

Gambia @ a view

Resorts and Accommodation

There are nine main resort areas in what is referred to as the Tourism Development Area- the palm-fringed coastline, and virgin golden sands, overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. Outside this area, there are exotic camps mainly situated on the banks of the beautiful River Gambia, a meandering flow situated at the heart of this tiny nation.

Activities

We can make your holiday a memorable one from river cruising, fishing, village tours, to African wrestling, bird watching, trekking, horse and camel riding, and adventure trips. Musical events, family visits, evening entertainment, cultural orientation, and sporting events. The choice is yours!

Nature

Nature lovers will derive pleasure visiting Abuko Nature Reserve and other varied bird and wildlife sanctuaries as well as cruising on the River Gambia. The Gambia is a Birdwatchers Paradise! Visitors can also see a variety of tropical plants as well as monkeys, crocodiles and other wildlife. Dolphins and hippos are spotted on the river.

People and Culture

Hospitality is second to none!

The Gambia has a population of over 1.8 million people (2013 pop census) belonging to eight ethnic groups as well as fairly large communities from neighbouring West African countries, and Lebanon. We are an open and inviting society. Our hospitality is second to none. The people live harmoniously in communities, freely exercising their religious and cultural traditions. Gambians are recognized all over the world for their spontaneous warm smile, their peace-loving nature and their hospitality.



Cuisine

Hotels and restaurants in The Gambia serve various international and African cuisines. Gambians have a variety of delicious dishes, which are mainly prepared with rice (staple food of the country), millet and maize.



Arts and Craft

The fun is the conversation and bargaining

The craft markets outside the main hotels offer a large variety of antique masks, carvings, batik products, hand woven fabrics, leather work and jewelry. Prices for these products are affordable, and the whole process of picking what you like for the right price is an experience not to be missed. The fun is in the conversation. Locals often engage visitors in conversation whilst negotiations go on. In the end both buyer and seller come out acquainted through a healthy dialogue of a cultural exchange-this is typical of Gambian hospitality and warmth, embrace it.



Music

Like other African countries, The Gambia has a variety of traditional musical instruments and the most famous of them is the Kora - a 21 - string harp. The drum is also popular, because it plays a major part of the culture in most of the ethnic groups; whether it is a wedding, or a naming ceremony, the drum has kept communities informed and entertained for many centuries.

Country Factsheet

Location:

West Africa- The smallest Country on mainland Africa
Area:
11,298 Sq. km (4361 Sq. Miles)

Capital:

Banjul

Population:

1.8 Million

Currency:

Dalasi

Time Zone:

Greenwich Mean Time (GMT)

Climate:

Pleasant sub-tropical climate with two distant seasons:
Dry savannah winds from November to June, (Harmattan) and (heavy showers) wet, and lushly green from July – October.

Average Mid-day:

Temperatures about 27°C (80°F)
(With a cooling light breeze).

Night temperatures:

Considerably cooler, between 10° - 16°C (50° - 60°F).

Ethnic Diversity:

Official Language: English

Other Languages: Mandinka, Wolof, Fula, Jola, Sarahule, Serere, Manjago, Cerole (Aku or pigeon English). Most people in the industry can speak Dutch, Swedish, German, Danish and Spanish. French is taught in some Secondary and High schools.

Getting here:

By Air, there are a number of Tour Operator chartered flights to the Gambia, serving Banjul International Airport.

From UK:

Gambia Experience, Royal Air Maroc, Brussels Airline, Turkish Air-line and TUI

From Scandinavia:

Thomas Cook Scandinavia, Brussels Airlines and Royal Air Maroc

From Holland:

TUI Holland (Arke fly), Travelpoort and Corendon

From Belgium:

Brussels Airlines and TUI

From Spain:

Vueling, Royal Air Maroc and Binter Canaries

From Germany:

Brussels airlines, Vueling, FTI-Corendon and connecting flights available from European countries

From The United States:

Connecting flights available from Europe and Africa

From The West African Sub-Region:

Air Peace, Asky, Air Senegal, Trans Airline and Royal Air Maroc.

