-taxi office at the end - you'll have to buy your ticket there for USD40 or EUR35, and check in your large bags. You'll take a minibus for 15 minutes, then the water-taxi for 30 minutes. The boat lands at the jetty, where you hand in your luggage ticket to get your large bags back.*

*The jetty is in the Aberdeen district of Freetown, only a 200m walk from our hotel. Just walk up the hill to the main road - the Raza Guesthouse is slightly further down and on the other side of the road.*

Accommodation: Raza Guesthouse

## Day 2 - Freetown Peninsula (14th March 2021)

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

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Today we leave Freetown for the stunning beaches of Freetown Peninsular, where we will spend 2 nights.

There are a few different options for which beaches we could choose to visit, our favourites being Bureh Beach at the south of the peninsular and River Number 2 Beach in the western part.

## Day 3 - Freetown Peninsula (15th March 2021)

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

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We will have a full day for optional activities on the wonderful beaches - we could go fishing, take a boat to explore the Banana Islands, get to know the local communities, and of course relax on the beautiful beaches!

## Day 4 - Southern Guinea (16th March 2021)

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

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**Border information:** Exit Sierra Leone at Kindia, enter Guinea at Pamalap.

Today we will head north from Freetown Peninsular and cross into Guinea. Our co-driver will leave the truck this evening and take local transport to Conakry in order to obtain Guinea-Bissau visas for the group at the consulate there.

The rest of us will continue a short way past the town of Coyah and wild camp en route.

## Day 5 - Labe (17th March 2021)

**Meals:** Breakfast

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Over the next 2 days we will continue our journey north through central Guinea to reach the town of Labé, the gateway to the Fouta Djallon highland region. Our co-driver will catch up with us in Labé, with everybody's Guinea-Bissau visa obtained.

## Day 6 - Labe (18th March 2021)

**Meals:** Breakfast

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Today we continue our drive and find ourselves another stunning wild camp ready to reach Labe tomorrow.

## Day 7 - Labe (19th March 2021)

**Meals:** Breakfast

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From Labé we will set off for an included 2-day excursion to the heart of the Fouta Djallon region of Guinea.

On the first day we will travel in 4x4 jeeps through very remote country roads to the small rural community of Aïnguel (approximately a 4 hour drive). After lunch there will be a short 3-hour trek to a waterfall viewpoint and to the nearby 'Pont de Pierre' rock bridge where we have the chance to swim in a beautiful natural lagoon.

On this night we will stay in a very small and basic community-run guesthouse - please note that if the group is large, some people may need to sleep in tents just outside.

## Day 8 - Labe (20th March 2021)

**Meals:** Breakfast

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On the second day there is a long 8-hour trek through the surrounding hills and villages taking in the incredible scenery. We will stop for a picnic lunch next to a stunning waterfall, where we have the opportunity to swim in the lagoon beneath. In the latter stages of the trek, we hope to be able to get to the base of a much larger and incredibly powerful waterfall, although this is dependent on the ground waters having receded enough after the rainy season to make this route passable.

Upon returning after this walk, we will immediately drive back in the 4x4s to Labé to spend the night in our guesthouse there.

## Day 9 - Northern Guinea (21st March 2021)

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

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From Labé we journey up through the remote hilly areas of northern Guinea on our way towards Guinea-Bissau. The roads on this section are very challenging dirt roads which take us through some incredibly remote areas, and our speed will largely be determined by the state of these roads - although getting to these areas is very special and a great adventure, even more flexibility will be required on these days!

We will stop for 2 wild camps en route - the first is likely to be in the highlands before the village of Seriba, the second is likely to be near the border with Guinea-Bissau at Kandika.

## Day 10 - Northern Guinea (22nd March 2021)

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

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Our journey towards Guinea-Bissau continues today. Enjoy driving through small towns and villages where you can see life happening all around you as you head through the country.

## Day 11 - Bissau (23rd March 2021)

**Meals:** Breakfast

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**Border information:** Exit Guinea at Kandika, enter Guinea-Bissau at Kandika.

Today we will drive across the border into the very rarely-visited country of Guinea-Bissau, and drive to its capital of Bissau.

## Day 12 - Bissau (24th March 2021)

**Meals:** Breakfast

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Today, we will have time to freely explore the city and the old Portuguese centre of Bissau Velho.

## Day 13 - Cap Skirring (25th March 2021)

**Meals:** Breakfast

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**Border information:** Exit Guinea-Bissau at São Domingos, enter Senegal at Mpack.

Today we will journey through western Guinea-Bissau and cross the border into the southern Casamance region of Senegal, arriving at the beautiful beaches of Cap Skirring.

## Day 14 - Cap Skirring (26th March 2021)

**Meals:** Breakfast

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We will have 2 full days in Cap Skirring, where there will be good opportunities for optional activities such as swimming, biking, fishing, quad-biking and sun-bathing!

