

Overseas Adventure Travel[®]

THE LEADER IN PERSONALIZED SMALL GROUP ADVENTURES SINCE 1978

Your O.A.T. Adventure Travel Planning Guide[®]



New! Cruise Madeira to the Canary
Islands & West Africa

2025

Overseas Adventure Travel®

347 Congress Street, Boston, MA 02210

Dear Traveler,

I am thrilled that you are considering exploring the world with O.A.T. There are so many wonderful destinations to discover, and the itinerary described inside is a perfect way to fulfill a travel dream.

When you join us, you will enjoy the thrill of off-the-beaten-path discovery coupled with the convenience of unpacking just once. Aboard our privately owned small ship, you will visit lesser-known ports that larger vessels cannot access—and enjoy intimate interactions with local people in your small group of no more than 25 travelers. You will get to know community leaders and try your hand at local trades during your *A Day in the Life* experience, share traditional fare and lively conversation during a Home-Hosted Visit, discuss the Controversial Topics impacting everyday life, and visit sites supported by Grand Circle Foundation.

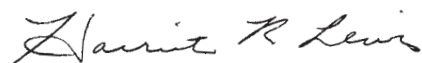
But your personal connections are not limited to your time on land—while onboard, you will enjoy the warm hospitality provided by our friendly, English-speaking crew, as well as the camaraderie of your fellow American travelers. Whether you travel with a partner, sister, friend, or independently, you will feel welcomed and included throughout your journey. And if you do choose to travel solo, you will enjoy an unmatched value, with our FREE or low-cost Single Supplements—just one of the reasons we continue to be the leader in solo travel.

To ensure you experience the true culture and feel supported every step of the way, we provide the services of a local Trip Experience Leader from the beginning of your adventure to the end. Along with introducing you to the history and culture of their homeland, these friendly experts will gladly help you out with any special requests to make your trip even more special. You can also rely on the seasoned team at our regional office, who are ready to help 24/7 in case any unexpected circumstances arise.

Plus, you can put your own personal stamp on your trip, like the, like the **87% of our travelers who personalize their experience**. Perhaps you will choose to see more of your destination by adding an optional trip extension to your itinerary. You can also arrive a few days early to explore independently and get acclimated, customize your air itinerary, and more.

I hope you find this Travel Planning Guide helpful. If you have any further questions, do not hesitate to contact one of our Travel Counselors at **1-800-955-1925**.

Warm regards,



Harriet R. Lewis
Chair
Overseas Adventure Travel

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Monument to African Renaissance, Dakar, Senegal

New! Cruise Madeira to the Canary Islands & West Africa Small Ship Adventure

Portugal: Funchal | **Canary Islands:** Lanzarote, Tenerife, La Palma, Gran Canaria | **Morocco:** Dakhla | **Senegal:** Dakar

Small groups of no more than 25 travelers, guaranteed

20 days starting from \$8,795

including international airfare

Single Supplement: **\$1,995**

For departure dates & prices, visit www.oattravel.com/ccv2025pricing

Embark on a journey that will take you from Portugal's vineyard-laced Madeira to the sun-splashed Canary Islands, and finally to the port cities of Morocco and Senegal. Experience a 14-night voyage aboard the privately owned **98-passenger M/V Corinthian**, disembarking to explore Spain's lush Canary Islands and the coastlines of northwest Africa.

IT'S INCLUDED

- 18 nights accommodation, including 14 nights aboard our privately owned 98-passenger M/V *Corinthian*
- International airfare, airport transfers, government taxes, fees, and airline fuel surcharges, unless you choose to make your own air arrangements
- 49 meals: 18 breakfasts, 15 lunches, 16 dinners—plus all onboard house beer, wine, and soft drinks
- 22 guided tours and cultural experiences
- Gratuities for local guides and motorcoach drivers
- All port charges
- Baggage handling for 1 piece of luggage per person, including tips
- 5% Frequent Traveler Credit toward your next trip

Prices are accurate as of the date of this publishing and are subject to change.



ITINERARY SUMMARY

DAYS	DESTINATION
1	Depart U.S.
2-5	Funchal • Madeira
6	At sea
7-13	Canary Islands
14	At sea
15-16	Dakhla, Morocco
17	At sea
18-19	Saint-Louis, Senegal • Dakar
20	Return to U.S.

WHAT TO EXPECT

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ Moderately Strenuous

Pacing: 19 days, with 14 nights aboard the M/V *Corinthian*, one three-night hotel stay in Funchal, and one overnight hotel stay in Dakar

Physical Requirements: Walk 4 miles unassisted and participate in 3-4 hours of physical activities each day, including the boarding of Zodiacs or tenders and possible rough seas

Flight time: Travel time will be 6-18 hours and most likely won't have connections

View all physical requirements at www.oattravel.com/ccv

PORTUGAL, THE CANARY ISLANDS & WEST AFRICA: THE O.A.T. DIFFERENCE

Unbeatable Value: Travel at the lowest price and per diems in the industry. Plus, all port charges included.

People-to-People Experiences: Experience local culture in Morocco when you visit a Sahraoui tent—a simple nomadic dwelling of the Berber people. Here, you'll sit down for a traditional Moroccan tea ceremony.

O.A.T. Exclusives: Enjoy a glimpse of life in the desert when you join a local Moroccan family for a **Home-Hosted tea ceremony** in Dakhla—a unique opportunity for true cultural connection. You'll sit down with our hosts and share refreshments and lively conversation.

PERSONALIZE YOUR ADVENTURE

OPTIONAL EXTENSIONS

Portugal: Lisbon, Coimbra & Cascais

PRE-TRIP: 7 nights from **\$2,295**

The Gulf of Guinea: Ghana, Togo & Benin

POST-TRIP: 7 nights from **\$3,795**

ARRIVE EARLY

We recommend that you relax after a long flight or explore more in depth before your trip. Prices shown include accommodations and private airport transfer.

- Arrive early in **Lisbon** before your pre-trip extension from **\$360** per room, per night
- Arrive early in **Madeira** before your main adventure from **\$280** per room, per night

Cruise Madeira to the Canary Islands & West Africa

YOUR DETAILED ITINERARY

BEGIN YOUR ADVENTURE WITH AN OPTIONAL PRE-TRIP EXTENSION

7 nights in *Portugal: Lisbon, Coimbra & Cascais*

Day 1 Depart U.S.

Day 2 Arrive Lisbon, Portugal

Day 3 Explore Lisbon • National Tile Museum

Day 4 Explore Belém • Visit Ajuda Royal Palace

Day 5 Ancient Roman ruins of Conimbriga • Coimbra

Day 6 Explore Coimbra

Day 7 Alcobaça Monastery • Obidos village • Cascais

Day 8 Cascais • Sintra • Cabo da Roca

Day 9 Join main adventure

Day 1 Depart U.S.

Depart the U.S. on your flight to Funchal, Portugal.

Day 2 Arrive Funchal, Portugal

- Destination: Funchal
- Accommodations: Hotel Melia Madeira Mare or similar

Activity Note: This itinerary offers an off the beaten path experience. Expect coaches and hotels with lower standards than what we are used to in the U.S. and Europe. If you choose to join, a sense of adventure and a willingness to embrace cultural differences is essential.

Afternoon: You'll arrive in Funchal sometime this afternoon, depending on your specific flight arrangements. An O.A.T. representative

will meet you at the airport, and assist in your transfer to your hotel. Our Trip Experience Leader will meet you here, and together you'll join your fellow travelers—including those who have arrived from our pre-trip extension, *Portugal: Lisbon, Coimbra & Cascais*—on an orientation walk of the area.

Dinner: On your own in Funchal—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Evening: On your own. You may wish to retire early tonight after your day of travel.

Day 3 Funchal • Explore the Old Quarter

- Destination: Funchal
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Hotel Melia Madeira Mare or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Meet with your Trip Experience Leader for a Welcome Briefing after breakfast. During this briefing, you'll review the itinerary in more detail (including any changes that may need to occur). Our Trip Experience Leader will also discuss logistics, safety, and emergency procedures, and answer any questions you may have.

Then we'll head out to explore Funchal's Old Quarter—known for its winding cobblestone streets and historic buildings. Along the way, we'll stop to visit a farmer's market to learn about the island of Madeira's local produce. This is also a great opportunity to interact with locals.

Lunch: On your own in Funchal—ask your Trip Experience for recommendations.

Afternoon: The remainder of the afternoon is free for you to continue exploring more of Funchal at your leisure. After a few hours, we'll reconvene at the hotel before dinner.

Dinner: At a local restaurant.

Evening: Free to spend in Funchal as you wish.

Day 4 Explore Madeira • Quinta do Furão • Pico do Arieiro

- Destination: Funchal
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Hotel Melia Madeira Mare or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Hop aboard our private motorcoach and set off on a drive around the island today. We'll first head to the easternmost point of Madeira, where the relatively treeless landscape—in stark contrast with the wooded interior—will grant us sweeping views of the sea.

Then, we'll continue our explorations with a visit to a local rum factory—one of the oldest on the island—that still runs its sugar cane processing machines by steam power. We'll learn about the rum-making process as well as sample a taste of the results (seasonal dependent).

Afterwards, we'll drive to Quinta do Furão and learn about the organic vines, vegetables, and herbs that are typical for Madeira gardens. Take in sweeping views of the ocean as you explore the farm, where you'll have the opportunity to learn about the traditional drink Poncha, a popular rum drink among the locals.

Lunch: At a Quinta do Furão restaurant.

Afternoon: We'll wrap up our island discoveries as we ascend to Pico do Arieiro, the island's third-highest mountain peak, for a scenic photo stop. We'll arrive back at our hotel later this afternoon, where the rest of the day will be on your own.

Dinner: On your own. Your Trip Experience Leader will be happy to recommend a spot that suits your tastes.

Evening: You may wish to find a local bar to enjoy a drink before heading back to the hotel.

Day 5 Explore Funchal • Botanical Garden visit • Embark ship

- Destination: Funchal
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: M/V *Corinthian*

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll check out of our hotel after breakfast this morning. Then enjoy a walking tour of Funchal's Old Town with your Trip Experience Leader. We'll ascend by cable car—installed to make daily life easier for the locals—and stroll its narrow, cobbled streets, as well as visit its Botanical Garden.

After, you may like to try a toboggan ride, a traditional basket sledge that was a popular means of transportation for the locals back in the early 19th century.

Next it will be time to embark your small ship. This privately owned, 98-passenger vessel will be your home for the next 14 nights.

Lunch: Served onboard in the ship's dining room.

Afternoon: After lunch, your Captain will conduct a safety briefing. At the conclusion, you'll have time to get acquainted with the ship's inviting common areas.

Make your way to the lounge later this afternoon for an embarkation briefing, during which you'll meet the crew. Then, your Trip Experience Leader will deliver the first in a series of nightly Port Talks.

Dinner: Tonight, you and your fellow travelers will be invited to the dining room for a Welcome Dinner.

Evening: You are free to relax in the lounge after dinner, or return to your cabin to settle in.

Day 6 At sea

- Destination: At sea
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: M/V *Corinthian*

Breakfast: All breakfasts onboard are served in the ship's dining room. You may choose from an assortment of familiar options—including hot and cold cereals, eggs, sausage, bacon, fresh fruit, and toast.

Morning: Enjoy a morning at leisure. You may wish to bring a book up to the Sun Deck to enjoy the fresh air as we sail.

Lunch: Served in the ship's dining room.

Afternoon: Continue to enjoy a relaxing day at sea.

Dinner: Served in the ship's dining room.

Evening: At leisure. Feel free to take advantage of the ship's amenities—including the bar and the lounge—as we continue our overnight voyage toward Spain's Canary Islands.

Day 7 Lanzarote, Canary Islands • Timanfaya National Park • El Golfo • Volcanic winery visit

- Destination: Canary Islands
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: M/V *Corinthian*

Breakfast: Served onboard in the ship's dining room.

