



PRESS RELEASE



The Rough Guide to West Africa, 5th edition, June 2008

First published in 1990, the Rough Guide to West Africa is the most detailed guide available to the region. Although relatively close to Europe, West Africa is less well-known than many more distant parts of the globe. Now accessible by a new tarred road linking Morocco with Senegal - as well as by air - West Africa's diverse countries, ranging from the islands of the Cape Verde archipelago to Africa's most populous nation, Nigeria, offer a vast array of sights and experiences and the chance to engage first-hand with one of the economically poorest, yet culturally richest, parts of the planet.

The Rough Guide to West Africa is the most comprehensive and user-friendly guide to this rewarding region, covering the fifteen visitable countries from Mauritania to Cameroon in fifty percent more detail than its only competitor (1384 pages compared with 904 pages). The Rough Guide includes thoroughly researched hotel and restaurant listings for all budgets, as well as essential sections on everything from food and language to media and sport, and thoughtful background on the environment, culture, history, politics and music.

The colour introduction highlights West Africa's attractions, and touches on its great range of cultural and scenic impressions. Colour photo sections on *Arts and Crafts* and *Food plants* offer fascinating information and useful advice. More than 150 accessible and accurate maps guide you from the urban jungle to the beaches and mountains. And an extensive index references every place mentioned in the guide.

Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast)

Like the Rough Guide's only competing title, we didn't send researchers to Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire in 2007. However, rather than compile chapters on the basis of "desk updates" we decided once again to omit these two countries until conditions improve to the point where we can cover them properly and recommend a visit.

Expect the unexpected

If Niger River boat trips, slave castles, Dogon hikes and palm-fringed beaches are the (relatively) well-known side of West African travel, there are thousands of other ways to experience the region, all covered in the Rough Guide.

For example:

- Watch bands rehearse in Conakry (p.605), see chimps in Freetown (p.688), meet a Yoruba priestess in Nigeria (p.1144), or photograph crocodiles in the Sahara (p.139);
- Stay at a German-run lakeside resort in Cameroon (p.1329) or an eco-lodge in southern Gambia (p.310);
- Buy a replica coffin in the shape of a plane in Accra (p.825), climb a mid-Atlantic volcano (p.478), or visit Victorian explorers' houses in Timbuktu (p.402);
- See salt-water hippos in Guinea-Bissau (p.553) or Youssou N'Dour play live in his club in Dakar (p.211);
- Time your visit to Burkina Faso for the pan-African film festival (p.717), pick up a fetish remedy in Lomé (p.916), explore the palaces of the Dahomey kings in Benin (p.993) or go giraffe-spotting in Niger (p.1047).

New features

The Rough Guide to West Africa includes a host of new and improved features. All capitals and major cities feature newly formatted "Surface arrivals and departures" public transport tinted boxes for overland travellers, summarizing the bus, taxi and - where relevant - train and ferry options. In addition, look out for:

Background boxes

Background and further information on more than 120 subjects. New boxes include:

- THE MALI EMPIRE: the empire's founding and demise, and the lives of its inhabitants;
- THE SLAVE TRADE: fresh insights on its impact on the interior, the traders involved, the destinations of transported slaves and the abolition of slavery;
- SPAIN'S HELLISH ALLURE: the 21st century economic refugee crisis;
- PROJECT ZACA: the redevelopment of central Ouagadougou.

New and improved maps

The Rough Guide has more maps than any other travel guide to West Africa and 32 maps that don't appear in the only competing guide. New maps include:

- BENIN: new map of Abomey, showing royal palaces in detail for the first time;
- CAMEROON: redrawn and expanded country map, and new maps of Douala;
- CAPE VERDE: new map of Sal island's booming resort of Santa Maria;
- GUINEA: new maps of Greater Conakry and Nzérékoré;
- GUINEA-BISSAU: new maps of Bubaque, Bafatá and Gabú;
- MALI: new maps of Djenné, Sévaré and Gao;
- NIGERIA: greatly expanded map of central Lagos and a detailed new double-page map of the capital, Abuja;
- SENEGAL: new map of the holiday resort of Cap Skiring;
- SIERRA LEONE: new maps of Makeni, Bo, Kenema and Tiwai Island National Park (last published in 1990, before the war);
- TOGO: new maps of Atakpamé and Dapaong.

Readers' quotes

Readers' letters and emails are invaluable in telling researchers about new places to visit and old descriptions to refresh. In this edition we wanted to give readers more of a voice, so quotations from their contributions, sometimes offering opinions different from our own, are now printed as tinted boxes in each chapter.

Books, Music, Cinema

Reading, listening and viewing suggestions for each country, with concise reviews, write-ups and the local back stories on literature, music and film.

Up-to-date information

Recent information, incorporated throughout the guide, includes the latest security and travel updates, fuel prices, current events updates and much more.

Languages

The Basics chapter includes a detailed section on West African ethnicity and languages, with a West African language map. Each country includes a language chapter, incorporating practical phrases, word lists and glossaries, giving the basic tools of expression for one or more important languages, a total of 24 language kits, ranging from Bamana to Yoruba.

Author's blog

Readers can access the guide's update blog, published by author Richard Trillo, at <http://theroughguidetowestafrika.blogspot.com>.

Notes to Editors:

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