## Day 15 - Cap Skirring (27th March 2021)

**Meals:** Breakfast

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On our final day here we can continue to enjoy the activities on offer, relax and recharge ready for the journey ahead.

## Day 16 - Tendaba (28th March 2021)

**Meals:** Breakfast

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**Border information:** Exit Senegal at Senoba, enter The Gambia at Soma.

Today we will head across the border from Senegal into the small country of The Gambia, and head to the famous Tendaba Camp on the southern shore of the Gambia River. Tendaba Camp was the first inland hotel in The Gambia, and is one of the most popular spots in the country for birdwatchers.

## Day 17 - Tendaba (29th March 2021)

**Meals:** Breakfast

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Tendaba is located opposite the Bao Bolong Wetland Reserve, one of the premier birdwatching sites in Africa. On our full day here we will have an included morning boat trip into the wetlands to spot some of the stunning area's wildlife and natural scenery. We will also have an opportunity to take an optional safari drive around the nearby forests of Kiang West NP.

## Day 18 - Toubakouta (30th March 2021)

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

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**Border information:** Exit The Gambia at Fass, enter Senegal at Karang.

Today we cross the Gambia River on a local transport barge and cross the border into the main part of Senegal, heading to the small town of Toubakouta, situated close to the stunning wetlands of the Sine-Saloum Delta. The ferry can be quite a chaotic local experience!

## Day 19 - Toubakouta (31st March 2021)

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

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On our full day in Toubakouta we will have an optional morning pirogue trip to a nearby village to see a slice of rural Senegalese life and to meet their charismatic female chief. In the afternoon we have an included pirogue trip to the mangroves, the 'Shellfish Island' and the 'Island of Birds' - if the weather is good, there are often some stunning sunsets across the delta.

## Day 20 - Saint-Louis (1st April 2021)

**Meals:** Breakfast

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Today we head north through Senegal to the old colonial city of St. Louis, formerly the capital of French West Africa. On the way we will see the landscape change as we enter the drier Sahel region, and we will stop to see the Grand Mosque of Touba, one of the best known mosques in Senegal and most holy site in the Mouride branch of Islam.

## Day 21 - Saint-Louis (2nd April 2021)

**Meals:** Breakfast

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Today we will have a free day to explore the streets of the old city and take an optional trip to the Langue de Barbarie NP or the nearby Djoudj Birdlife Reserve.

## Day 22 - Dakar (3rd April 2021)

**Meals:** Breakfast

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Today our overland journey takes us south to Dakar, the bustling capital of Senegal and the most western point in Africa.

## Day 23 - Dakar - End Date (4th April 2021)

**Meals:** Breakfast

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**Border information:** if you are leaving at Dakar, you will most likely exit Senegal at Dakar Léopold Sédar Senghor International Airport (IATA code: DKR).

Today is the end day for passengers finishing their trip in Dakar, and is a free day to explore the cosmopolitan city and perhaps take an optional trip to the famous Île de Goreé.

Today is the end day for passengers finishing their trip in Dakar. Please note there is no accommodation included on the trip tonight - please contact the Sales Team if you are interested in booking extra nights of accommodation in order to fully explore and take part in some of the optional activities listed below.

Accommodation:

## ITINERARY DISCLAIMER

The routes, activities and places visited described in these notes are intentions and are meant as a rough guide only. By their very nature, overland itineraries need to be flexible and the regions that we are travelling through are often unpredictable. We intend to follow the planned route but exact night stops and inclusions cannot be guaranteed and it sometimes happens that we decide to make a change to our planned itinerary. This may be for a variety of reasons; climatic, road or bureaucratic conditions may demand it. Changes to the itinerary may occur with little notice so please be prepared for modifications to your trip.

### Drive Times

Drive times are listed in the day-to-day itinerary. These are the approximate number of hours that the vehicle will be in motion, and does not include any time taken for coffee or lunch stops, border crossings, photo stops, activities en route, comfort breaks, shopping stops, toilet stops, etc. The times given are approximate estimates only and whilst given with the best of intentions, the drive times are heavily dependent on traffic, road conditions, weather, police roadblocks, and many other factors.

### Accommodation and Meals Included

The type of accommodation and included meals are listed for each day of the itinerary. These listings show our intention and on most departures the listings will be accurate. However due to the flexible nature of overland itineraries, climatic, bureaucratic or road conditions may demand changes to our listed intentions or groups may simply decide to amend the plans from time to time.