Morning: Disembark this morning to begin our discoveries of the Canary Islands. We'll journey by bus to Timanfaya National Park—an otherworldly area formed by volcanic eruptions from as recently as 300 years ago. We'll also have the opportunity to feel the Earth's heat during a geothermal demonstration in the park's welcome center. Next, we'll

drive along *Ruta de los Volcanes* (Volcano Route) where we'll witness the area's unique moon-like landscape.

After our visit here, we'll drive along the Timanfaya coast, stopping along the way at El Golfo, a fishing village within Volcanoes National Park. We'll find charming Lanzarote-style fishing houses with whitewashed walls and flat roofs, surrounded by miles of hardened lava left over from the eruptions of the early 1700s.

Our next destination will be a nearby winery that uses the volcanic soil to its advantage in the cultivation of its grapes. This mineral-rich soil—almost completely black—yields grapes used in vintages such as Malvasia, the most typical wine of Lanzarote. We'll learn about their meticulous hand-harvesting process as well as enjoy a tasting. After our visit, we will drive back to our ship.

Lunch: Served onboard in the ship's dining room.

Afternoon: Free to make your own discoveries. Buses will be available for those who wish to head back out into the island. Or, you may choose to relax onboard.

Gather in the ship's lounge later this afternoon for our nightly Port Talk.

Dinner: Served onboard in the ship's dining room, followed by a folklore performance.

Evening: At leisure. During your free time aboard, you may choose to relax at the ship's bar or take in the views from the window-lined lounge.

Day 8 Lanzarote • Mirador del Río • Cactus Garden visit • César Manrique Foundation

- Destination: Canary Islands
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: M/V *Corinthian*

Breakfast: Served onboard in the ship's dining room.

Morning: Today, we'll drive to El Mirador del Río, a panoramic balcony designed by architect César Manrique in a landscape that best represents his philosophy of harmonizing art with nature. From here, we can appreciate the unique topography of El Río, a narrow strip of sea that divides Lanzarote from La Graciosa, the eighth Canary Island.

After our visit, we'll drive to the Cactus Garden, a unique and vast garden situated in a former quarry and home to over 1,000 species of cactus from around the world. Wander through this immersive garden full of plants ranging from small succulents to towering cacti.

Before returning to the ship, join our Trip Experience Leader for a discovery walk in the historical town of Tegüise, the former capital of Lanzarote and one of the first settlements established in the Canary Islands. Tegüise's Old Town is one of the oldest villages and is rich with historical architecture.

Lunch: Served onboard in your ship's dining room.

Afternoon: Next, we'll visit the César Manrique Foundation, located at the site of a lava dome formed during a series of volcanic eruptions that rocked the island between 1730 and 1736. Headquartered in the tranquil and serene Volcano House, the foundation was created by artist and architect César Manrique in 1968 using the natural volcanic landscape as part of the home's design. As you explore, take note

of how Manrique honored the violent aspects of nature by blending it seamlessly with the architectural elements.

Later on, we'll once again gather in the ship's lounge for our Port Talk.

Dinner: Served onboard in your ship's dining room.

Evening: Free to spend as you wish.

Day 9 Tenerife • Mount Teide Volcano • Visit Santa Cruz de Tenerife • Optional Anaga Forest tour

- Destination: Canary Islands
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: M/V *Corinthian*

Activity Note: Some groups will experience the activities featured on Day 9 and 10 in reverse order.

Breakfast: Served onboard in the ship's dining room.

Morning: Today we'll set off on a drive through the Esperanza Forest on our way to the day's first destination, Santa Cruz de Tenerife's impressive Mount Teide Volcano—the highest point above sea level in the islands of the Atlantic. In fact, Teide's elevation above sea level makes Tenerife the tenth highest island in the world. Teide Observatory, a major international astronomical observatory, is located on the slopes of the mountain. We'll pause a few times to take in sweeping views of the island beginning with the lunar-like landscape surrounding Mount Teide. Teide National Park is recognized by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site.

Our next stop along the way will be at Minas de San José, a mine deposit peppered with unique valleys and rock formations. Then we'll

head to Roques de García, one of the most exceptional rock formations found in Mount Teide's National Park.

After, we'll continue our drive to Santa Cruz de Tenerife.

Lunch: Served onboard in the ship's dining room.

Afternoon: After lunch, you can join your Trip Experience Leader for a discovery walk of the baroque and neoclassical buildings of Santa Cruz de Tenerife. Or, consider joining our optional Anaga Forest tour. The Anaga Forest is a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve nestled at the island's northeastern tip. Anaga is an enchanting region of ancient laurel forest, Eden-like valleys, and picturesque villages and hamlets that cling to the mountainsides. During a stroll through one of the many mountain paths that crisscross Anaga, you can keep an eye out for the rich and diverse variety of flora and fauna found here—the highest concentration of endemic species in Europe—while taking in the scenic beauty of this unspoiled region. You'll be back to the ship in time for our nightly Port Talk and dinner.

Dinner: Served onboard in your ship's dining room.

Evening: On your own. You may wish to unwind after the day's discoveries, perhaps writing in your travel journal.

Day 10 Tenerife • San Cristobal de la Laguna • Visit Garachico Harbor and Old Town

- Destination: Canary Islands
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: M/V *Corinthian*

Breakfast: Served onboard in the ship's dining room.

Morning: We'll drive to San Cristóbal de la Laguna—a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Upon arrival, we'll stroll the city's wide streets and open squares, which have a number of churches and buildings dating from the 16th century. San Cristóbal de La Laguna is the first example of an unfortified town with a grid model that was the direct precursor of the settlements in the Americas under Spanish rule during colonial times. This town is a living example of the exchange of influences between European and American cultures.

We'll next head to Garachico Harbor, its modern port a striking contrast to the nearby historic Old Town. We'll explore Garachico, walking past the former port that was buried by a volcanic eruption in the 18th century. The town you see today was rebuilt after a lava flow destroyed much of the original town in 1706. This eruption lasted several days and filled the harbor of Garachico with lava, making it unusable for many years.

Lunch: At a local restaurant.

Afternoon: Return to the ship for a few hours of free time. Later, gather in the lounge for our nightly Port Talk.

Dinner: Served onboard in the ship's dining room.

Evening: Free to spend onboard however you wish.

Day 11 La Palma • Santa Cruz de la Palma

- Destination: Canary Islands
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: M/V *Corinthian*

Activity Note: For today's discoveries, we'll split into smaller groups and visit the volcano of La Palma to learn about the recent volcanic

eruption on the island. Please note that we will spend about 3.5 hours here exploring the area, walking in ash, uneven terrain, and inclines.

Breakfast: Served onboard in the ship's dining room.

Morning: Stroll Santa Cruz de La Palma this morning, the capital city of the island of La Palma, and admire its famous centuries-old architecture, cobblestone streets, and lively port on a discovery walk with your Trip Experience Leader. We'll walk along the Calle Real—the city's main street—and the Plaza de España, a popular meeting point for locals.

For those embarking on the tour to the volcano, travelers will split into smaller groups and will be joined by a local guide who will explain how the most recent volcanic eruptions have altered the islands' geology. Learn how a recent eruption was active for three months and during that time destroyed more than 3,000 properties and hundreds of acres of farmland on the island. Plus, hear how the molten rock which poured into the ocean increased the size of the island.

Lunch: Served onboard in the ship's dining room.

Afternoon: After lunch, the rest of the afternoon is free for your own discoveries in Santa Cruz de La Palma.

Later, regroup with your Trip Experience Leader and fellow travelers for a Port Talk.

Dinner: Served onboard in the ship's dining room.

Evening: At leisure. Perhaps you'll enjoy a night cap at the ship's bar or relax in the lounge.

Day 12 La Palma • Visit a banana plantation • Coffee plantation

- Destination: Canary Islands
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: M/V *Corinthian*

Activity Note: The visit to Cenobio Valeron involves climbing 150 steps to reach the top. The site becomes fully visible only after reaching the halfway point, enhancing the anticipation and unveiling the beauty gradually.

Breakfast: Served onboard in the ship's dining room.

Morning: Today begins with a visit to a family-owned banana plantation. We'll meet with the owner and learn about the cultivation techniques and the history of banana production in the Canary Islands.

Afterwards, we'll visit Cenobio de Valerón, an archaeological cave site in Gran Canaria. Also referred to as Valerón's "monastery," the cave was used by the inhabitants of the island before the land was conquered at the end of the 15th century.

Next, we'll split into smaller groups and meet with some residents of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria for a **Home-Hosted Lunch**. We'll have an opportunity for true cultural exchange by sharing a meal with these local families and gaining insights into everyday life in the Canary Islands.

Lunch: Enjoy a **Home-Hosted Lunch** with a local family.

Afternoon: We'll return to our ship for some free time this afternoon.

Dinner: Served onboard in the ship's dining room.

Evening: At leisure.

Day 13 Visit a cochineal farm • Explore Las Palmas de Gran Canaria

- Destination: Canary Islands
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: M/V *Corinthian*

Breakfast: Served onboard in the ship's dining room.

Morning: We'll begin the day with a visit to a cochineal farm, where we'll learn about the rich history of cochineal cultivation in the Canary Islands. Cochineals are parasitic insects that live on cacti and are bred and harvested to extract carmine, a natural reddish dye used in cosmetics, food, textiles, and more. We'll try our hand at gathering some cochineal before driving over to the drying room, where we'll learn about the final process of extracting carmine and using the dye to make our own watercolors. We'll conclude our visit with the opportunity to sample some beer and a centuries-old liquor made from cochineal. Then, we'll return to our ship for lunch.

Lunch: Onboard our ship.

Afternoon: This afternoon, we'll enjoy a panoramic tour of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, including a walking tour of Old Town. Called Vegueta, this area was the original settlement that gave birth to Las Palmas de Gran Canaria at the end of the 15th century. We'll enjoy some free time here before returning to our ship for dinner.

Dinner: Served onboard in the ship's dining room.

Evening: Free to spend onboard however you wish.

Day 14 At sea

- Destination: At sea
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: M/V *Corinthian*

Breakfast: Served onboard in the ship's dining room.

Morning: Sit back and enjoy another day at sea, as we bid Spain's Canary Islands *adios* and head towards our first stop in Africa—Morocco.

Lunch: Served onboard in the ship's dining room.

Afternoon: At leisure as we continue to sail. If weather permits, you may want to head up to the Sun Deck. Later on, gather in the ship's lounge for our nightly Port Talk.

Dinner: Served onboard in the ship's dining room.

Evening: On your own—perhaps you would like to join your fellow travelers for a nightcap in the lounge.

Day 15 Dakhla, Morocco • White Dune • Tea ceremony • Visit a local market

- Destination: Dakhla
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: M/V *Corinthian*

Activity Note: Upon arrival at Dakhla port, anticipate an intense fish smell due to its active fishing activities. Today's location is very windy, a characteristic of the area in Morocco.

Depending on the day of the week we visit the market, some shops may be closed.

Breakfast: Served onboard in the ship's dining room.

Morning: This morning, we'll board 4x4 vehicles and head to Dakhla's White Dune. Surrounded by the ocean, this impressive dune

is one of Morocco's must-see destinations. Kite surfers can often be spotted here, as well as the occasional pink flamingo.

Lunch: Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant.

Afternoon: After lunch we'll visit with some local Moroccan families for tea. Then, we'll drive to a local market to peruse the goods and mingle with the locals before returning to our ship.

After some time to relax, we'll enjoy an onboard discussion by a local University Professor followed by our Port Talk.

Dinner: Served onboard in the ship's dining room.

Evening: On your own. Perhaps you'll sit down with fellow travelers in the lounge and recount the discoveries you made today.

Day 16 At Sea

- Destination: At sea
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: M/V *Corinthian*

Breakfast: Served onboard in the ship's dining room.

Morning: As we cruise to Senegal, our final destination, you may wish to relax in the ship's lounge or watch the scenery pass from the Sun Deck.

