

TOURISM

Written by STEVE, ANANSI'S FRIEND

Thursday, 02 June 2011 10:43 - Last Updated Monday, 22 July 2013 16:25

TOUR TO GHANA

ABOUT AFROMULTICURE'S TOURISM TO GHANA

WHY GHANA IS THE MAIN TOURISM CENTER IN AFRICA?

Ghana has been adjudged the eleventh friendliest country in the world, making it one of the most preferred tourism destinations around the globe. Ghana was the only African country that was ranked high in a survey undertaken by Forbes, a reputable international magazine.

The survey which was done in consultation with a cross-section of world travelers in 2010, found that Ghana is one of the "most welcome nations." Thailand came first, followed by Columbia, which was said to have very pleasant citizens and was a preferred destination, in spite of the perception of a centre of drug cartel operations.

Australia took the third place, while Costa Rica, Canada, Greece and India, captured the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh spots respectively. The United States was adjudged the eighth friendliest nation, followed by Turkey in the ninth position, new Zealand, tenth, Ghana eleventh, Fiji twelfth and Vietnam in 13th position. Reasons attributed to Ghana's ranking include the fact that tourism in Ghana is "driven by natural history, colourful festivals, historic sites and the hospitable people".

Unlike in many other African countries, Ghana's different ethnic groups live side by side in relative harmony. "This sub-Saharan African county is renowned for its hospitability, friendliness, tolerance and patience," the Forbes survey said of Ghana.

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The survey, which was published early this month, said the achievement of Columbia was as a result of a national drive to promote its tourism potentials towards increasing tourist inflows. By so doing, the survey said, the nation desired to do change world's own perception of itself.

The Ministry of Tourism, reacting to the outcome of the survey, said government was excited. "We are excited but government will not be carried away by our ranking," James Agyenim Boateng, Deputy Minister of Tourism told the Times in Accra. Meanwhile, Ghana has improved in the latest rankings of the world's favourite tourism destinations, moving two places up.

According to the latest travel and tourism index of the World Economic Forum, the country moved from 110 in 2009 to 108 in 2010 among the 139 countries surveyed. The movement is an endorsement of efforts by government to improve the sector, currently the fourth highest earner of foreign exchange.

The ranking was based on three main indicators, the regulatory framework covering the travel and tourism industry, business environment and infrastructure, and human, cultural and natural resources. In Africa, Ghana was ranked 10th after countries like South Africa, Mauritius, Kenya, Rwanda and Cape Verde.

Ghana performed a little better in the various sub-categories. Of the 139 countries, its regulatory framework was ranked 108th, the business environment and infrastructure was ranked 105th whilst its' human, cultural and natural resources was ranked 104th. Switzerland remains the most favoured tourism destination in the world.

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HOW TO LIVE OR TOUR IN GHANA, WHERE, WHAT, HOW AND WHEN? DETAILS

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General Information

When to go

There really is no 'best' time to visit Ghana, as the temperature is always Africa-hot and if rainfall doesn't soak you, then the humid air will. If you prefer your soaking tropical in nature, stick close to the beaches. Whatever the season, the weather gets more arid the farther inland you go. Village-specific [festivals](#) and events occur throughout the year.

Entry Requirements:

Travel documents and visas: A passport and a [visa](#) are required. All visitors to Ghana must possess valid passports issued by their home governments, except nationals of any member country of the ECOWAS who may produce travel certificates in lieu of passports. All non-ECOWAS citizens require visas at a fee before entry.

Ghana Missions and Embassies are authorized to issue visas or entry permits to all classes of visitors destined to Ghana. Where no Ghanaian mission has been established, the visitors may apply directly or through his/her Ghanaian associate by fax, at least two weeks before the visit, addressed to:

The Chief Executive,

Ghana Investment Promotion Centre.

Immunization/Vaccination: Evidence of immunization for yellow fever and cholera is also required. It is strongly recommended to contact your health official at least 4-6 weeks prior to travel for vaccinations.

Yellow fever: A yellow fever vaccination certificate is required from all travelers when entering Ghana.

Malaria: Vaccination for malaria is recommended. Malaria risk is predominantly in the malignant (*P.falciparum*) form, and exists throughout the year in the whole country.

Also Recommended: mefloquine

Tax: All travelers are required to pay an airport departure tax of (\$15).

VAT, Sales or Use Tax: The VAT (Value-Added-Tax) has just been introduced in Ghana. It is 10% and not refundable. Restaurants charge 5% service charge plus a 10% VAT.

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Note: Always ask to see a vendor's VAT certificate; he/she must have it and willingly show it. Unscrupulous dealers will casually add a higher percentage and pocket the profit.

Currency: This is called the Cedi (¢) which comes in denominations of "500, "1000, "2000 and "5000 bills. 10,00 & 20,000 bill will be available in late 2002. Coins come in denominations of "500, "200 "100, "50, "20 and "10.

There is no restriction on the amount of foreign currency you may bring into Ghana. This must, however, be stated on the currency declaration form.