### Optional Activities

A selection of optional activities is listed in the day-to-day itinerary. This list is designed to be a helpful guide as to what is commonly available in each location, and is neither an exhaustive list, a guarantee that the activity is available, or an endorsement or recommendation. Certain activities may not be available on your particular visit and it may not be possible to do all the activities listed in the time available at each destination. It is recommended to give yourself extra time in your joining or ending city if you would like to participate in some optional activities there. Prices listed are for entrance only and do not include transport costs to and from the sites or local guides unless indicated. The prices are displayed according to our latest information and in the best faith, but prices do fluctuate due to exchange rates, season, numbers of participants, and simple increases from the operator, and therefore any prices listed are a guide only and cannot be guaranteed. If you partake in any optional activities, you do so at your own risk and it must be clearly understood that your participation is your own decision and does not form part of your contract with Dragoman. You may be required to sign/complete a waiver form or optional activity form for some optional activities. For more information around activity safety and insurance, please see the Essential Information document.

## EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

In the event of a real emergency once you have left your home country, please contact us on our out of office hours number. If you cannot get through on the phone, please leave a message with your name, reference number, contact details and a message with the help that you need and we will get back to you. Please bear in mind that real progress or action may not be possible until normal office hours, depending on the issue.

If your flight is delayed, please inform us as soon as you can and then make your way to the joining hotel as instructed in the Joining Point section of these notes.

**Out of hours Number: +44 (0) 7985 106564**

## A FEW RULES

We expect all group members to act respectfully towards our staff and other group members. Bullying will not be tolerated.

Engaging in commercial or exploitative sexual activities, committing acts of violence or threatening violence towards local people, other group members or any member of our staff is not allowed. Any customer engaging in such activities will be required to leave the trip immediately with no refund of the trip price.

You must at all times comply with the laws, customs, foreign exchange and drug regulations of all countries visited and conduct yourself in accordance with our responsible travel policy. Any customer found contravening such laws or regulations will be required to leave the trip immediately with no refund of the trip price.

Although we are aware that in some parts of the world taking, carrying or selling drugs, or carrying weapons may be legal, it is not acceptable for Dragoman customers and our tour leaders have the right to ask you to leave the trip immediately with no refund of the trip price if you are found to be engaging in such activities.

## ISSUES ON THE TRIP

While we always endeavour to provide the best possible holiday experience, due to the nature of travel and the areas we visit sometimes things can and do go wrong. Should any issue occur while you are on your trip, it is imperative that you discuss this with your group leader or our local partner straight away so that they can do their best to rectify the problem and save any potential negative impact on the rest of your trip.

We recognise that there may be times when your group leader may not be able to resolve a situation to your satisfaction. If this is the case please contact our customer relations department on [customer-relations@dragoman.co.uk](mailto:customer-relations@dragoman.co.uk).

You may also choose to provide details in your feedback questionnaire which we ask you to complete at the end of your trip, but we do ask you to be aware that it is very difficult for us to provide any practical help after the trip is complete.

## IMPORTANT NOTES

### OVERLANDING LIFESTYLE

Dragoman was founded in 1981, and has had many years of experience of leading overland trips across 4 continents. Overlanding is all about sharing a great travelling experience with like-minded people. On your trip you'll travel in one of Dragoman's purpose-built iconic expedition vehicles on an off-the-beaten-track adventure along rugged roads, experiencing the sights, sounds and smells of the world up-close. Your journey will be overland, sometimes across vast distances, so some long days spent driving are inevitable - but these will be interspersed with breaks of a day or two at a destination or activity.

On an overland journey, you are more than just a passenger and everyone gets involved setting up camp - we supply the tent but it's up to you to pitch it! As part of your trip, you will be assigned a truck job which could be collecting firewood or water, luggage loading, organising food, stores, etc. Like all great adventures, the more you put in the more you'll get out! For more details of how an overlanding trip works, please see the Essential Information document.

### SAFETY STANDARDS

We run adventure journeys in off the beaten track areas, which often have poor infrastructure. You should expect that some of these areas do not adhere to 'Western' safety standards. For more information, please see the Essential Information document

### MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN REMOTE AREAS

We will be travelling to areas in remote locations where medical assistance will not be available, and communications may be sparse. We do not carry satellite phones on our regular trips. Therefore, if you have a medical condition such as a heart condition that would put you at risk, we would suggest that this is not the trip for you. Also, please be aware that should an emergency occur, there is likely to be a considerable delay in accessing medical care, and by joining our trip you accept this risk.

### VISAS, HEALTH, INSURANCE & MONEY

Before you travel there are vital things to consider such as:

- Any visas needed for your trip
- Any vaccinations needed (please consult your GP or travel clinic)
- Organising your local payment (the kitty)
- Buying travel insurance (insurance is compulsory to be allowed to join our trips)

For more information on these topics, please see the Essential Information Document.

SIERRA LEONE NOTES

SENEGAL NOTES

GUINEA NOTES

GUINEA-BISSAU NOTES

GAMBIA NOTES

Please ensure you have an up to date version of these notes. **These notes were printed on the 28th September 2020**