Lunch: Served onboard in the ship's dining room.

Afternoon: Continue to enjoy an afternoon at leisure.

Dinner: Served onboard in the ship's lounge.

Evening: The remainder of the evening is free to spend however you wish.

Day 17 At sea

- Destination: At sea
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: M/V *Corinthian*

Breakfast: Served onboard in the ship's dining room.

Morning: We continue sailing to Senegal. Perhaps you'll join your fellow travelers on the Sun Deck to enjoy the passing views or relax in your cabin.

Lunch: Served onboard in the ship's dining room.

Afternoon: At your leisure.

Dinner: Served onboard in the ship's dining room.

Evening: Spend the evening on your own or enjoy a drink onboard with your fellow travelers.

Day 18 Visit Bandia Wildlife Reserve

- Destination: Dakar
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: M/V *Corinthian*

Breakfast: Served onboard in our ship's dining room.

Morning: We'll set out to visit the Bandia Wildlife Reserve, which has successfully reintroduced a wide range of native wildlife that disappeared from Senegal centuries ago. Set over 8,000 acres dominated by acacia and ancient baobab trees, the reserve is home to populations of antelope, gazelle, giraffe, zebra and many more in their natural habitat, along with numerous bird and plant species. The reserve also includes replicas of Serere pyramids and sacred burial chambers.

Lunch: Enjoy an included lunch at the restaurant on the reserve, overlooking a waterhole for buffalos.

Afternoon: Return to ship for some time to freshen up for dinner.

Dinner: Tonight, gather with your fellow travelers to savor a Farewell Dinner onboard.

Evening: At your leisure.

Day 19 Explore Dakar • Disembark ship

- Destination: Dakar
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Pullman Dakar Teranga or similar

Activity Note: Expect a busy working port with diverse embarkations when we dock in Dakar. As the capital with 3 million inhabitants, anticipate chaotic traffic and a vibrant city stimulating all the senses.

Breakfast: Served onboard in our ship's dining room.

Morning: After breakfast, we'll enjoy a panoramic tour of Senegal's capital city. One of West Africa's main ports, Dakar is also known for its lively markets and rich musical culture.

Lunch: We'll return to the ship to enjoy lunch in our ship's dining room.

Afternoon: We'll bid the *Corinthian* and its crew farewell this afternoon. Then, we'll check into our hotel for our final night.

Dinner: At a local restaurant in Dakar.

Evening: Enjoy your last night in Senegal at leisure. Perhaps you'll share a toast to your discoveries with your fellow travelers in a nearby bar.

Day 20 Optional Gorée Island tour • Return to U.S. or begin post-trip extension

- Included Meals: Breakfast

Breakfast: Served at the hotel.

Morning: After breakfast, you may enjoy your final morning at leisure.

Or, join us on an optional Gorée Island tour, during which we'll board a ferry to transfer to the picturesque island—a UNESCO World Heritage Site—set off the coast of Dakar. As we set foot on the island, we'll bear witness to centuries of human history, both harrowing

and inspiring. We'll wind our way down cobbled streets and stop to marvel at colonial architecture and local culture along the way. Gorée Island's past may be heavy, but its present is a testament to the strength of the human spirit and the enduring power of hope.

Lunch: On your own. Ask your Trip Experience Leader for suggestions.

Afternoon: After lunch, we'll return to our hotel in Dakar. Later, transfer to the airport for your flight home. Or, continue on to our post-trip extension to *The Gulf of Guinea: Ghana, Togo & Benin*.

END YOUR ADVENTURE WITH AN OPTIONAL POST-TRIP EXTENSION

8 nights in *The Gulf of Guinea: Ghana, Togo & Benin*

Day 1 Dakar • Fly to Cotonou, Benin

Day 2 Cotonou • Visit Lake Village Ganvie

Day 3 Cotonou • Explore Porto-Novo

Day 4 Overland to Lomé, Togo • Ouidah • Visit Pythons Temple • Foundation Zinsou

Day 5 Explore Lomé • Visit Togoville

Day 6 Overland to Accra, Ghana

Day 7 Visit Tetteh Quarshie Cocoa Farm • Explore Aburi Botanical Garden

Day 8 Explore Accra • Visit Kwame Nkrumah Mausoleum

Day 9 Optional Ghana Bead-Making Experience tour • Return to U.S.

OPTIONAL TOURS

During your trip you will be able to book optional tours directly with your Trip Experience Leader. He or she will ask you to confirm the payment for these tours by filling out a payment form. Optional tours can only be purchased with a credit or debit card. We accept Visa, MasterCard, and Discover credit cards. We also accept Visa and MasterCard debit cards, but it must be a debit card that allows you to sign for purchases.

In order to correctly process these charges, there can be a delay of 2–3 months from the date of your return for the charges to be posted to your account. Therefore we ask that you use a card that will not expire in the 2–3 months following your return.

Please note: *Optional tour prices are listed in U.S. dollar estimates determined at the time of publication and are subject to change. Optional tours may vary.*

Anaga Forest tour

(Day 9 \$70 per person)

Journey to the island's northernmost tip for an optional walking tour of the Anaga Forest, a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. Anaga is an enchanting region of ancient laurel forest, Eden-like valleys, and picturesque villages and hamlets that cling to the mountainsides. You'll enjoy a stroll through one of the many mountain paths that crisscross Anaga, keeping an eye out for the rich and diverse variety of flora and fauna found here while taking in the scenic beauty of this unspoiled region. After your visit, you'll return to the ship in time for dinner.

chapter in the island's history as a hub of the transatlantic slave trade. We'll walk through the narrow lanes as we explore the island's rich tapestry, from its colonial architecture to vibrant local culture. Gorée Island's past may be heavy, but its present is a testament to the strength of the human spirit and the enduring power of hope.

Gorée Island

(Day 20 \$150 per person)

This optional tour takes us to the island of Gorée—a UNESCO World Heritage Site. This picturesque island, situated off Dakar's coast, bears witness to centuries of human stories, both harrowing and inspiring. As we set foot on the cobbled streets, we'll be transported back in time to the 15th century, when the Portuguese first arrived, marking the beginning of a dark

PRE-TRIP

Portugal: Lisbon, Coimbra & Cascais

INCLUDED IN YOUR PRICE

- » 6 nights accommodation
- » 13 meals—7 breakfasts, 3 lunches, and 3 dinner
- » 11 small group activities
- » Services of a local O.A.T. Trip Experience Leader
- » Gratuities for local guides, drivers, and luggage porters
- » All transfers

PRE-TRIP EXTENSION ITINERARY

Lisbon, Portugal's city of hills, overlooks the harbor from which Vasco de Gama returned after his great voyages—the castle-topped view that greeted him awaits you as you begin your explorations. Head next to the medieval walled city of Coimbra, the end your journey in seaside Cascais. From here, you'll set off to visit the stunning Royal Palace in Sintra and walk the cobblestone streets of Obidos.

Day 1 Depart U.S.

Depart today on your flight to Lisbon, Portugal.

Day 2 Arrive Lisbon, Portugal

- Destination: Lisbon
- Accommodations: Altis Grand Hotel

Morning/Afternoon: You'll arrive in Lisbon sometime this morning or afternoon, depending on your flight. An O.A.T. representative greets you at the airport and assists with the transfer to your hotel. After settling in, you'll get acquainted with your surroundings during an orientation walk led by your Trip Experience Leader, followed by a Welcome Drink.

Dinner: On your own. You can sample local specialties—from seafood and grilled chicken to hearty stews. Ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Evening: Relax at a nearby café and linger over a glass of *ginginha* or local wine.

Day 3 Explore Lisbon • National Tile Museum

- Destination: Lisbon
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Altis Grand Hotel

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: After breakfast, we'll gather with our Trip Experience Leader and fellow travelers for a Welcome Briefing and drink. Your Trip Experience Leader will lead this briefing outlining expectations for our time together and answering any questions you may have.

Then, we'll depart the hotel by motorcoach to explore the highlights of Lisbon and the surrounding area with a local guide on an included panoramic city tour. Spread out on seven low hills overlooking the Tagus River, the

legendary Portuguese capital has lured traders and settlers for more than two millennia. During our drive, we'll admire some of Lisbon's famous areas, such as the Alfama district, one of Lisbon's oldest and most ethnically diverse neighborhoods.

Our drive will end at Lisbon's National Tile Museum, which we will visit with our Trip Experience Leader. Housed in the Madre de Deus Convent, which was founded in 1509, the museum boasts Portugal's most extensive and historic collection of painted tiles or *azulejos*. As you explore, you'll be treated to Portugal's history of tile—from the 15th century to today.

Afterwards, we'll set off on a walking tour of Lisbon's downtown district, known as Baixa. Located in the heart of the city, Baixa was destroyed and completely rebuilt after the Great Earthquake of 1755. It now features broad squares and avenues flanked by shops, cafés, and elegant Neo-Classical buildings.

Lunch: On your own—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Afternoon: The balance of the afternoon is free for your own discoveries. You may wish to continue exploring Baixa on your own, or you can return to the hotel to freshen up or relax before dinner.

Dinner: Enjoy a Welcome Dinner at a local restaurant this evening.

Evening: The remainder of the evening is free to explore more of the area and perhaps enjoy a nightcap at a nearby café.

Day 4 Explore Belém • Visit Ajuda Royal Palace

- Destination: Lisbon
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Altis Grand Hotel

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Today we'll see more of Lisbon's highlights as we take a panoramic tour of the Belém district. In the late 15th century, the port of Lisbon was the staging point for Portuguese explorations that would usher in the great Age of Discovery—and make Lisbon the richest European capital until the 19th century. During our tour, we'll see historic monuments to this time period, such as the Tower of Belém and the Discoveries Monument.

Afterwards, we'll enjoy a tour of the Ajuda Royal Palace. Built in 1795, this was Portugal's last royal palace—and was the residence of Portugal's royalty for around 250 years. Today, visitors can admire the palace's splendid Neo-classical architecture and magnificently decorated interiors.

Lunch: At a local restaurant featuring local specialties.

Afternoon: The balance of the day is free for you to make your own discoveries in the city of seven hills. Ask your Trip Experience Leader for more information if interested.

Dinner: On your own in Lisbon—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Evening: On your own. You may wish to seek out a local bar with live *fado* music—Portugal's haunting musical style that has been compared to the blues.

Day 5 Ancient Roman ruins of Conimbriga • Coimbra

- Destination: Coimbra
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Vila Gale Coimbra Hotel

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll check out of our hotel this morning and begin our drive to the city of Coimbra. Along the way, we'll stop to marvel at the ancient Roman ruins of Conimbriga. Located in the verdant countryside just outside of Coimbra, these ruins are the largest in Portugal. Not only are they vast, but the ancient city itself is remarkably preserved. Colorful mosaic floors, intricate fountains, and carefully planned streets give visitors an unparalleled look at what life was like here 2,000 years ago.

Lunch: At a local restaurant near Conimbriga.

Afternoon: We'll continue our drive into Coimbra, about 30 minutes. As we drive, we'll get a panoramic look at what is known as the "city of students." Famous for its university—the oldest in Portugal and one of the oldest in Europe—Coimbra was built along the shores of the Mondego River and for a century was also the medieval capital of the country.

We'll arrive at our hotel and check in, after which the rest of the day will be on your own.

Dinner: On your own in Coimbra. Perhaps you'll try *bacalhau*—the dried and salted cod Portugal is famous for.

Evening: Free to spend as you wish.

Day 6 Explore Coimbra

- Destination: Coimbra
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Vila Gale Coimbra Hotel

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: After breakfast, we'll head out to discover more of Coimbra. This medieval city was built into the hillsides, and its whitewashed buildings seem to rise from the river. We'll take a walking tour down its cobblestone streets, admiring its Moorish-influenced architecture, stately cathedral, and—the city's crowning glory—the University of Coimbra, Portugal's oldest and most prestigious university.