Foreign Exchange Bureau: Foreign currency can be freely exchanged at any forex in the country. There are several foreign exchange bureaus (Forex) in all the major towns and cities, but many outside Accra may not accept travelers cheques except the banks. Forex bureaus tend to give better rates for large-denomination bills than banks normally do. The best exchange rates are for US Dollars, French Francs, Deutsche Marks and British Pounds.

Most **travellers cheques** exchanged, but the rate is 5% lower than cash. Private foreign-exchange (Forex) offices have better rates and hours. How many cedis you get for your foreign currency:

[Currency Rates](#)

Credit cards: Many places take major international credit cards such as Visa, MasterCard and American Express. Barclays Bank in Accra will advance Ghanaian money on Visa and MasterCard, minus a commission and a fee for the approval telex. If you have a US card, you will probably have to pay for two exchange rates, US\$ to Pound Sterling to Cedis. Not all forex bureaus accept traveler

Banking Hours: Banks open from 8.30am to 2pm (3pm on Fridays) on weekdays. Some branches of Barclays and Standard Chartered Banks open on Saturdays from 10.30am to 12.30pm. However, most banks now operate Automatic Teller Machines (ATM). For cash advances, Barclays Bank accepts VISA and MasterCard.

Airport & Transport: Kotoka Airport (7km from the centre), shared minibuses (tro-tro), taxi

Telephone: Phone cards are available for C12,500 (120 units). Make international calls from the public telephones at the P&T communications centre (Cantoments) and P&T Kwame Nkrumah circle, Accra or a telephone booth.

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Direct code out: 00

Medical Facilities: Medical facilities in Ghana are limited, particularly outside the capital of Accra. Malaria is common, as are other tropical diseases. Doctors and hospitals often request immediate cash payment for health services.

Photo Developing and printing: There are several photo laboratories in the city of Accra well equipped to develop and give you high quality photo prints of your memories of Ghana. They have a good reputation for handling both professional photos and safari snapshots. Open Monday-Friday 8.30 am-5.30 pm, Saturday 8.30 am to 1 pm. The most popular in Accra include Flash Photos at Danquah Circle-Osu, Photo Lab (close to Papaye Fast Foods) at Osu and Modern Photos near the KwameNkrumah Circle.

Special Concerns

Ethnic clashes in the Northern Region of Ghana have resulted in intense violence, particularly in the city of Yendi. Ghanaian authorities have imposed curfews throughout the region, and troops are in place to restore and maintain peace.

--Posted July 9, 2002.

Other

Visitors entering Ghana with more than \$5,000 U.S. in cash are required to declare the amount upon entry into Ghana. Currency exchange is available at most banks and at licensed foreign exchange bureaus. Currency transactions with private citizens are illegal.

The Government of Ghana maintains strict regulations on the import and export of gold, diamonds, and other precious natural resources. Only agents licensed by the Precious Metals and Mining Commission, telephone (233)(21) 664-635 or 664-579, may handle import-export transactions of these natural resources. Any transaction lacking this Commission's endorsement may be illegal and/or fraudulent. Attempts to evade regulations are punishable by prison terms.

In rare instances, visitors arriving in Ghana with sophisticated electronic equipment (video cameras and laptop computers) may have to deposit 17.5 per cent of the item's value with the Customs and Excise office at the airport. To get the deposit refunded, visitors must apply to the

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Customs and Excise Office in central Accra 48 hours before departure.

It is illegal to wear military or camouflage clothing.

PHOTOGRAPHY RESTRICTIONS: Photography of sensitive installations, including military sites, government buildings, and Accra's International Airport, is prohibited. Permission should also be obtained before taking photographs of anyone in uniform (police officers and military officers, for example). In some instances, film and cameras have been confiscated.

DUAL NATIONALITY: (July 2002) -- The Government of Ghana now permits dual nationality.

Warning & Advice

[Updated 17.05.2005]Ghana is a very safe country. The hospitality of Ghanaians will amaze you
However:

Crime

Business fraud stemming from Nigerian scam operations targets foreigners, and poses a danger of financial loss and physical harm. Persons contemplating business deals in Ghana with individuals promoting investment in Nigeria, especially the Central Bank of Nigeria or the Nigerian National Petroleum Company, are strongly urged to check with their countries Department of Commerce before providing any information, making financial commitments, or

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traveling to Ghana.

Clothing

- Wear light summer clothing preferably in cotton. Avoid synthetic fabric in all seasons.

Health

- Boil your non-tap drinking water.
- **A**void street food and water. Be very careful of what enters your body.
- **B**e wary of prostitutes, and remember that AIDS is real, so do protect yourself if you must entertain them. Remember 'prevention is better than cure'. Always move in a group.

Budget & Money Exchange

- Ghana is among Africa's costlier destinations, though travel here is still very cheap by western standards. Travellers intent on stretching their cedis to the limit can easily get by on less than US\$10 per day, staying in decrepit hotels and eating all meals from street vendors. A moderate hike in standards might bring the total to US\$20 per day, including comfortable bedding, running water and regular restaurant meals. Luxury items like air conditioning and fine French cuisine are available only in the big cities, and you should plan on spending at least US\$50 per day for the experience.

