



Côte d'Ivoire | Practical Information

Accommodation

On our trip through Ivory Coast we stay in clean thoroughly selected 2-3-stars-hotels. The rooms have en suite facilities, electricity and water supply and air condition or fan. The hotels at Grand Bassam, Grand Lahou, Yamoussoukro, Korhogo and Man have clean swimming pools.

Here is a selection of the hotels used on our tour:

www.hoteletoiledusud.org/

www.complexeolymppe.ci

www.iroki.ci

www.hotel-lescascades.com/

www.lepollet.jimdofree.com/

www.hotelleravingrandlahouci.com/

Airlines

Airlines with scheduled flights from Europe to Abidjan include Air France, Brussels Airlines, Turkish Airlines, TAP Portugal and Ethiopian Airlines.

For more information please consult the following websites:

www.turkishairlines.com, www.brusselsairlines.com, www.airfrance.de, www.flyethiopian.com,
www.flytap.com

If you book a tailor-made trip with us you can fly the airline of your choice and we can coordinate your flight arrangement with the land itinerary. We will be pleased to provide you with our consultation and support.

Clothing

Light short-sleeved cotton clothing is recommended for the days and a long-sleeved shirt and trousers for the evenings which will help you to fend off mosquitoes. In the rainy season you need a waterproof jacket and/or an umbrella. (see chapter "when to go"). In many hotels there is a laundry service on offer, so you can get your washing done. As for footwear, you should carry with you a good pair of walking shoes for our hiking tours and a pair of sandals. Thongs are useful in shower and pool areas. Don't forget your swimwear! You will have the opportunity to swim in the sea, and some of our hotels have clean swimming pools.

Communication

International and national calls can be made from post offices and hotels. The prefix for UK is 0044, for USA and Canada 001, for Ivory Coast 00225. As in many other African countries, Ivory Coast has a booming mobile industry, and coverage is excellent across the country. For detailed information please

contact your provider prior to departure. If you have an unlocked GSM phone, it is possible to buy a local SIM card like Orange, Comium or Moov for about 5 - 6 \$ and buy top-ups. International calls to the UK and USA cost about 400 to 500 CFA per minute.

Internet access is widely available in Abidjan and other cities of the country and prices not expensive, although connections are often slow. Many hotels offer free WIFI.

Electric Supply & Plugs

The nominal supply voltage is 220 volts alternating current. Generally, hotel rooms have wall outlets for recharging electrical devices and batteries. Côte d'Ivoire uses two-pin continental-style plugs, so US and UK guests will probably need an adapter. The former may also need a voltage converter. Please note that power cuts are frequent.

Food and Drinks

In the itinerary we state which meals are included on each day.

Food included in the breakfast varies according to hotel standard. Most hotels serve bread, butter, jam, sometimes honey and processed cheese or omelette for breakfast. It also includes tea or coffee.

Upmarket hotels usually serve buffet breakfast. Dinner we usually take in the restaurants of our hotels or in clean, thoroughly selected restaurants in town. In many places international cuisine is served.

Ivorian cuisine is based on grains and tubers, fish and seafood, chicken, fresh fruits, vegetables and spices, and is very similar to that of neighbouring countries in West Africa. Plantains and cassava are important staple crops. Grated cassava is used to make *attiéké*, a popular side dish very similar in taste and consistency to couscous. A type of corn paste called *aitiu* is used to prepare corn balls, and peanuts are widely used in many dishes. A common street-vended food is *allico*, which is ripe banana fried in palm oil, spiced with a hot sauce made of onions and chili. It can be eaten alone as a snack or often with a hard-boiled egg, as well as a side dish. Grilled fish and grilled chicken are the most popular non-vegetarian foods. Lean, low-fat Guinea Fowl, is commonly referred as *poulet bicyclette*. Seafood includes shrimp, tuna, sardines and bonito, which are similar to tuna. *Mafé* is a dish consisting of meat in a peanut sauce. Slow-simmered stews with various ingredients are another common food staple in Côte d'Ivoire. *Kedjenou* is a type of spicy stew consisting of chicken and vegetables that are slow-cooked in a sealed terracotta pot called a *canary* with little or no added liquid.