Lunch: On your own in Coimbra. Perhaps you'll seek out a *bifana*, a signature Portuguese sandwich comprised of sautéed, marinated pork packed inside a sandwich roll.

Afternoon: The rest of the afternoon is free for you to continue exploring Coimbra independently. You may wish to join our Trip Experience Leader on an elective walk to the Quinta das Lagrimas, or Lover's Fountain—which, as the legend goes, sprouted out of the ground after a woman was beheaded for daring to carry on a relationship with the prince.

Dinner: At a local restaurant.

Evening: On your own—ask your Trip Experience Leader for details.

Day 7 Alcobaça Monastery • Obidos village • Cascais

- Destination: Cascais
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Hotel in Cascais

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Today we'll begin our drive to Cascais with some fascinating stops along the way.

First, we'll visit Alcobaça Monastery. One of the best-preserved examples of Cistercian architecture, the abbey itself was first founded in 1153. Other areas of the complex were added over the centuries, such as the Monastery Church—the first Portuguese Gothic religious building—which was built in 1252.

The Monastery is also famous for its creation of a famous local sweet, known as *cornucópias*. The delicate pastry shell, shaped like a vase or cornucopia, is filled with a sweet, creamy, egg-yolk-based custard.

After our tour here, we'll head to Obidos, medieval walled village that looks like a fairy tale come to life. Topped with a castle, the village historically once belonged to the queens of Portugal, a tradition that began in the 13th century. Our Trip Experience Leader will guide us on a tour here.

Lunch: At a local restaurant.

Afternoon: Enjoy some free time to continue exploring the village on your own. Maybe you will choose to climb its ramparts.

Then, we'll continue our drive to Cascais, where we'll check into our hotel. Once we're settled in, our Trip Experience Leader will take us on a vicinity walk of the surrounding area.

Dinner: On your own.

Evening: Free to spend in Cascais as you wish.

Day 8 Cascais • Sintra • Cabo da Roca

- Destination: Cascais
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Hotel in Cascais

Activity Note: Monserrate Palace may be closed for private events on certain dates; should this occur during your departure, we will visit another site.

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Today we'll join our Trip Experience Leader for a walk through Cascais—a former fishing village, known for its sandy beaches, mosaic sidewalks, and pastel-colored buildings.

Then we'll drive to nearby Sintra. The village is situated within a story-book landscape of lush forests, turreted palaces, and castle ruins. While here, we'll visit Monserrate Palace, a 19th-century villa overlooking the Atlantic that incorporates lavish, Arabic-style architecture with a traditional English garden.

Lunch: At a local restaurant in Sintra.

Afternoon: You'll have about an hour of free time following lunch to explore Sintra. Then we'll head to Cabo da Roca, the westernmost point in continental Europe.

After we spend some time in this scenic location, we'll drive back to our hotel in Cascais where the remainder of the day will be on your own.

Dinner: On your own—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Evening: On your own. Perhaps you'll join your fellow travelers for a nightcap in a local bar.

Day 9 Join main adventure

- Included Meals: Breakfast

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: After checking out of our hotel this morning, we'll drive to the airport where we'll board our flight to Funchal and join our main adventure.

POST-TRIP

The Gulf of Guinea: Ghana, Togo & Benin

INCLUDED IN YOUR PRICE

- » 8 nights accommodation
- » 18 meals—8 breakfasts, 5 lunches, and 5 dinners
- » 11 small group activities
- » Services of a local O.A.T. Trip Experience Leader
- » Gratuities for local guides, drivers, and luggage porters
- » All transfers

POST-TRIP EXTENSION ITINERARY

Set off on a journey through western Africa. Delve into region's rich history at the Great Mosque of Porto-Novo and the Ethnographic Museum in Benin. Discover ancient traditions like Voodoo, which is still practiced in Togo. And explore diverse landscapes, from the Tetteh Quashie Cocoa Farm to a botanical garden abounding in plants and butterflies native to Ghana.

Day 1 Dakar • Fly to Cotonou, Benin

- Destination: Cotonou
- Accommodations: Overnight flight or similar

Evening: Your flight from Dakar, Senegal arrives in Cotonou, Benin late tonight.

Day 2 Cotonou • Visit Lake Village Ganvie

- Destination: Cotonou
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Novotel Cotonou Orisha or similar

Activity Note: The countries we visit on this trip extension are very off the beaten path. While the amenities and services are not at the same level as those in more popular African countries, these unspoiled destinations offer opportunities for true adventure. Be prepared for older infrastructure, a slower pace, and lifestyles that are far different from what you are accustomed to. With an open mind and an

appreciation for the unexpected, you'll make discoveries unlike anything you've experienced previously.

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: After an early arrival, you may spend the morning as you please. Perhaps you'll unpack and settle in, or explore the area around your hotel.

Lunch: On your own.

Afternoon: This afternoon, we'll visit Lake Village Ganvie. Nicknamed "the Venice of Africa," Lake Village Ganvie is home to more than 20,000 people who live in houses built on stilts in the middle of Lake Nokoue. As we'll see, life here revolves around the water: fishing is a local mainstay, and the villagers travel almost exclusively by boat to complete their daily chores.

Afterwards, we'll return to Cotonou.

Dinner: At a local restaurant.

Evening: Enjoy a free evening at your leisure.

Day 3 Cotonou • Explore Porto-Novo

- Destination: Cotonou
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Novotel Cotonou Orisha or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: On our way to Porto-Novo this morning, we'll stop at Benin Amazone, a 98-foot statue honoring the women warriors of Dahomey. We'll also make a brief stop at a graffiti mural that is over 3,000 feet long and recounts Benin's history.

Then, we'll view the outside of the Great Mosque of Porto-Novo. Built at the turn of the 20th century by freed slaves who had returned to their native Benin from Brazil, the mosque features a unique Afro-Brazilian architectural style, resembling a chapel.

Afterwards, we'll return to Cotonou.

Lunch: At a local restaurant.

Afternoon: After returning to our hotel, you have the afternoon free to relax or explore Cotonou at your leisure. You can also choose to join your Trip Experience Leader for an elective visit to an arts and crafts center.

Dinner: At a local restaurant.

Evening: Enjoy a free evening to explore on your own or with your fellow travelers.

Day 4 Overland to Lomé, Togo • Ouidah • Visit Pythons Temple • Foundation Zinsou

- Destination: Lomé
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Hotel 2 Fevrier Lome or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll depart for Togo this morning, where we'll make our first stop in Ouidah, home to the Slave Route where over one million Africans were kidnapped and sent to America for forced labor. We'll visit Python's Temple, a voodoo shrine sacred to the locals of Ouidah. Here, we'll discover the sacred iroko tree, believed to be over 600 years old.

We'll then visit Foundation Zinsou, a private institution that provides contemporary African artists a platform to exhibit their artwork. The mission of the Foundation is to connect with all populations and share the cultural creations of Africa.

Lunch: At the Foundation.

Afternoon: We'll drive across the border into the Togo, a sliver of a nation nestled between Ghana and Benin. Our final destination is the country's capital, Lomé, where we'll check in to our hotel.

Dinner: At a local restaurant.

Evening: The rest of the evening is yours to make your own discoveries, or settle into your room.

Day 5 Explore Lomé • Visit Togoville

- Destination: Lomé
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Hotel 2 Fevrier Lome or similar

Breakfast: In the hotel.

Morning: We'll begin the day with a visit to a local fishing village to learn about daily life. We'll also stop at a local village school to meet with some teachers and students (when school is in session; not available on holidays and weekends.) Then, we'll depart by boat and sail across Lake Togo to Togoville, where we'll learn about Voodoo traditions and how it's still a profound influence on the locals' daily lives. We'll return by boat before lunch.

Lunch: At a local restaurant.

Afternoon: After lunch, we'll return to our hotel, where the rest of the afternoon is free.

Dinner: At a local restaurant.

Evening: You're free to relax or explore the city.

Day 6 Overland to Accra, Ghana

- Destination: Accra
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Movenpick Ambassador Hotel Accra or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Today, we depart for Accra, Ghana's famous seaside capital. Along the way, we'll stop at the Akodessewa Fetish Market, located in Togo's capital, Lomé, it is the largest Voodoo market in the world. As Voodoo is the dominate religion of western Africa, the market serves as a mecca to the locals and is often viewed as a medical facility when traditional treatment is unattainable, or not believed in. The market hosts a surplus of supplies that are used in traditional Voodoo rituals, such as talismans, charms, and even living and dead creatures. In Voodoo, every single being is deemed divine and powerful—whether it is dead or alive.

Then, we'll continue our drive, crossing the border into Ghana.

Lunch: At a local restaurant.

Afternoon: Upon arrival in Accra, we'll check into our hotel. Feel free to settle in or explore the area.

Dinner: On your own—ask your Trip Experience for a local recommendation.

Evening: Enjoy a night in to prepare for tomorrow's activities or ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Day 7 Visit Tetteh Quarshie Cocoa Farm • Explore Aburi Botanical Garden

- Destination: Cotonou
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Movenpick Ambassador Hotel Accra or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: You'll depart for the Tetteh Quarshie Cocoa Farm this morning, where you'll learn more about Ghanaian agriculturalist, Tetteh Quarshie, who was directly responsible for introducing cocoa crops to Ghana. Cocoa crops today constitute one of the major exports of the Ghanaian economy.

Lunch: At a local restaurant.

Afternoon: After lunch, we'll depart for Aburi Botanical Gardens in the Eastern region of Ghana. These breathtaking gardens are situated between the lush Akwapim hills and are abundant in native and imported trees and plants. Keep your eyes peeled for many native bird and butterfly species. After our tour concludes, we'll depart for our hotel.

Dinner: On your own—ask your Trip Experience Leader for local recommendations.

Evening: You're free to make your own discoveries.

Day 8 Explore Accra • Visit Kwame Nkrumah Mausoleum

- Destination: Accra
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Movenpick Ambassador Hotel Accra or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: In the company of a local guide, you'll embark on a city tour of Accra, Ghana's famously frenetic seaside capital. Along the way, you'll visit the Kwame Nkrumah Memorial Park and Mausoleum, located in downtown Accra. The Mausoleum is the final resting place of Ghana's first president and Africanist, Kwame Nkrumah. The museum is home to a vast collection of rare artifacts relating to Ghana's independence and offers tours that give visitors in-depth history of the Sub-Saharan struggle for freedom. The rest of the afternoon is free for you to make your own discoveries.

Lunch: At a local restaurant.

Afternoon: You'll have some free time to explore before we depart for the hotel.

Dinner: On your own.

Evening: Enjoy a free evening to make any last-minute discoveries.

Day 9 Optional Ghana Bead-Making Experience tour • Return to U.S.

- Included Meals: Breakfast
- Accommodations: Movenpick Ambassador Hotel Accra

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning/Afternoon: You'll have the use of day room facilities at our hotel today. You can relax, explore on your own, or choose an optional Ghana bead-making experience. Discover the rich heritage of Ghanaian bead-making at TK Beads, specialists in creating hand-made beads using traditional techniques that have been passed down through generations. You'll get to meet and interact with the staff and workers and learn about the variety of raw materials such as glass, clay, and bones are ground into a fine powder and then baked at the factory. And you'll see how traditional Ghanaian symbols are incorporated into their designs, which instill an element of cultural and spiritual significance into each piece of jewelry.

Return to the hotel early this afternoon. We'll depart for the airport for our flights home tonight.

OPTIONAL TOUR

Ghana Bead-Making Experience

(Day 9 \$115 per person)

Delve into the rich heritage of Ghanaian bead-making at TK Beads, specialists in creating hand-made beads using traditional techniques that have been passed down through generations. You'll get to meet and interact with the staff and workers and learn about the variety of raw materials such as glass,

clay, and bones are ground into a fine powder and then baked at the factory. And you'll see how traditional Ghanaian symbols are incorporated into their designs, which instill an element of cultural and spiritual significance into each piece of jewelry.