Over 500
species of birds



THE GAMBIA
THE SMILING COAST OF AFRICA



Your Pocket Guide



www.visitthegambia.gm

50
THINGS TO DO

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1. Beauty Salons

There are several beauty salons in and outside of the hotel area which look forward to catering for you.

2. Hair Braiding

Hair braiding is very popular in The Gambia and thus many tourists are interested in trying out a new hair style.

3. Massage

There are a range of massage facilities in and outside of the various hotels waiting to welcome you and give you the treatment your body truly deserves.

4. Sun bathing

The Gambia has many unspoilt beach sides along the Atlantic coast. Sun beds are provided by the hotels, beach bars and restaurants.

5. Lazy day cruise on the river

If you want to free your mind and do nothing at all, the lazy day cruise on the river is the perfect trip for you. One can relax on the sun deck, take a swim and unwind the soul. Enjoy a scenic route with occasional sightings of dolphins, and bird watching opportunities.

6. Creek tours

A peaceful and relaxing day out on the creek or around belongs (river tributaries) of the River Gambia is not to be missed.

Sports

7. Golf

The Fajara Golf Club has an 18-hole course, which is close to most of the resorts.

8. Cycling

Cycling is gaining more and more popularity in The Gambia and thus many bicycles are available for hire in and around the hotels.

9. Swimming

The beaches in front of most hotels are safe for swimming although the flag should always be watched. Please never swim when the red flag is flying. As an alternative most of the hotels have a pool for cooling down.

10. Kayaking

Embark on one of the Kayaking tours where you can experience Gambia's amazing nature coming alive as the sun rises over the tranquil mangroves, or take a relaxing sunset cruise and enjoy the breath-taking natural beauty as the sun sets over the beautiful Gambian scene.

11. Tennis

Tennis is also available in most hotels and racquets and tennis balls can be obtained in the hotels as well.

12. Horse Riding

A couple of stables in the country have a good set of horses

13. Camel Riding

Camel riding might be an interesting alternative to horse riding.

14. Jet Skiing

Jet Skiing is generally available at the Corinthia Atlantic

Hotel, Sunbeach Hotel and Resort, and at Denton Bridge

15. Windsurfing

Windsurfing equipment can be hired at some hotels. It should be noted that only strong swimmers should venture beyond their knees

16. Fishing

The Gambia River carries with it a rich variety of fish, as does the vast ocean of the Atlantic. There are a variety of options available such as Creek Fishing, Deep Sea Fishing and Beach Casting. Both experts and amateurs can enjoy the chances of catching the 'Big One', on either the river or the salty water of the Atlantic Ocean.

Culture

17. Art Galleries

The Gambia has several art galleries that have works of Gambian contemporary painters on display. If you are really interested, owners can facilitate you meeting the painters at their studios

18. Museums

There are also a number of Museums spread over the country which are definitely worth a visit.

19. Craft Markets

Banjul, Serre kunda, and Bakau are known for their markets and craft markets. Many different things can be purchased such as wood crafts, batik, silver and leather products.

20. Brikama Wood Carving Centre

Brikama has a huge Wood Carving Centre, which produces and sells hundreds of teak wood carvings, djembe drums and other souvenirs

21. Juffureh

Juffureh is a small village located 30km inland on the North Bank of the River Gambia and is best known for its appearance in Alex Haley's novel "Root-the saga of an American family". A slavery exhibition in the museum can be seen.

22. Albrede

Albrede is an historic settlement in the North Bank of the River Gambia and is known as "trading post" or "slave fort"

23. James Island

James Island is an island in The Gambia River 30km inland on the North Bank of the river close to Juffureh and Albrede. It contains a fort known as Fort James and provides an exceptional testimony to the different facets of the African-European encounter. James Island is part of the UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

24. Wassu Stone Circles

The ancient Wassu Stone Circles are located around Wassu in the Central River Region and are believed to be burial mounds of kings and chiefs in ancient times. They are also part of the UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

25. Galloya "White Open Walls" Art Project

The Belgian graffiti artist ROA is known for painting huge murals of animals on multi-storey buildings in large cities around the world. But in the village of Galloya, in The Gambia's Kombo Central District, the scale of his work is much smaller. Visit the village of Galloya to see the amazing paintings on the walls of the villagers by top graffiti artists like ROA. The project also trains local women how to paint their own houses.