The *maquis* is Côte d'Ivoire's great contribution to eating in West Africa. A typical maquis is a reasonably priced open-air restaurant where you eat under a thatched pailote. Maquis normally feature braised or grilled chicken and fish served with onions and tomatoes, *attiéké*, and/or *kedjenou*.

Fizzy drinks are widely available. The standard beer is Bock Solibra, which locals order by asking for a *soixante-six* - a 660-ml-bottle, or even a *grosse bière*, a hefty 1L-bottle. *Bandji* is the local palm wine, which is especially palatable when it's freshly tapped.

Health

A Yellow Fever vaccination and certificate is a compulsory requirement for entry into Ivory Coast (see visa requirements). You should always carry the certificate with you while being in Africa.

Immunisations against tetanus, diphtheria, polio and hepatitis A are recommended by the World Health Organization, regardless of your destination. For other vaccinations and prophylactic measures please consult your doctor, travel clinic or tropical medical bureau before departure. For further information please consult our Infoportal.

To prevent traveller's diarrhoea, peel fresh fruits before eating them and avoid fresh salads and ice cubes in basic restaurants. Be careful and very selective when eating or drinking in street stalls and make sure that meat is always well cooked and plates and serving utensils are clean. Don't drink hastily ice-cold drinks. Consult your doctor before departure for appropriate medication and rehydration mixtures.

The best prevention of malaria is to avoid being bitten. The evening wear clothes covering your entire body and use mosquito repellent. Sleep under a mosquito net and/or turn AC or fan on. For further prophylactic measures consult a specialist for tropical diseases.

Keep away from street dogs, monkeys and other mammals that could carry rabies. Avoid bathing in standing bodies of water because they are high-risk areas for bilharzia. Be careful while bathing in the sea because undercurrents and breaking waves are very dangerous even for strong swimmers the seas off Ivory Coast being particularly risky.

Literature

Travel guides:

West Africa, Lonely Planet, 9th edition, published September 2017

Côte d'Ivoire, Bradt Travel Guide, 1st edition, published 2016

The Rough Guide to West Africa, 5th edition, published June 2009

Money

The CFA franc (Communauté Financière Africaine) represented on international banking systems by XOF, is the common currency of Ivory Coast. Exchange rates are \$1 = 538 CFA, £1 = 763 CFA, 1 CAD = 445 CFA (as of May 2021), €1 = 655.95 CFA. The CFA franc is pegged directly to the Euro. Notes are in denominations of CFA 10,000, 5,000, 2,000 and 1,000, coins come in CFA500, 250, 200, 100, 50 and 25. Coins of CFA 10 or 5 exist, but they are extremely rare.

Please note that finding change can be very difficult at times, particularly in small shops, restaurants, taxis and street stalls, so you should always have a good supply of cash money in small denominations or coins.

You can change cash money in banks and some larger hotels. Normal banking hours are from 08.00 to 14.00 Uhr or 15.00 Uhr Monday to Friday. Some banks give you cash advance on your credit card. You don't need your PIN code but will need your passport. However, this procedure is time consuming, and commission is very high. The easiest way to change money is to change cash. Changing euros, dollars or pound sterling in foreign exchange bureaus (Bureau de change) is less time consuming and cheaper than in banks. In all larger cities banks are equipped with ATM machines, allowing you can withdraw money using your Visa card. Please note, that most banks and cashpoints only accept Visa card. Mastercard, American Express or other credit cards are generally not accepted. Cashpoints may not be working or may be malfunctioning, so do not count on them. In Ivory Coast it's practically impossible to use your credit card as a means of payment. EC Maestro card is an absolute no-go everywhere in Ivory Coast. Some banks in the larger cities offer travellers' cheques services. While travellers' cheques offer a greater security, changing them can be time consuming and commission is very high. You will be asked to produce both your passport and the receipt you get from your bank when purchasing them..