YOUR M/V CORINTHIAN SMALL SHIP

Explore aboard our privately owned, 98-passenger small ship

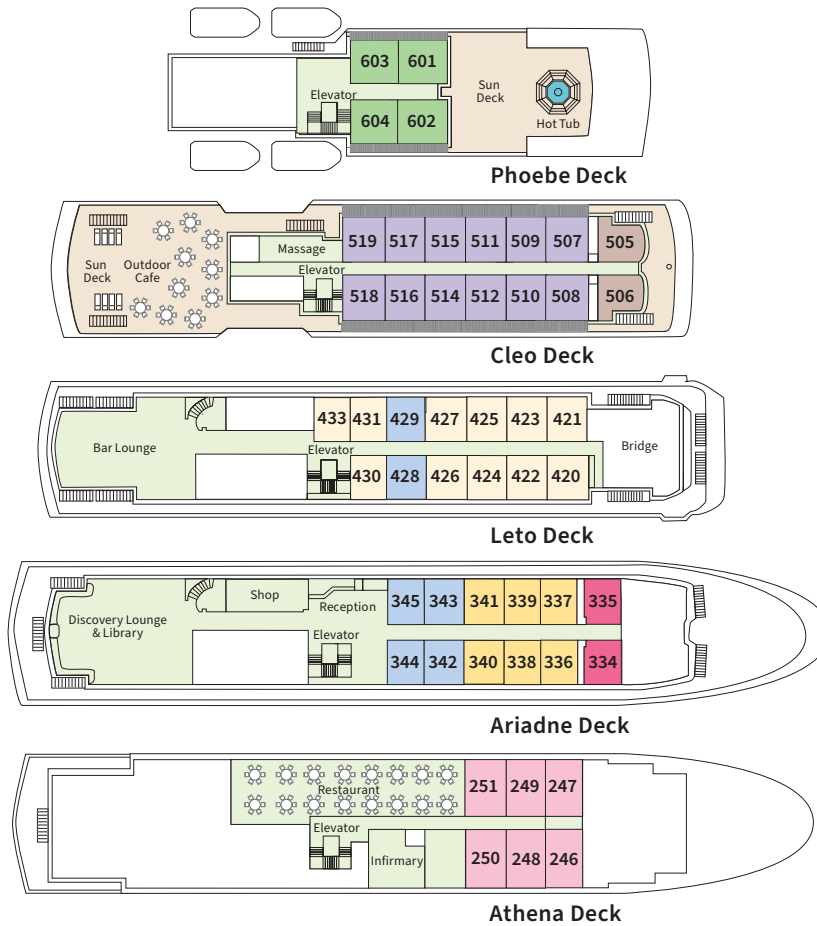
Discover the coastal wonders of the world aboard the M/V *Corinthian*. This ocean cruising vessel—which 95% of travelers rated excellent—was acquired in 2014 and refurbished in 2015 with your tastes in mind. The ship holds four groups of 20–25 travelers (with an average of 22), each with its own local Trip Experience Leader, and charts courses throughout Europe—including the British Isles, Spain, Portugal, and France—and Antarctica.



SHIPBOARD FEATURES

- **Restaurant with single, open seating:** Savor regionally inspired dishes or American favorites during all buffets and table-service meals.
- **Two lounges:** Relax with old friends and new, and participate in onboard discussions and lectures.
- **Complimentary beverages:** Enjoy house beer and house wine—as well as soft drinks—at any time of day while onboard.
- **Complimentary wireless Internet access:** Connect online in cabins and common areas. *Please note: Connectivity may be limited at certain points throughout your cruise.*
- **Outdoor common areas:** Relish coastal views from your seat in the outdoor café, Sun Deck, or hot tub.
- **English-speaking crew:** Enjoy dedicated attention from our international staff throughout your voyage. Plus, all shipboard announcements are made in English for your convenience.
- **Zodiac crafts:** These onboard crafts are available to take you to shore in the most remote ports.
- **Elevator service:** An elevator serves all five passenger decks.

M/V CORINTHIAN



CABIN CATEGORIES	
PHS	Penthouse cabin with private balcony – 305 sq. ft.
VS	Cabin with private balcony – 255-270 sq. ft.
AA	Cabin with forward windows – 250 sq. ft.
A	Cabin with window – 215-225 sq. ft.
B	Cabin with window – 215 sq. ft.
C	Cabin with window – 215-250 sq. ft.
D	Cabin with porthole – 250 sq. ft.
E	Cabin with window (partially obstructed) – 225 sq. ft.
F	Cabin with window (partially obstructed) – 215 sq. ft.
G	Cabin with porthole – 250 sq. ft.

Registry: Malta

Length: 290 ft.

Beam: 50 ft.

Draft: 12 ft.

Cabin Size: 215 sq ft. minimum

Number of Cabins: 50

Passenger Capacity: 98

Entered Service: 1990

Refurbished in: 2015

International crew: 55-65

Passenger Decks: 5

Group Size: 25 travelers, maximum, with 1 Trip Experience Leader

Elevator service to all passenger decks

This ship complies with the latest international and U.S. Coast Guard safety regulations and is outfitted with the most current navigational and communications technology. It has retractable fin stabilizers to help reduce discomfort during rough seas.

CABIN FEATURES

- Each of the ship's 49 cabins is at least 215 sq. ft.
- All outside-facing with portholes, a window (some with partially obstructed views), or a balcony
- Queen-size bed (convertible to two twins)
- Complimentary wireless Internet access, sitting area, closet, flat-screen TV, DVD/CD player, telephone, mini-refrigerator, safe
- Private bath with shower, hair dryer, and toiletries



Cabin on the Ariadne deck

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS & ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Your Passport

- Must be in good condition
- Must be valid for at least 6 months after your scheduled return to the U.S.
- Must have the required number of blank pages (details below)
- The blank pages must be labeled “Visas” at the top. Pages labeled “Amendments and Endorsements” are not acceptable

Need to Renew Your Passport?

Contact the National Passport Information Center (NPIC) at **1-877-487-2778**, or visit the U.S. Department of State’s official website at **www.travel.state.gov** for information on obtaining a new passport or renewing your existing passport. The U.S. Department of State allows for passport renewal by mail or, for applicable citizens, renewal online. We advise you review the process and requirements for online passport renewal on the official website.

You may also contact our recommended visa service company, PVS International, at **1-800-556-9990** for help with your passport.

Recommended Blank Pages

Please confirm that your passport has enough blank pages for this vacation.

- **Main trip only:** If you are taking only the main trip, you will need 4 blank passport pages.
- **Pre-trip extension to Portugal:** No additional blank pages needed beyond the 4 for the main trip.
- **Post-trip extensions to Ghana, Togo, and Benin:** You will need 3 additional blank pages.

Visas Required

We’ll be sending you a detailed Visa Packet with instructions, application forms, and fees about 100 days prior to your departure. All visas information listed is only applicable if you are taking an optional stopover extension to a country with a required visa. In the meantime, we’re providing the information below as a guideline on what to expect. This information is for U.S. citizens only. All visas and fees are subject to change.

- **Europe (Portugal and Spain):** Starting in 2025, U.S. citizens will be required to fill out an online European Travel Information and Authorization System (ETIAS) visa-waiver to enter countries in the European Union. There is no confirmed start date for the ETIAS at the time of printing. The ETIAS will be valid for 3 years.
- **Morocco:** No visa needed for U.S. citizens for stays of less than 90 days.

- **Senegal:** No visa needed for U.S. citizens for stays of less than 90 days.
- **Ghana (post-trip extension): Visa required.** Must be obtained in advance.
- **Togo (post-trip extension): Visa required.** This must be obtained in advance.
- **Benin (post-trip extension): Visa required.** Must be obtained in advance.

Traveling Without a U.S. Passport?

If you are not a U.S. citizen, or if your passport is from any country other than the U.S., it is your responsibility to check with your local consulate, embassy, or a visa services company about visa requirements. We recommend the services of PVS International, a national visa service located in Washington D.C.; they can be reached at **1-800-556-9990** or **www.pvsinternational.org**.

Traveling With a Minor?

Some governments may require certain documentation for minors to enter and depart the country or to obtain a visa (if applicable). For further detail on the required documentation, please contact your local embassy or consulate.

Travel Protection Required:

For new bookings starting 1/1/25, Overseas Adventure Travel requires all travelers purchase travel protection with Medical Evacuation coverage of at least \$200,000 and Medical Expense coverage of at least \$50,000, due to the remote nature of your adventure.

O.A.T. Travel Protection:

If you **purchase your Travel Protection Plan** through O.A.T., no further action will be needed, as the Medical Evacuation coverage and Medical Expense coverage meets these requirements.

Your Own Travel Protection:

If you purchase your own travel protection, we recommend you review the plan to ensure Medical Evacuation coverage of at least \$200,000 and Medical Expense coverage of at least \$50,000 is included. Once you confirm your plan meets the requirements, you will need to email the following information to **TravelCoverage@oattravel.com**:

- Traveler Name(s)
- Reservation Number
- Trip Protection Provider
- Policy Number
- Date of Purchase
- Copy of your Policy Documents

You can also contact our Travel Counselors at **1-800-221-0814** to review this policy. You will be required to provide proof of coverage by 60 days prior to departure at the latest.

Emergency Photocopies of Key Documents

We recommend you carry color photocopies of key documents including the photo page of your passport plus any applicable visas, air itinerary, credit cards (front and back), and an alternative form of ID. Add emergency phone numbers like your credit card company and the number for your travel protection plan. Store copies separate from the originals.

If you plan to email this information to yourself, please keep in mind that email is not always secure; consider using password protection or encryption. Also email is not always available worldwide. As an alternative, you could load these documents onto a flash drive instead, which can do double-duty as a place to backup photos during your trip.

Overseas Taxes & Fees

This tour may have taxes and fees that cannot be included in your airline ticket price because you are required to pay them in person onsite. All taxes are subject to change without notice and can be paid in cash (either U.S. or local currency). If applicable, you will receive a list of these fees with your Final Documents.

RIGORS, VACCINES & GENERAL HEALTH

Is This Adventure Right for You?

Please review the information below prior to departing on this adventure. We reserve the right for our Trip Experience Leaders to modify participation, or in some circumstances send travelers home, if their condition would adversely affect the health, safety, or enjoyment of themselves or of other travelers.

GROUP SIZE

- This adventure has a maximum group size of 25 travelers with a local Trip Experience Leader exclusive to O.A.T.

PACING

- 19 days, with 14 nights aboard the *M/V Corinthian*, one three-night hotel stay in Funchal, and one overnight hotel stay in Dakar

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Walk 4 miles unassisted and participate in 3-4 hours of physical activities each day
- Good agility, balance, and strength are required for boarding Zodiacs or tenders and possible rough seas
- Travelers using mobility aids or with medical conditions that might require immediate attention will not be able to board the *Corinthian*
- We reserve the right for Trip Experience Leaders to restrict participation, or in some circumstances send travelers home, if their limitations impact the group's experience
- You may encounter animals on this trip. We make every effort to keep these encounters safe, however animals may behave unpredictably or dangerously at times. Please use caution when interacting with animals on this trip: Keep a safe distance, stay alert, and respect the animals

TERRAIN & TRANSPORTATION

- Uneven surfaces, including unpaved paths, steep hills, stairs, and cobblestones
- Gangway incline can be steep when docked at a pier
- Expect coaches and hotels with lower standards than what we are used to in the U.S. and Europe
- Travel by 98-passenger small ship, 33- to 45-seat coach, Zodiac, and local tenders
- You must be cleared by a country's local port authorities before disembarking
- Weather conditions and tides may require adjustments to your itinerary

CLIMATE

- Daytime temperatures in November–February often reach above 80°

CULTURAL INSIGHT

- We may see people living in poverty, which could be distressing for some travelers

Steps to Take Before Your Trip

Before you leave on this adventure, we recommend the following:

- Check with the CDC for their recommendations for the countries you'll be visiting. You can contact them online at www.cdc.gov/travel or by phone at **1-800-232-4636**.
- Have a medical checkup with your doctor at least 6 weeks before your trip.
- Pick up any necessary medications, both prescription and over-the-counter.
- Have a dental and/or eye checkup. (Recommended, but less urgent)

Vaccines Required

Yellow Fever

All travelers on the post-trip extension will need to bring EITHER proof of a yellow fever vaccination OR an official vaccination waiver in order to meet Ghana's and Togo's entry requirements.

