AFRIQUE UNIE · TRAVEL NOTEBOOK

Guinea in 11 days: a day-by-day itinerary

Guinea, the water tower of West Africa, is best discovered through its mountains. This eleven-day itinerary starts in Conakry and the nearby Îles de Los, then climbs into the Fouta Djallon, a green plateau of waterfalls, cliffs and Fula villages, via Kindia, Dalaba, Pita and Labé. It leaves out Mount Nimba and the parts of Upper Guinea bordering Mali and Côte d'Ivoire, where the French government advises against all but essential travel. Check official travel advice before you leave, and never drive at night.

Day by day

Days 1-2 · Conakry, a capital on a peninsula (night : Conakry)
From the airport, reach your accommodation via the motorway and in daylight if possible, staying alert on the way. Conakry stretches along a long peninsula; the historic centre, in Kaloum, can be seen in a day. Start with the National Museum, which displays masks and ritual objects from the different regions, then visit Sainte-Marie Cathedral and the imposing Grand Mosque of Faisal. The vast Madina market gives a sense of the city's scale, but pickpocketing is common there, so carry only what you need. In the evening, avoid dark, quiet places, and stay away from any demonstrations.

Day 3 · A day on the Îles de Los (night : Conakry)
Take a break at sea: the Îles de Los lie just off Conakry and can be reached by motorboat from the fishing port or the Boulbinet landing stage. The archipelago has three main islands, Kassa, Room and Tamara. Room, with its palm-fringed sandy beaches, is the favourite for a relaxing day; Kassa, more populated, still has traces of the colonial era. Choose a boat in good condition with life jackets, and check the weather before you set off. Bring water and lunch if you have not booked anything, and head back before late afternoon.

Day 4 · Kindia and the Bridal Veil Falls (night : Kindia)
Leave Conakry early to avoid the traffic jams: Kindia is only 135 kilometres away, but getting out of the capital can take time, so allow three to four hours on the road. The town, surrounded by citrus orchards and banana plantations, is the gateway to the highlands. In the afternoon, head to the Bridal Veil Falls, named after the curtain of water sliding down the cliff. The flow is strongest just after the rainy season. Afterwards, stroll through Kindia market, known for its fruit. As the road between Conakry, Kindia and Mamou is sometimes targeted by highway robbers at night, make sure you arrive before sunset.

Days 5-6 · Dalaba, the cool air of the Fouta Djallon (night : Dalaba)
Via Mamou, a busy crossroads town, the road climbs to Dalaba, 55 kilometres further north; allow four to five hours from Kindia. Perched at over 1,200 metres, the town was a hill station of French West Africa in the 1930s, and it is easy to see why: the mornings are cool, and the pine trees and green hills come as a surprise. On day 6, walk with a local guide in the surrounding area, between Fula hamlets, terraced fields and viewpoints over the plateau, and look at the old colonial-era villas. Bring a jacket, as nights can be cold in the dry season.

Days 7-8 · Pita, its waterfalls and the Doucky cliffs (night : Pita)
Pita, about an hour's drive from Dalaba, is the ideal base for the finest scenery in the Fouta Djallon. On day 7, visit the Kinkon Falls, near the hydroelectric dam of the same name, then the Kambadaga Falls, spectacular at the start of the dry season. On day 8, set off on a hike to the cliffs and canyon of Doucky: paths between rocks, natural bridges and plunging views over the valleys. The walk requires good fitness and a guide from the village. Pita is also a centre of traditional cotton weaving, so take the chance to watch the weavers at work.

Day 9 · Labé, capital of the Fouta (night : Labé)
A short drive takes you to Labé, the largest town in the region and the former political and religious centre of the Fouta Djallon. Its market, one of the most important in the country, brings together herders, traders and craftspeople from the surrounding villages; look out for indigo-dyed fabrics and leather goods. Visit the great mosque and stroll through the older neighbourhoods. In the late afternoon, take time to chat over tea, as Fula hospitality is renowned. Do not continue north-east towards Mali, whose border area is one the French government advises against except for essential travel. Prepare for the long drive back the next day.

Days 10-11 · Back to Conakry and departure (night : Kindia)
The return to the capital covers nearly 400 kilometres, so do not try to do it in one go. On day 10, leave Labé early and drive down via Pita, Dalaba and Mamou to Kindia, where you will spend the night, allowing six to eight hours depending on the state of the road. On day 11, cover the last 135 kilometres to Conakry in the morning, leaving plenty of time for the traffic jams on the way into the city, then head to the airport. If your flight leaves early, plan a night in Conakry instead and add a day to the trip. Either way, do not drive after dark.

Getting around

A four-wheel-drive vehicle with a driver is essential: roads in the Fouta Djallon are often in poor condition, and accidents are frequent. Never travel at night, in town or on the main roads, where highway robbers are regularly reported around Kindia and Mamou. In Conakry, use a trusted driver rather than shared taxis. For hikes around Dalaba, Pita and Doucky, hire local guides, who know the trails and make it easier to be welcomed in the villages.

When to go

The best time to go is from November to April, during the dry season. In November and December, the Fouta Djallon waterfalls are still full and the landscapes green. From December to February, the harmattan can haze the sky and nights are cool at altitude. March and April are hotter and the waterfalls thinner. From May to October, the rains are very heavy, especially on the coast, and make the tracks difficult.

Practical information

Guinea

Entry	Depends on your passport: visiterafriqueunie.com/en/visa/guinea/
Yellow fever	Certificate required from all travellers
Malaria	throughout the country
Currency	Guinean franc (GNF)
Languages	French, Fula, Malinke, Susu
Plugs	type C, F, K · dialling code +224 · UTC0
Emergencies	police 122 · fire 18

Departure checklist

Documents

☐ Passport valid for at least six months after your return, with blank pages
☐ Visa or e-visa (printed if required)
☐ International vaccination certificate (yellow fever if required)
☐ Travel insurance certificate and assistance number
☐ Paper and digital copies of your passport and bookings
☐ Tickets, bookings and addresses saved offline
☐ International driving permit if you are hiring a vehicle

Health

☐ Travel consultation done and vaccinations up to date
☐ Malaria tablets if your doctor recommends them
☐ First-aid kit: plasters, antiseptic, anti-diarrhoea tablets, rehydration salts
☐ Mosquito repellent suitable for the tropics
☐ Sunscreen, hat and sunglasses
☐ Personal medication and prescriptions

Money and connectivity

☐ Bank told, Visa or Mastercard (and a backup card)
☐ Cash in euros or dollars, recent notes in good condition
☐ eSIM or local SIM card sorted
☐ Plug adapter for the country
☐ Power bank and cables
☐ Offline maps downloaded
☐ Afrique Unie app installed

In the bag

☐ Light clothes that cover up (sun, mosquitoes, places of worship)
☐ A fleece for evenings, dawn safaris and altitude
☐ Walking shoes and sandals
☐ Head torch
☐ Water bottle (ideally with a filter)
☐ Small daypack and waterproof pouches
☐ Luggage padlock

Before you close the door

☐ Your government's travel advice reread
☐ Trip registered with your consular service (if it offers this)
☐ Itinerary and contacts left with someone close
☐ Online check-in done and baggage allowance checked

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