Photography

Ivory Coast is a real treasure trove for passionate photographers. Whether the impressive basilica of Yamoussoukro, the stilt village of Tiagba, the unforgettable mask dances or the country's beautiful beaches: there are countless photographic subjects.

Before you snap people please ask permission. A small friendly conversation can help you to break the ice and win your subject's sympathy. Particularly in the animistic parts of the countries there are sacred places where photography is not allowed. Please follow your local guide's instructions. Some places charge a photo fee (e.g. the basilica of Yamoussoukro. Taking pictures is not allowed inside the museums. It is strictly forbidden to take pictures of military buildings and people wearing uniforms, airports, dams, bridges, power plants, police stations, control posts along the roads and border posts!

Safety

The danger most likely to affect a tourist is pick-pocketing, particularly in busy markets, bus stations, in crowds in the streets or in shared taxis. Bag snatchers are few, but can occasionally strike, speeding past on mopeds. Do not wear expensive jewellery or carry large amounts of cash or expensive items such as cameras. You should keep belongings close when walking down streets. We recommend you to keep your documents, cash money, credit card and cheques in a skin-hugging hidden money-belt or a button-up chest pocket. Always travel with photocopies of your documents and keep them in a separate bag. Avoid walking around the streets at night, especially alone. During late evening or around/after midnight, we recommend you to use a taxi.

For up-to-date information and safety and security advice about your destination please check your government's travel advisory: www.fco.gov.uk, www.travel.state.gov, www.voyage.gc.ca

Ivory Coast

Since the end of the civil war and Alassane Ouattara's election for president in 2011 the security situation has largely improved in the past couple of years. The elections on October 25, 2015 were carried out peacefully.

In case of emergency please contact your embassy or representation in Ivory Coast:

For UK citizens:

- **British Embassy**

Quartier Ambassades

Rue l'Impasse du Belier, Rue A 58, Abidjan 01

01 B.P 2581

Phone: +225 2244 2669.

Fax: +225 2248 9548

For further information click here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/world/cote-d-ivoire>

Opening hours: Monday - Thursday: 09:00 to 16:30, Friday 09:00 to 14:30.

For US citizens:

- **Embassy of the United States**

Abidjan 01, Côte d'Ivoire

01 B.P. 1712

Tel: (+225) 22-49-40-00

Tel. Consular Section: (+225) 22 49 45 94

Fax: (+225) 22 49 42 02

E-mail for American citizens: abjamcit@state.gov

For further information click here: <http://abidjan.usembassy.gov/>

For Canadian citizens:

- **Embassy of Canada to Côte d'Ivoire**

23 Noguès Ave., Plateau, Abidjan 01

Trade Centre Building, 6th and 7th floors

01 B.P. 4104

Tel: +225 20 30 07 00

Fax: +225 29 30 07 20

E-mail: abidjn@international.gc.ca

<http://www.canadainternational.gc.ca/cotedivoire/>

Office hours: Monday to Thursday: 07:30 – 12:30 and 13:30 – 16:30, Friday: 07:30 – 13:00

Time Zone Difference

Côte d'Ivoire's time zone is UTC/GMT + 0. As they do not observe daylight saving time they are one hour behind in summertime.

Tipping

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized part of life in Africa. In the more well-to-do restaurants you can tip 5 – 10% if you were satisfied. For hotel tipping guidelines are as follows: for porters 300 CFA for one piece in Ivory Coast, for housekeeping 400 - 500 CFA per person per night. At your discretion you might also consider tipping your driver, tour guide and local guides in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

Visa Requirements

You may choose to use a visa service or send your application to the representations listed below.

Please note, that for this trip you need to have 2 empty pages in your passport.

Please note that a Yellow Fever vaccination and certificate is a compulsory requirement for entry into all three countries (see chapter "Health"). The certificate is often checked upon arrival.