While the CDC offers a wide range of vaccination and medication suggestions, there is one in particular that we'd like to draw your attention to—the yellow fever vaccine. For some countries, the yellow fever vaccination is a legal entry requirement, like a passport. For other countries, it is a health recommendation to protect you from getting sick. On this adventure, this vaccination is a legal entry requirement for Ghana and Togo—but fortunately, authorities will accept a doctor's waiver in place of getting the actual shot.

You should discuss the vaccine with your doctor to see if he or she recommends it and if your health allows for it. (He or she can offer a suggestion tailored to your personal medical history.) If you and your doctor decide the vaccination is right for you, then he or she will issue you a Yellow Fever Card, also called an International Certificate of Vaccination. This is your proof of vaccination; you should bring it with you on the trip.

If you and your doctor decide the vaccination isn't right for you, then have your doctor issue an official vaccination waiver. An official waiver is a letter that meets these requirements:

- It must be on business letterhead paper.
- It must be signed by a doctor.
- It must be stamped using the same stamp that the doctor uses on a Yellow Fever Card.

- It must give the medical reason why you cannot get the vaccine, say how high the risk is, and cite an authority. (For example: Mr. Smith cannot receive the yellow fever vaccine due to a high risk of side effects as outlined in the Center for Disease Control’s guidelines for people over the age of 65.)

Whether you receive a Yellow Fever Card or an official vaccination waiver, keep it on your person (in your backpack or purse) so it is easy to find when you arrive or when you cross the border. You may not be asked to show anything at all when you cross the border—it all depends on the local official. But if you are asked, you must be able to produce your Yellow Fever Card OR your waiver.

Medication Suggestions

- An antibiotic medication for gastrointestinal illness
- Prescription pain medication in the unlikely event of an injury in a remote location

Traveling with Medications

- **Pack medications in your carry-on bag** to avoid loss and to have them handy.
- **Keep medicines in their original, labeled containers** for a quicker security screen at the airport and a better experience if you get stopped by customs while overseas.
- **Bring copies of your prescriptions**, written using the generic drug name rather than a brand name to be prepared for any unforeseen loss of your medications.

We recommend checking with the State Department for medication restrictions by country: **travel.state.gov** (Go to “Find International Travel Information”, select “Country Information”, then enter the country into the search bar; if you don’t see any medications specifically mentioned under the “Health” section, then you can presume major U.S. brands should be OK).

Staying Healthy on Your Trip

Jet Lag Tips

- Start your trip well-rested.
- Begin a gradual transition to your new time zone before you leave or switch to your destination time zone when you get on the plane.
- Attempt to sleep and eat according to the new schedule.
- Avoid heavy eating and drinking caffeine or alcoholic beverages right before—and during—your flight.
- Drink plenty of water and/or fruit juice while flying
- Stretch your legs, neck, and back periodically while seated on the plane.
- After arrival, avoid the temptation to nap.

- Don't push yourself to see a lot on your first day.
- Try to stay awake your first day until after dinner.

Allergies

If you have any serious allergies or dietary restrictions, we advise you to notify us at least 30 days prior to your departure. Please call our Travel Counselors at **1-800-221-0814**, and we will communicate them to our regional office. Every effort will be made to accommodate you.

Water

- Tap water in Portugal and the Canary Islands is safe to drink, but is processed differently than in the U.S. so it can still upset your stomach or feel "heavy". Therefore, we suggest drinking bottle water instead. Tap water aboard ship is safe to drink.
- Tap water is not safe to drink in Senegal.
- Tap water is not safe to drink in Ghana, Togo, or Benin (post extension).
- If you prefer bottled water is usually for sale in hotels, food shops, and restaurants.
- Another alternative is to bring a reusable water bottle from home, which you can fill up on the ship or in your hotel before you set out for the day.

Food

- We've carefully chosen the restaurants for your group meals. Your Trip Experience Leader can suggest restaurants for the meal you take on your own.

MONEY MATTERS: LOCAL CURRENCY & TIPPING GUIDELINES

Top Three Tips

- **Carry a mix of different types of payments**, such as local currency, an ATM card, and a credit card.
- **Traveler's checks are not recommended.** They can be extremely difficult to exchange and the commission fee for cashing them is quite high. We do not recommend using traveler's checks.
- **You will not be able to pay with U.S. dollars on this trip;** you will need to use the local currency instead. Most banks will only exchange money for their customers, so we recommend that you change some money before your trip. (Once on the trip you can use ATMs and/or exchange offices.)

Local Currency

For current exchange rates, please refer to an online converter tool like www.xe.com/currencyconverter, your bank, or the financial section of your newspaper.

Euro Countries: European Euro (€)

Morocco: Moroccan Dirham (DH)

Senegal: CFA Franc (F.CFA)

Ghana: Ghanaian Cedi (GH¢)

Togo: West African Franc (CFA)

Benin: West African Franc (CFA)

How to Exchange Money

If you want to exchange money before your trip, you can usually do so through your bank or at an exchange office. Your departure airport in the U.S., a travel agent, or an AAA office are also possible outlets. Or you can wait and change money on the trip instead—but it might be helpful to arrive with some local currency in case you run into a bank holiday or an “out of order” ATM.

On your trip, the easiest way to obtain local currency is to withdraw funds from a local ATM. The ATM will give you local money and your bank at home will convert that into U.S. dollars, which depending on the bank might add conversion fees, so please check with your bank for applicable values.

You may be able to exchange cash at some hotels and money exchange offices, however they do not typically offer good exchange rates and can be difficult to find. To exchange cash, you'll usually need your passport and bills in good condition (not worn, torn, or dirty). New bills (post 2014) are best.

Please note that many banks will only exchange money for their own customers. Never exchange money on the street. All exchange methods involve fees, which may be built into the conversion rate; ask beforehand.

ATMs

When using the ATM, keep in mind that it may only accept cards from local banks, and may not allow cash advances on credit cards; you might need to try more than one ATM or more than one card.

Many banks charge a fee of \$1–\$10 each time you use a foreign ATM. Others may charge you a percentage of the amount you withdraw. We recommend that you check with your bank before you depart.

Lastly, don't forget to memorize the actual digits of your card's PIN number (many keypads at foreign ATMs do not include letters on their keys—they only display numbers.)

In most countries, ATMs are widely available in major cities. If you are in a rural location, it will likely be harder to find an ATM.

Senegal: ATMs may be found in large cities such as Dakar, but are otherwise rare and can be difficult to find. ATMs are not always reliable. You may consider bringing enough cash to cover your time in Senegal in case there are ATMs are unavailable or out of service.

Ghana: ATMs are widely available in larger cities such as Accra for major international networks, but you may be charged a withdrawal fee.

Credit & Debit Cards

While traveling, most countries and major cities will accept credit cards. Even if you don't plan on using a credit card during your trip, we still suggest that you bring one or two as a backup, especially if you are planning a large purchase (artwork, jewelry). We also suggest that you bring more than one brand of card (i.e. Visa, MasterCard, American Express) if possible, because not every shop will take every card. For example, although Discover and American Express cards are accepted in some countries outside the U.S., they are not widely adopted, so other brands will work at a much larger range of stores, restaurants, etc.

If you are visiting a country that does not commonly accept credit cards, they will be listed below.

Portugal: Visa and MasterCard credit cards are fairly common in Portugal, but may not be accepted for small purchases or in the markets. American Express is not commonly accepted.

Spain: Visa and MasterCard credit cards are fairly common in Spain, but may not be accepted for small purchases or in the markets. American Express is not commonly accepted.

Morocco: Credit cards are accepted at many locations in tourist cities and for major purchases, but may incur a surcharge (usually about 5%). Most locations, especially smaller “Mom & Pop” shops or restaurants, are cash only.

Senegal: Senegal is mainly a cash economy so credit card use is rare. You should plan to bring enough cash for your time in Senegal instead of relying on credit/debit cards.

Ghana: Credit cards are widely accepted in Ghana. Visa Cards have larger acceptance, followed by Mastercard and American Express.

Chip Cards

Many countries have adopted credit cards that have an embedded computer chip. These cards are inserted into the reader instead of swiped. The card owner then authorizes the purchase using a PIN instead of signing.

Though this technology is common in the U.S., occasionally there are machines in other countries that can't read U.S. cards or the machine can read the card, but asks for a PIN. This doesn't happen often, and is nothing to worry about. You can usually resolve the situation by asking the cashier to let you sign. (If you don't speak the language, just mime signing on your hand.) If you are not able to sign for a purchase, such as at an automated ticket booth, you can use another form of payment, such as a debit card that has a PIN.

Notify Card Providers of Upcoming Travel

Many credit card companies and banks have fraud alert departments that will freeze your card if they see suspicious charges—such as charges or withdrawals from another country. To avoid an accidental security block, it is a good idea to notify your credit card company and/or bank you will be using your cards abroad. You can do this by calling their customer service number a week or two before your departure. Some banks or credit card companies will also let you do this online.

You should also double-check what phone number you could call if you have a problem with a card while you are abroad. Don't assume you can use the 1-800 number printed on the back of your card—most 1 800 numbers don't work outside of the U.S.!

On Board Ship: Two Separate Bills Will be Issued

- **Shipboard account:** This bill is for any on board purchases (drinks, souvenirs, etc.). You can pay this bill by cash or credit/debit card only. For cash, we accept U.S. dollars or Euros (on itineraries in Europe). For credit/debit cards, we accept MasterCard and Visa. Other forms of payment, such as checks, Discover, or American Express are not accepted.
- **Optional tour account:** This bill is for any optional tours taken during the trip and is calculated in U.S. dollars. You can pay for this bill by credit/debit card only; other forms of payments such as cash and checks are not accepted. For more information on optional tours—including which cards we accept for payment—see the “Preparing for Your Trip” chapter.

Please note: Payments made by credit card may take up to three months to process. We ask that you use a credit card that will not expire until three months after your trip ends. Because our headquarters are in Boston, the charges may appear to be from Boston or might be labeled as “OPT Boston” (depending on your credit card company).

Exchange Services

Due to international banking laws, we are not able to exchange money onboard the ship. If you need to obtain local currency, please see the “How to Exchange Money” section for helpful tips and information.

Tipping Guidelines

Of course, whether you tip, and how much, is always at your own discretion. But for those of you who have asked for tipping suggestions, we offer these guidelines:

- **O.A.T. Trip Experience Leader:** It is customary to express a personal “thank you” to your Trip Experience Leader at the end of your trip. As a guideline, many travelers give \$10–\$14 USD (or equivalent in local currency) per person for each day their Trip Experience Leader is with them. *Please note that these tips can only be in cash. If you are taking any of the optional extensions, your Trip Experience Leader during the extension(s) may not be the same as the one on your main trip.*
- **Shipboard:** We recommend a flat tip of \$16–\$18 per traveler, per day. You’ll give this tip once—at the end of your cruise—and it will be pooled among the entire crew. **Policy Update:** *Due to international banking laws, we are no longer able to process crew tips on a credit card; crew tips can only be in the form of cash.*
- **Housekeeping staff at hotels:** \$1–2 per room, per night
- **Waiters:** When dining as a group, your tip is included—there is no need for you to leave an additional tip. When dining on your own, check your bill for a service charge. If a service charge is not included in your bill, we suggest you leave about 10% of the check.
- **Taxi drivers:** The practice of tipping taxi drivers varies from country to country. In some cities it is expected and in others it is discretionary. Your Trip Experience Leader can advise you what the practice is in each area that you visit.

