

Central Africa Republic and Gabon

Off the Beaten Track

14 nights

Brief Itinerary



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| Day 1 | Fly Douala (CAR), Hotel Somatel 1 night BB |
| Day 2 | Fly Bayanga, Doli Lodge 2 nights, FB |
| Day 5 | Fly Iguela (Gabon), Loango Lodge 1 night, HB |
| Day 6 | Boat transfer, Akaka Bush Camp 2 nights, FB |
| Day 8 | Return Loango Lodge 1 night, FB |
| Day 9 | Boat tour to Pointe Sainte Cathérine Beach Camp, 1 night FB |
| Day 10 | Boat trip to Evengué Lodge 1 night, FB |
| Day 11 | Fly Príncipe, Bom Bom 3 nights, FB |
| Day 14 | Fly Doula, fly home |

Day 1

On arrival in Cameroon at Douala International Airport, you will be met by a representative who will help you with the customs procedures and collecting of your luggage. Please note that you will need to show your vaccination booklet. They will then transfer you to Hotel Somatel, where you will stay for the night on a B&B basis.

Hotel Somatel is a friendly 3-star city-centre hotel just 5 minutes from the airport. It has 86 comfortable rooms all with air-conditioning. If you feel up to it, our representative can pick you up from your hotel in the evening for a tour of Douala by night and dinner out (to your own account).



Day 2

This morning you will be transferred to the airport for your flight to Bayanga in the Dzanga-Sangha Reserve in the Central African Republic (approximately 2 hours). On arrival you will be met and taken to Doli Lodge, where you will stay for 2 nights on a full-board basis.

The Dzanga-Sangha Reserve is part of the Sangha Tri-national Protected Area, which stretches from the Republic of Congo (Brazzaville) to Cameroon, with the Dzanga-Sangha Reserve in the middle. This breathtaking reserve is one of Central Africa's best kept secrets, and is home to large populations of forest elephants, forest buffalo, giant hogs, bongos (forest antelope) and gorillas. At the Dzanga saline, more than 3000 elephants have been counted and identified in the last few years, and it's quite common to see between 30 and 100 elephants feeding on the mineral-rich soil on the edge of the saline.

Doli Lodge (doli means elephant in the Sango language) is a converted logging lodge with eight wooden bungalows on stilts overlooking the Sangha River. Built from local materials, each of the rooms has its own terrace and en-suite toilet and shower. It is all fairly simple and the hot water is fairly erratic as it's solar-powered, but it's a great base for forest activities, which include gorilla tracking, observing forest elephants, hiking around the salines, and net hunting with the Pygmies. All forest activities are accompanied by trained guides who speak French and also some English. You may also be entertained by the Pygmies with traditional music and dance.



Day 5

After lunch today, you will be taken to the airstrip for your flight to Iguela in Gabon, via Douala. After a short stop in Port Gentil for customs, you will be driven to Loango Lodge in time for a late dinner. You will stay at Loango Lodge for 1 night on a half-board basis.

Loango National Park is an area of a 1550sq km of pristine forests, open savannahs, tidal lagoons, coastal and mangrove forest. The park is unique as it is a meeting of the savannahs and forests of the Congo Basin and the Atlantic Ocean. There are plenty of animals, most of which are very different to what you would see in East or Southern Africa. The smaller forest elephant, red forest buffalo, red river hogs with furry ears, long snouted crocodiles, hippos, sitatunga, duikers, a variety of monkeys, a huge array of birds, whales (in season) and Western lowland gorillas and chimpanzees.



Loango Lodge is set on the edge of a lagoon with 10 comfortable, air-conditioned cottages along the water. You will use the lodge as a base, and stay at some of the satellite camps around the park. Activities include game drives and walks, and looking for gorillas and chimps (which are in evidence but hard to find).



Day 6

After an early breakfast, you will take a 4-hour boat journey south to the satellite camp at Akaka. After crossing large lagoons, you will cruise down the Rembo Ngowe River for the last hour-and-a-half. En route you may see birds, elephants, buffalos and sitatunga (swamp-dwelling antelopes), possibly even bathing in the river. You will stay at Akaka Bush Camp for 2 nights on a full-board basis.