- The best currencies to bring to Ghana are US dollars, euros and British pounds; other currencies - even Canadian dollars and Japanese yen - exchange at extremely unfavorable rates.

- There are foreign exchange bureaus (Forex) in all the major towns and cities, but many outside Accra won't accept traveller's cheques. Forex bureaus tend to give better rates for large-denomination bills than banks do, but otherwise bank rates are slightly better.

- A few banks give cash withdrawals against Visa and MasterCard, minus a commission and a fee for the approval telex. In theory, all branches of Barclays Bank (but most reliably in Accra and Kumasi) give cash advances against Visa and MasterCard, but charge a hefty commission for their trouble.

- Change your foreign money at the forex bureaux. No matter the amount, count before leaving premises. Good bureaux have counting machines. In a big town or city avoid the roadside money changers. They'll cheat you. You'll realize this only when you get home.

- Don't exchange more money than you need at a time (not more than 5 days time).

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- Avoid Saturday night exchange of money..the rates are terrible
- To be a good sprinter like Ghana inflation, make sure that whatever you want to buy is at hand before you exchange your foreign currency.

Transportation

- **Always** travel on STC buses whenever possible. They are more comfortable and a lot safer.

Shopping

- **Always** shop with a "proper" Ghanaian with you. Alternatively, let somebody you trust shop for you otherwise you'll pay double the price.
- If you have to do the shopping yourself first check the prices in the shops. If you have to shop outside (bargain) first check the prices at the shops. Then you'll never pay more than it costs in the shops.

Mind Your Ghanian Manners

- Dashes (tips) are a way of life in Ghana. Rather than calling it a bribe, a dash is a tip that may be requested by anyone from train conductors who seat you to youngsters who may run errands for you. Seen as gifts, dashes will ease your way through Ghana immensely, and are usually about 5,000 cedis (67 cents).
- When taking photos, always ask the person beforehand, and you may be asked to give a dash as well.
- **Always** shake hands and pick up food with your right hand, since the left is used to perform other personal functions.
- When traveling with another person of the same sex, you are often required to rent separate hotel rooms. However, unmarried mixed-sex couples have no problem.
- When meeting a chief or village elder, always lower yourself or bow with your knees to show respect. Learning a few words of Twi (akwaaba means welcome) will make you a big hit among Ghanaians. Be sure to always smile and wave to strangers-everyone loves it and invariably waves back.

Others

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- Do not swim in the LAKES or RIVERS
- **M**any people/institutions'll frustrate you but keep your cool. Never engage in arguments unless your vital interests are at stake.

The Country Ghana

Ghana, a country on the West Coast of Africa, is one of the most thriving democracies on the continent. It has often been referred to as an "island of peace" in one of the most chaotic regions on earth. It shares boundaries with Togo to the east, la Cote d'Ivoire to the west, Burkina Faso to the north and the Gulf of Guinea, to the south. A recent [discovery of oil](#) in the Gulf of Guinea could make Ghana an important oil producer and exporter in the next few years.

The country's economy is dominated by agriculture, which employs about 40 percent of the working population. Ghana is one of the leading exporters of cocoa in the world. It is also a significant exporter of commodities such as gold and lumber. A country covering an area of [23 8,500 square kilometres](#)

, Ghana has an estimated population of 22 million, drawn from more than one hundred [ethnic groups](#)

- each with its own unique language. English, however, is the official language, a legacy of British

[colonial rule](#)

In 1957, Ghana (formerly known as the Gold Coast) became the first country in sub-Saharan Africa to gain [independence](#) . After leading the country for nine years, the nation's founding president, [Kwame Nkrumah](#) was overthrown in a coup d'etat in 1966. After Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana was ruled by a series of military despots with intermittent

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experiments with democratic rule, most of which were curtailed by [military takeovers](#)

. The latest and most enduring democratic experiment started in 1992 and it is what has gained recognition for Ghana as a leading democracy in Africa.

Ghana has several tourist attractions such as the [castles](#) . Most of the major [international airlines](#) fly into and from the international airport in Accra. Domestic air travel is thriving and the country has a vibrant telecommunications sector, with five cellular phone operators and several internet service providers.

Background Information

- Official name: [Republic of Ghana](#)
- Population [22 million](#) . Life expectancy 56 years.
- Official language English. Over 25 [ethnic languages](#).

[Traditional Rulers](#)

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Daasebre Oti Boateng

- [President](#) is John Evans Atta Mills.
- Parliament has [230 members](#)
- GDP (Gross Domestic Product) is 14 billion USD (2008 estimate)
- Agriculture employs 60 % of workforce and accounts for 37 % of GDP.
- Export products are gold, cocoa, timber, bauxite manganese and electricity. [Oil](#) was found in 2007.

- Economy relies heavily on foreign assistance and remittances from [Ghanaians abroad](#) .
- Currency is [Ghana Cedi \(GH¢\)](#)
- Popular [tourist destination](#)

CONTACT US FOR HOME ARRANGEMENTS INSTEAD OF HOTELS TO CUT DOWN EXPENDITURES AND ENJOY LIKE YOUR NATIVE COUNTRY.