Please Note: Your tour price includes gratuities on the main trip and optional extensions for local guides, drivers, and luggage porters that may assist you during the scheduled activities on your adventure. All tips are quoted in U.S. dollars; tips can be converted and paid in local currency or in U.S. dollars. Please do not use personal or traveler’s checks for tips.

AIR, OPTIONAL TOURS & STAYING IN TOUCH

Land Only Travelers & Personalized Air

Quick Definitions

- **Land Only:** You will be booking your own international flights. Airport transfers are not included.
- **Air-Inclusive:** You booked international air with us. Airport transfers are included as long as you didn't customize your trip's dates (see next bullet).
- **Arrive Early or Stopover (select adventures only):** If you chose one of these Personalization options and purchased air through O.A.T, accommodations and airport transfers are included. However, if you chose one of our Personalization options, but did not purchase air through O.A.T., accommodations are included, but airport transfers are not. If you chose one of our Personalization options, and purchase air through O.A.T. but not the accommodations, the airport transfers are not included. We have included transfer options below.
- **Personalization on Your Own:** If you have not purchased air through O.A.T. and decided to arrive early, stay longer, or stop in a connecting city on your own, you are responsible for airport transfers and accommodations. For your convenience, a preliminary list of your included hotels is available on your My Planner at www.oattravel.com/myplanner under "My Reservations" to help you with selecting a hotel for your additional time.

Air Inclusive Travelers

If you have purchased international air with us, there are some points that may be helpful for you to know.

- **U.S. Departure:** If you are among a group of ten or more travelers who depart the U.S. from your international gateway city, it is our goal to have an O.A.T. Representative assist you at the U.S. airport with the check-in of your flight. Unless there are extenuating circumstances beyond our control, the Representative will be at the check-in counter three hours before your departure time. If you are flying domestically before your international flight, the representative will be stationed at the check-in counter for your departing international flight, not at the domestic arrival gate.
- **U.S. Return:** If you are among a group of ten or more travelers who return to the same U.S. gateway city, an O.A.T. Representative will meet you as you exit Customs and help you find taxis, buses, hotel accommodations, or connecting flights. Again, it is our goal to have our Representative waiting to assist your group. In rare instances, unforeseen circumstances may prevent this service.

- **Flying with a Travel Companion:** If you're traveling with a companion from a different household, and both of you are beginning and ending your trip at the same airport on the same dates, let us know you'd like to travel together and we'll make every effort to arrange this (please note, however, that this is not always possible). If you request any changes to your flights, please be sure that both you and your companion tell us that you still want to fly together.
- **Selecting Your Seats:** If your airline allows pre-assigned seats, you will be able to select and view them directly from the airline's website after booking. Some airlines will not allow seat confirmation until your reservation is ticketed 45-30 days prior to departure, and/or they may charge a nominal fee. You may locate your itinerary on an airline's website utilizing the Record Locator Number found on the Air Itinerary in your My Planner.

Airport Transfers Can Be Purchased

For eligible flights, airport transfers may be purchased separately as an optional add-on, subject to availability. To be eligible, your flight(s) must meet the following requirements:

- You must fly into or fly home from the same airport as O.A.T. travelers who purchased included airfare.
- Your flight(s) must arrive/depart on the same day that the group arrives or departs.
- If you are arriving early, you must have arranged the hotels through our Arrive Early personalization option

Airport transfers can be purchased up to 45 days prior to your departure; they are not available for purchase onsite. To learn more, or purchase airport transfers, please call our Travel Counselors at **1-800-221-0814**.

If you don't meet the requirements above, you'll need to make your own transfer arrangements. We suggest the Rome to Rio website as a handy resource: www.rome2rio.com

Optional Tours

Optional tours are additional add-on tours that allow you to personalize your adventure by tailoring it to your tastes and needs. And if you decide not to join an optional tour? Then you'll have free time to relax or explore on your own—it's about options, not obligations.

What You Need to Know

- All optional tours are subject to change and availability.
- Optional tours that are reserved with your Trip Experience Leader can be paid for using credit/debit cards only. We accept MasterCard, Visa, and Discover credit cards; we can also take MasterCard or Visa debit cards as long as the card allows you to sign for purchases. (You won't be able to enter a PIN.)

- To ensure that you are charged in U.S. dollars, your payment will be processed by our U.S. headquarters in Boston. This process can take up to three months, so we ask that you only use a card that will still be valid three months after your trip is over. The charge may appear on your credit card statement as being from Boston, MA or may be labeled as “OPT Boston”.
- Your Trip Experience Leader will give you details on the optional tours while you’re on the trip. But if you’d like to look over descriptions of them earlier, you can do so at any time by referring to your Day-to-Day Itinerary (available online by signing into My Planner at www.oattravel.com/myplanner).

Communicating with Home from Abroad

To ensure you are available during your trip to friends and relatives at home, you will receive two copies of your hotel list, including phone numbers, with your Final Documents. One copy is for you to bring, and one to leave behind with friends or relatives in case they need to contact you during the trip.

Cell Phones

If you want to use your cell phone on the trip, check with your phone provider to see if your phone and service will work outside of the U.S. It may turn out to be cheaper to rent an international phone or buy a SIM card onsite. If you want to use a local SIM, just make certain your phone can accept one.

Calling Apps

Another option is to use a smartphone app like Skype, FaceTime, or WhatsApp. We recommend you use WhatsApp to communicate with home while abroad and with your Trip Experience Leader while onsite. You will need a Wi-Fi connection if you do not have international coverage. Other calling options include smartphone apps such as Skype or FaceTime. You will need a Wi-Fi connection for these apps and the calls may count towards your phone plan’s data allowance. Many smartphones—and some tablets or laptops—come with one of these apps pre-installed or you can download them for free from the appropriate apps store.

Calling Cards and 1-800 Numbers

When calling the U.S. from a foreign country, a prepaid calling card can be useful because it circumvents unexpected charges from the hotel. Calling cards purchased locally are typically the best (less expensive, more likely to work with the local phones, etc.).

One reminder: Do not call U.S. 1-800 numbers outside the continental United States. This can result in costly long distance fees, since 1-800 numbers do not work outside the country.

Internet

WiFi is readily available in some restaurants, cafes, and hotels. Some businesses will offer free WiFi, and some will charge for the service; charges vary. Cafes and chain restaurants are good places to look for free WiFi, although it is expected that you'll buy a drink while you're in the café. Many hotels will also have a computer in the lobby or in the business center that travelers can use; there may or may not be a fee.

How to Call Overseas

When calling overseas from the U.S., dial 011 for international exchange, then the country code (indicated by a plus sign: +), and then the number. Note that foreign phone numbers may not have the same number of digits as U.S. numbers; even within a country the number of digits can vary depending on the city and if the phone is a land line or cell phone.

Portugal: +351

Senegal: +221

Spain: +34

Ghana: +233

Morocco: +212

Togo: +228

PACKING: WHAT TO BRING & LUGGAGE LIMITS

Luggage Limits

MAIN TRIP LIMITS	
Pieces per person	One checked bag and one carry-on bag per person.
Weight restrictions	Varies by international airline. The current industry standard is 50 lbs for checked luggage and 15 lbs for carry-ons .
Size Restrictions	Standard airline size: checked luggage should not exceed 62 linear inches (length+ width + depth) and carry-on should not exceed 45 linear inches.
Luggage Type	A suitcase with wheels.

TRIP EXTENSION(S) LIMITS
Same as the main trip.

REMARKS/SUGGESTIONS
<p>One suitcase and one carry-on bag per person: Due to the space limitations on our coaches, you'll be limited to one suitcase and one carry-on bag per person. This is to ensure that we have room for everyone's luggage. We ask that you abide by this limit to avoid inconveniencing your fellow travelers and prevent additional luggage or portage fees (which would be at your own cost). Most airlines now charge to check more than one suitcase per person for flights to Europe and other international flights.</p> <p>Luggage rules: Luggage rules and limits are set by governmental and airline policy. Enforcement of the rules may include spot checks or may be inconsistent. However one thing is the same across the board: If you are found to have oversized or overweight luggage, you will be subject to additional fees, to be assessed by—and paid to—the airline in question.</p>

Don't Forget:

- **These luggage limits may change.** If the airline(s) notify us of any changes, we will include an update in your Final Documents booklet.
- It's a good idea to reconfirm baggage restrictions and fees directly with the airline a week or so prior to departure. For your convenience, we maintain a list of the toll-free numbers for the most common airlines on our website in the FAQ section.

- **Baggage fees are not included in your trip price;** they are payable directly to the airlines.

Your Luggage

- **Checked Luggage:** One suitcase per person. Look for one with heavy nylon fabric, wrap-around handles, built-in wheels, and a heavy duty lockable zipper. Our staff in Iberia do not recommend duffel bags as they slow down the loading/unloading/delivery of luggage.
- **Carry-on Bag:** You are allowed one carry-on bag per person. We suggest a tote or small backpack that can be used as both a carry-on bag for your flight and to carry your daily necessities—water bottle, camera, etc—during your daily activities.
- **Locks:** For flights that originate in the U.S., you can either use a TSA-approved lock or leave your luggage unlocked. Outside of the U.S. we strongly recommend locking your luggage as a theft-prevention measure.

Clothing Suggestions: Functional Tips

As you will experience a range of temperatures and weather conditions, our list suggests several layers of clothing. You'll want good-quality rain gear and a warm jacket for evenings. In fall and winter, you'll need a warm coat, hat, gloves, and a scarf. If you like to hand-wash your clothes, bring socks and underwear, and even shirts and pants, made of silk, synthetics, or a blend that will dry out overnight. You can buy clothing designed especially for travel. Look for clothes that offer warmth and breathability.

- **Footwear:** You'll be on your feet a lot during the trip, and walking over some rough and slippery surfaces. The soles of your shoes should offer good traction.

Style Hints & Dress Codes

- **Dress on our trip is functional and casual.** Generally, Portugal and Spain are informal countries. Even in the fanciest hotels and restaurants men don't need a jacket and tie—though you won't feel out of place wearing them.
- **Shorts are fine for touring except in religious sites,** where men and women are sometimes expected to have legs and arms covered.

Suggested Packing Lists

We have included suggestions from Trip Experience Leaders and former travelers to help you pack. These packing lists are only jumping-off points—they offer recommendations based on experience, but not requirements. We recommend using www.weather.com and consulting the "Climate" chapter of this handbook.

And don't forget a reusable water bottle—you'll need it to take advantage of any refills we offer as we are working to eliminate single-use plastic bottles on all of our trips.

Recommended Clothing

- Shirts: A mixture of short and long-sleeved shirts in a breathable fabric, like cotton or cotton-blend. Polo shirts are more versatile than T-shirts.
- Trousers and/or jeans: Comfortable and loose fitting is best. Avoid tight fits.
- Walking shorts: Cut long for modesty. See the “Style Hints” section on the previous page for more details.
- Optional: Travel skirt.
- Shoes and socks: We recommend you wear sturdy walking shoes or supportive sports shoes for our daytime shore excursions.
- Light rain jacket/windbreaker with hood
- Wide-brim sun hat or visor for sun protection
- Light sweater, sweatshirt, or jacket (air conditioning can be cold in museums, motor coaches, etc).
- Underwear and sleepwear
- Swimsuit

Seasonal Clothing Recommendations

For late spring or summer departures, add these items to your list:

- Light cotton garment, which are more comfortable than synthetic fabrics.
- A light windbreaker or sweater for layering

For fall and winter departures, add these items to your list:

- A light coat and sweaters or sweatshirts to layer.