26. Tanji Fishing Village

The main features of the village are its bonga fish smoking houses, the lines of African pirogues and

fishermen and housewives lining the shore and haggling over prices. The best time to visit Tanji is in the afternoon when all the fishing boats are coming back from the sea. A spectacle not to be missed.

27. Gambian Wrestling

Modern traditional wrestling is one of the oldest traditional sports in Gambia and wrestling festivals are a common occurrence.

28. Village Tour

There are many villages in the Gambia that are worth a visit in order to gain an insight into the Gambian way of life.

29. Sacred Crocodile Pool

There are several crocodile pools sprinkled about the nation. One of the most famous ones is Katchically Crocodile Pool in Bakau. Childless Gambian women often visit the pools to bath in the water, which they consider to hold the powers of fertility.

Business

30. Conference

Most of the hotels have conference rooms for hosting seminars and workshops. The bigger conference and banqueting halls can host up to 800 people, as well as several smaller committee rooms.

Nature

31. Bird Watching

There are more than 500 different species of birds in The Gambia, living within six protected areas. Gambia's abundance in diversity of birds is ranked as one of the highest in the world.

32. Niimi National Park

Niimi National Park features one of the last untouched mangrove stands in West Africa.

33. Tanbi Wetlands National Park

The Tanbi Wetlands National Park provides excellent boating, fishing, bird watching and wildlife viewing opportunities. It includes coastal lagoons, mudflats, gallery forests, marshes and mangrove forests.

34. Kiang West National Park

Kiang West National Park is one of the largest and most important wildlife reserves in The Gambia. It was gazetted as a national park in 1987 and is managed by The Gambia Department of Parks and Wildlife Management.

35. Bao Bolong Wetland Reserve

Bao Bolong Wetland Reserve features six major bolongs that provide excellent opportunities for boating and birding

36. River Gambia National Park

The River Gambia National Park is made up of a complex of 6 islands, which are collectively known as Baboon Islands. They form one of the last refuges for the very threatened hippopotamus, baboons and crocodiles within The Gambia. Their ecological systems range from lush jungle rainforest, reeds, savannah and mangrove swamps.

37. Abuko Nature Reserve

Abuko Nature Reserve is an all-time favourite for wildlife and bird watching. Walk the 3km path, which leads you to the Bamba Pool where Crocodiles live.

38. Makasutu (Holy Forest)

Makasutu is set in a thousand acres of forest and is a jewel of eco-tourism in The Gambia. It is winner of the Eco Tourism Award 2005.

39. Bijilo Forest Park

Bijilo Forest Park is a small reserve on the edge of the beach. The park offers a haven for birds and monkeys and is ideal for an early morning walk.

40. Lamin Lodge

Lamin Lodge is situated on the edge of the creeks. This huge tree house style lodge offers a wonderful view over the mangrove swamps and is an ideal spot for bird watching. Small boats can also be hired from there.

41. Jinack

Jinack Island is part of the Niimi National Park. It has over 11 kilometres of unspoilt, fairly shallow beaches which are often visited by dolphins.

Adventure

42. River Tours

River tours mostly start off from Denton Bridge or Lamin Lodge, but local camps in the rural areas along the river also organize such tours. A variety of birds can be spotted on the way

43. Bush and Beach Safaris

Discover Gambia by 4 wheel drive or mini truck. Villages and the rural areas will be visited, which is a good opportunity to see monkeys and the rich bird life of The Gambia.

44. Rural Excursions to Janjangbureh and Basse
Janjangbureh, which is formally called 'Georgetown', is one of the oldest towns in The Gambia. It is the old 'second' city of colonial times and the administrative headquarters of the Central River Region.