All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related issues with the relevant embassy or consulate prior to departure.

Ivory Coast

Passports valid for a minimum of six months after the intended length of stay as well as visas are required by all EU, US, Australian and Canadian nationals. Other nationals are advised to contact the embassy to check their individual requirements. Tourists require a confirmed accommodation booking or proof of sufficient funds to cover their stay. Similarly, a valid yellow fever vaccination certificate is required by all travellers. Short-stay tourist visa up to 3 months cost €50 (if collected from the embassy) or €70 (if collected at the airport), long-stay visa of six months to one year €130. Nationals of most countries can apply online (www.snedai.com/en) and then either collect the visa either from the embassy or at the airport in Abidjan. It's advisable to check with the embassy whether you're eligible for the airport visa pick-up.

UK citizens:

- **Embassy of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire**

2 Upper Belgrave St

Belgravia, London SW1X 8BJ

Phone: 020 7235 6991 and 020 7235 6992

Fax: 020 7259 5320

US citizens:

- **Embassy of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire**
2424 Massachusetts Avenue NW
20008 Washington DC
Phone: +1-202-559-0317
Fax: +1-202-204-3967
Mail contact: <http://ambaciusa.org/contact/>
Web: <http://ambaciusa.org/Site/>
Visa application: <http://ambaciusa.org/fr/?id=31>

Canadian citizens:

- **Embassy of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire**
9, Avenue Marlborough
Ottawa (Ontario) - Canada K1N 8E6
Phone: (1613) 236 9919
Fax : (1613) 563-8287
Email: info@canada.diplomatie.gouv.ci / ambci.info@rogers.com
Web: <http://www.canada.diplomatie.gouv.ci/>

What to take

- Passport
- Air ticket
- International yellow vaccination card
- Photocopies of your documents (it's good to keep them in a separate bag)
- Cash money, credit card
- Hard top suitcase or tear resistant travel bag + day bag
- Protective cover for your suitcase
- Swimwear
- A pair of flip flops (for shower and pool etc.)
- A pair of sandals
- Comfortable footwear, non-slip hiking boots
- Long lightweight trousers, shorts, long-sleeved shirt for the evening, light thin cotton clothing
- Sunhat and sunglasses
- Suncream
- Umbrella and/or waterproof jacket
- Towel
- Toilet paper, tissues, wet wipes
- Torch with spare bulb and batteries
- Swiss knife
- Personal first-aid kit
- Insect repellent
- Photographic equipment, memory cards/film rolls, batteries
- Binoculars

When to go

Climate

The climate is tropical along the Ivorian coast and semi arid in the far north. The best time to discover the region is between November and April. However, during this season the harmattan winds blow, bringing dust from the Sahara.

In spite of high humidity, the climate of is fairly agreeable, especially in the drier winter months. There are three main seasons - warm and dry from November to March, hot and dry from March to May, hot and wet from June to October. Average temperatures in the summer vary between 27° and 30 °C. Southern Côte d'Ivoire receives especially heavy rainfall between May and October.

Best period for this trip: November - April

What you should know before you go

... Ivory Coast is a wonderful country to visit, but remember that Africans have a different perception of time. A trip through West Africa requires a high degree of flexibility, patience and tolerance, western standards regarding service, punctuality, comfort and hygiene cannot be applied here. Although we thoroughly choose our vehicles and use only vehicles in good condition, flat tires or other car breakdowns can happen. The road conditions in African countries can change unexpectedly due to heavy rainfalls requiring a detour or bridges can suddenly become impassable. We do our utmost best to ensure a smooth journey but please understand that delays may occur. Technical defects or service inconveniences in the hotels such as the lack of towels can often be rectified within a few minutes. In case of any inconvenience please contact your tour guide!

All information, opinions and advice contained on our Website are provided without any guarantees, conditions or warranties as to its accuracy and for general information only.