Akaka is one of the most remote parts of Loango National Park. The Akaka forests thrive with butterflies and are home to a number of rare bird species. The camp is a good starting point for game viewing by kayak, boat and on foot. The bush tents are set on platforms within a forest clearing with views across the water. Animals come down to the river and the lagoon to drink, and, at times, the wildlife, especially elephants, passes right through the camp.



Day 8

This morning you will return to Loango Lodge where you will stay for 1 night on a full-board basis.

You will arrive around lunchtime, and you can either relax at Loango Lodge or explore some other parts of the park in a 4x4 vehicle or on foot into the mangroves with one of the eco-guides. On foot is one of the best ways to learn more about the diversity of the park. You may see elephants and buffalo, but even more interestingly you will discover the more inconspicuous forest animals and birds. Other activities include exploring by houseboat, cultural walks to the nearby village or the Operation Loango School and, from mid-July to September, whale-watching expeditions (like the gorillas, the whales are fairly elusive).



Day 9

This afternoon, you will take a 20-minute boat tour over the lagoon to the Pointe Sainte Cathérine Beach Camp, where you will stay for 1 night on a full-board basis.

Pointe Sainte Cathérine Beach Camp is on one of the world's most beautiful beaches in the north of Loango National Park, great for walking, collecting shells and fishing. Late in the humpback whale season (July-September), female humpbacks pass close inshore with their newly born calves. The camp is at the mouth of the Iguela Lagoon and is made up of five tents on platforms. As the sun sets, you will dine in the restaurant, on the lounge deck, or enjoy a feet-in-the-sand beach barbeque.



Day 10

This morning, you will take the boat back to Loango Lodge, where you will be met and driven by 4x4 jeep to the start of the Mpivié River. From here, you will go by boat on the dark waters of the Mpivié to Evengué Island, a small island just outside Loango National Park, where you will stay at Evengué Lodge for 1 night on a full-board basis.

The one-hour boat trip is a perfect opportunity to sit back and enjoy the breathtaking views. After approximately 2 hours, you will arrive at the small town of Sainte Anne, where there is an iron church built by Gustav Eiffel, who built the Eiffel Tower, in the late 1800s and shipped out to the mission in Gabon. There is also a Bamboo Cathedral. You will stop off to have a look before taking the last leg of the journey to Evengué Island.



Evengué Lodge is a lovely lodge in the middle of a lagoon. There are two very nice wooden chalets and two tented rooms. There is a small gorilla rescue centre here, the Fernan-Vaz Gorilla Project, where they take in orphaned or injured gorillas with the aim of re-habituating the younger gorillas back into the wild.

Day 11

This morning, you will be transferred to the airstrip for your flight to Príncipe airport via Port-Gentil. On arrival you will be met and transferred by a representative from Bom Bom Island Resort, where you will stay for 3 nights on a full-board basis.

The island of Príncipe is a place where dense rainforests teem with exotic birds, whales play off unspoiled, deserted beaches and where crystal-clear waterfalls cascade into the azure blue ocean. Bom Bom Island is joined to the mainland of Príncipe Island by a novel wooden walkway. The restaurant, bar and marina are situated on Bom Bom Island itself, whilst the chalets, swimming pool and all other amenities are situated on the main island of Príncipe. There are 25 chalets all leading onto the private beaches, all en suite with air-conditioning, mini bars and satellite TV. If you want to get away from the world for your holidays you couldn't be further off the tourist trail at Bom Bom. It's somewhere to really unwind. There is some great deep sea fishing and diving.



Day 14

Late this afternoon, you will be transferred to the airport for your return flight to Douala in Cameroon, for your onward flight.

The price includes:

- All internal flights and transfers
- All accommodation on a shared basis in double rooms
- Meals as indicated
- Drinks as indicated
- All National Park fees
- All game viewing activities with a qualified guide as indicated
- Tourist taxes

The price does not include:

- International flights
- Local airport taxes
- Staff tips
- Meals and drinks as indicated
- Extra activities as indicated
- Laundry

Travel insurance
Items of a personal nature
Visas

All quotes are subject to alteration due to availability at time of booking, currency fluctuations, fuel and rate increases, park fee increases and government action.