Basse is the major trading centre for the upper reaches of the Gambia River and liveliest of the upriver towns. It is a vibrant mix of linguistic diversity with languages

such as Mandinka, English, Arabic, French, Wolof and Serere being spoken.

45. Border crossing to Senegal

The Gambia is bordered on three-sides by Senegal; consequently excursions to Senegal are common place. Visit the vibrant city of Dakar or explore Goree Island.

Nightlife

46. Bars and Nightclubs

There are many bars and nightclubs especially on the 'Senegambia Strip' but also in other areas such as Kotu, Fajara, and Bakau.

47. Gambling at one of the casinos

For those who are willing to try their luck, there are casinos in the Senegambia and Palma Rima area.

48. Karaoke

For a fun night out with friends, do not miss the Karaoke nights offered in several bar.

49. Live Entertainment

There is a lot of live entertainment offered by the various bars, restaurants and hotels such as live musical performances and dance.

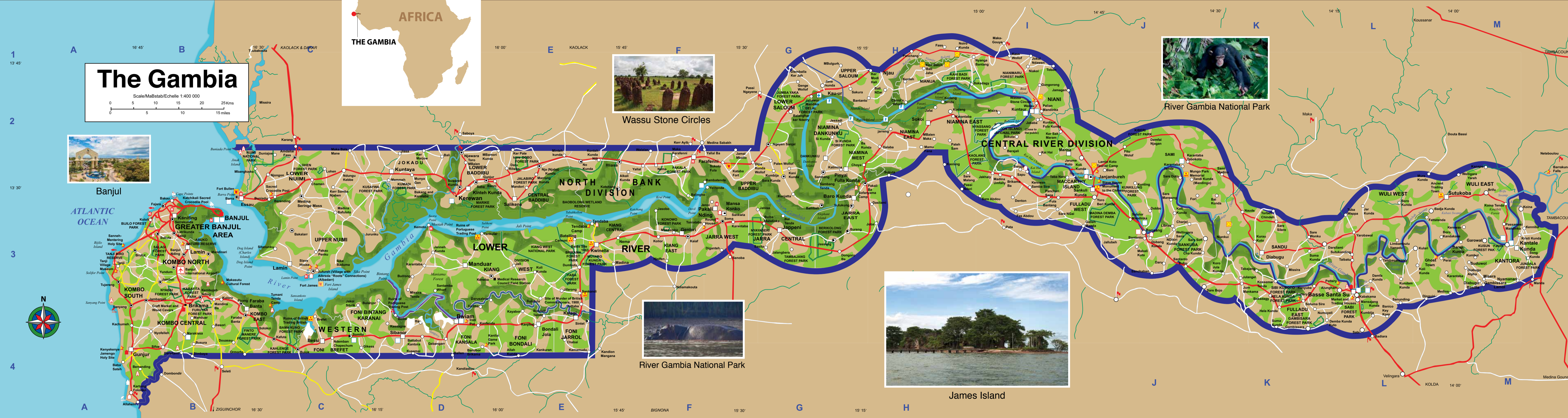
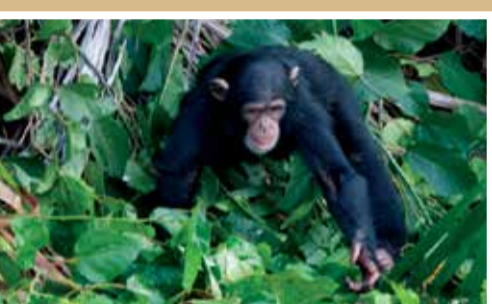
50. Dining out

There are a variety of different restaurants spread all over the country. The Cuisine is international but do not forget to try out some special Gambian dishes such as Domoda, Benachin or Yassa.



The Gambia

Scale/MaBstab/Echelle 1:400 000
0 5 10 15 20 25Kms
0 5 10 15 miles



Wassu Stone Circles

River Gambia National Park

River Gambia National Park

James Island