Essential Items

- Daily essentials: toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, hairbrush or comb, shaving items, deodorant, etc. Our hotels will provide the basics like soap and shampoo, but if you are sensitive to fragrances or new products, you may wish to bring your preferred brands. Most hotels do not provide a washcloth, so you may wish to pack one.
- Spare eyeglasses/contact lenses; sunglasses
- Sunscreen, SPF 15 or stronger

- Insect repellent
- Light folding umbrella
- Pocket-size tissues
- Moist towelettes and/or anti-bacterial “water-free” hand cleanser
- Electrical transformer & plug adapters
- Camera gear with extra batteries or battery charger

Medicines & First Aid Gear

- Your own prescription medicines
- Travel first aid kit: Band-Aids, headache and pain relief, laxatives and anti-diarrhea tablets, something for upset stomach. Maybe a cold remedy, moleskin foot pads, antibiotic cream, or allergy medication.
- An antibiotic medication for gastrointestinal illness
- Optional: A strong prescription pain medication for rare emergency purposes. (Applies more to the extensions than the main trip.)

Home-Hosted Visits

Many of our adventures feature a visit with a local family, often as part of the *A Day in the Life* experience. It is customary, though not necessary, to return your hosts’ generosity with a small gift. If you do bring a gift, we recommend that you bring something the whole family can enjoy, or something that represents your region, state, or hometown. Get creative and keep it small—peach jelly from Georgia, maple sugar candy from New England, orange blossom soap from California; something that can be used or used up is best. When choosing a gift, be certain to consider the local culture as well. For example, we do not recommend alcohol in Muslim countries because it is forbidden in Islam, and your hosts may be religious. Not all O.A.T. adventures include a Home-Hosted Visit; please check your final itinerary before you depart.

Electricity Abroad

When traveling overseas, the voltage is usually different and the plugs might not be the same shape.

Voltage

Electricity in Spain, Portugal, Morocco, Senegal, Ghana, Togo, and Benin is 220–240 volts. In the U.S. it is 110 volts. Most of the things a traveler will want to plug in—battery chargers, smartphones, tablets or computers—can run off both 110 and 220–240. But you should check the

item or the owner's guide first to confirm this before you plug it in. If you have something that needs 110 volts—like a shaver or a hairdryer—you can bring a transformer to change the current. (But transformers tend to burn out, so it might be better to leave whatever it is at home.)

Plugs

The shape of plugs will vary from country to country, and sometimes even within a country depending on when that building was built. To plug something from the U.S. into a local socket you'll need an adapter that fits between the plug and the socket. Even though you'll only need two types of adapters for this trip, it may be easier to purchase an all-in-one, universal adapter/converter combo. Versatile and lightweight, these can usually be found at your local electronics goods or hardware stores. Sometimes you can buy them at large retailers too, like Target or Walmart. If you forget to bring an adapter, you might also find them for sale at the airport when you arrive at your destination.

Different plug shapes are named by letters of the alphabet. Standard U.S. plugs are Type A and Type B. Here is the list of plugs for the countries on this trip:

Portugal: C and/or F

Spain: C and/or F

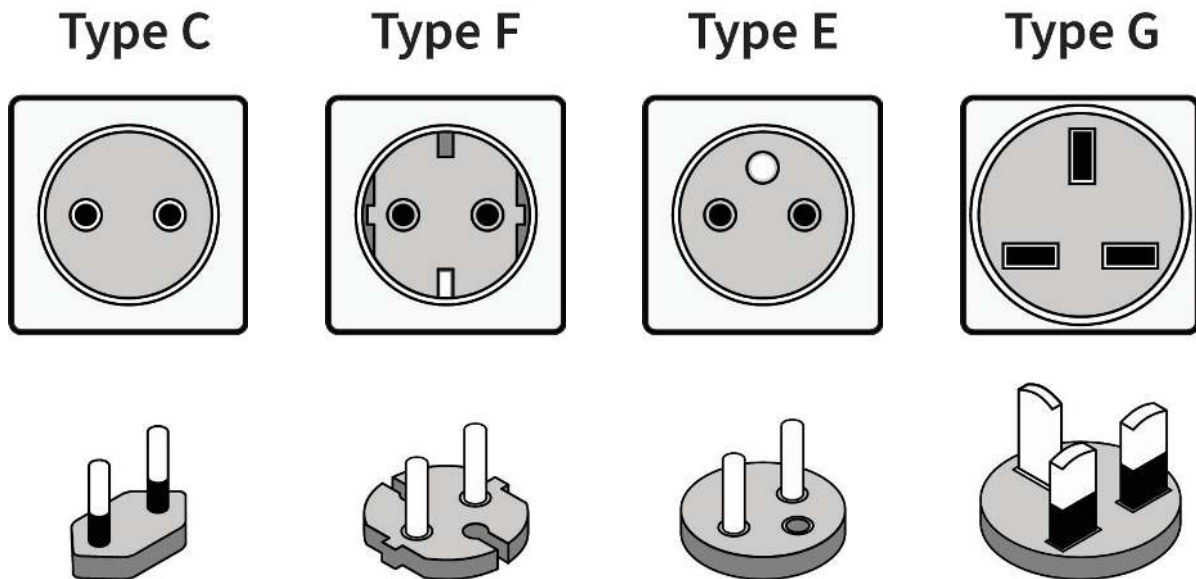
Morocco: C or E

Senegal: C, D, and E

Ghana: D and G

Togo: C

Benin: C



Availability

Barring the occasional and unpredictable power outage, electricity is as readily available on this adventure as it is in the U.S.

CLIMATE & AVERAGE TEMPERATURES

Lisbon, Portugal: Lisbon is one of the warmest European capitals. Spring and summer months are usually sunny with maximum temperatures close to or above 86 degrees and lows between 59 and 68 degrees. Autumn and winter are typically rainy and windy with some sunny days; the temperature rarely falls below 41 degrees, usually staying at an average of 50. On average, there are 100 days with rain per year. Lisbon's climate is strongly influenced by the Gulf Stream.

Madeira: This Atlantic island has a year-round subtropical climate. For North Americans, its weather most closely parallels that of coastal California, though Madeira is more humid. The island rarely gets extremely hot, thanks to the cool mountain air that wafts down from the interior peaks. Most of the rainfall occurs in autumn and winter. Showers can be heavy, but usually are not prolonged. Whatever time of year you go, be aware that it is always much cooler up in the mountains, and that the north coast may be windier than the south.

Tenerife, Spain: Tenerife is the largest of the Canary Islands and, due to its year-round weather, is known as the Island of Eternal Spring. Tenerife has a subtropical oceanic climate, with very mild, very sunny summers. Most of the rain ends up on the northeastern end of the island because of its altitude, allowing the area to get lush and green. With the weather on Tenerife being gorgeous and sunny all the time (the coldest month of January sitting at a comfortable low 60s), the main thing to look out for are the days of *calima*, when hot air masses from Africa sweep over Tenerife for three days. These abnormally hot and dusty days are rare but most likely to happen in the spring or summer.

Senegal: Senegal has a tropical climate with a distinct dry season from about mid-October to mid-May and a rainy season from late-May to early October. The country is divided into two climate zones with the south experiencing heavier rainfall and a semi-desert climate in the north. The dry season brings northeastern winds and the coolest temperatures (December-January). Inland areas bring much warmer temperatures, averaging about 90-93 degrees even during the coolest time of year and reaching over 100 degrees during the warmer months. Dakar and cities along the coast enjoy cooler and more temperate weather, averaging around 77 degrees, dropping to around 58-59 degrees at night but reaching highs around 95 degrees during the day.

Accra, Ghana: In Accra, it is hot all year round. The wet season is mostly cloudy while the dry season has partly cloudy skies. Throughout the year, temperature typically varies from 74°F to 91°F and is rarely below 73°F or above 93°F.

NOTE: If you are taking one of our optional stopovers before or after your OAT adventure, please be aware the climate and temperatures might be different from what you experienced during your tour. To prepare for weather differences and pack appropriate clothing, we recommend the following world weather sites:

- www.intellicast.com
- www.weather.com
- www.wunderground.com

Climate Averages & Online Forecast

The following charts reflect the **average** climate as opposed to exact weather conditions. This means they serve only as general indicators of what can reasonably be expected. An extreme heat wave or cold snap could fall outside these ranges. As your departure approaches, we encourage you to use www.weather.com for a more accurate forecast of the locations you visit.

Average Daily High/Low Temperatures (°F), Humidity & Monthly Rainfall

MONTH	LISBON, PORTUGAL			FUNCHAL (MADEIRA), PORTUGAL		
	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Average # of Days with Rainfall
JAN	58 to 47	85 to 72	3.8	67 to 56	76 to 70	12
FEB	61 to 49	84 to 68	3.6	67 to 55	77 to 69	10
MAR	65 to 51	83 to 61	2.0	68 to 56	75 to 67	9
APR	67 to 53	83 to 61	2.5	68 to 57	74 to 66	8
MAY	71 to 56	82 to 57	2.2	70 to 59	75 to 66	6
JUN	77 to 61	83 to 54	0.7	73 to 62	76 to 66	3
JUL	82 to 64	80 to 48	0.2	76 to 65	74 to 64	1
AUG	82 to 65	80 to 48	0.3	78 to 67	74 to 65	2
SEP	80 to 63	82 to 51	1.1	79 to 67	76 to 67	6
OCT	72 to 58	84 to 62	3.1	76 to 64	76 to 68	9
NOV	64 to 53	86 to 71	4.2	72 to 61	76 to 69	10
DEC	59 to 49	86 to 75	4.8	69 to 58	76 to 69	13

MONTH	TENERIFE, SPAIN			DAKAR, SENEGAL		
	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (avg)	Average # Days of Rainfall	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)
JAN	70 to 60	64	8	75 to 65	78 to 54	0.4
FEB	70 to 59	65	7	75 to 64	87 to 58	0.4
MAR	72 to 62	62	7	75 to 65	89 to 62	0.4
APR	73 to 62	61	6	75 to 66	91 to 68	0.4
MAY	75 to 64	61	3	77 to 69	89 to 69	0.4
JUN	79 to 67	61	1	82 to 74	87 to 70	0.8
JUL	84 to 70	58	0.2	84 to 77	85 to 70	2.0
AUG	84 to 71	60	1	85 to 78	87 to 73	5.9
SEP	83 to 71	64	3	86 to 78	89 to 74	5.9
OCT	79 to 69	66	6	86 to 77	87 to 67	0.8
NOV	75 to 65	65	9	83 to 73	80 to 58	0.4
DEC	72 to 62	66	9	79 to 69	74 to 53	0.4

MONTH	ACCRA, GHANA			LOME, TOGO		
	Temp. High- Low	% Relative Humidity	Monthly Rainfall (inches)	Temp. High- Low	% Relative Humidity	Average # of Rainy Days
JAN	90 to 76	87	3.7	90 to 75	92	1
FEB	91 to 78	91	6.1	91 to 77	94	2
MAR	91 to 78	91	8.7	91 to 78	94	4
APR	90 to 78	92	10.1	91 to 78	94	6
MAY	89 to 77	93	13.4	89 to 76	96	10
JUN	85 to 75	95	28.1	86 to 75	97	13
JUL	83 to 74	93	14.6	84 to 74	95	10
AUG	83 to 73	93	4.7	83 to 73	95	10
SEP	85 to 74	94	8.9	85 to 74	95	10
OCT	87 to 75	94	9.1	88 to 75	96	8
NOV	89 to 77	95	5.4	90 to 96	97	2
DEC	90 to 96	92	5.3	90 to 75	95	1

ABOARD YOUR SHIP: CABIN FEATURES, DINING & SERVICES ON BOARD

M/V Corinthian & M/V Clio

Cabin Amenities

Your cabin amenities include a private bathroom with shower, hairdryer, TV, in room heating, internal telephones and a mini-refrigerator. Each cabin is appointed with a sitting area, plus the decks and dining rooms are spacious and attractively decorated, providing welcoming locations for relaxing with your traveling companions.

Cabin Assignments

You will receive confirmation of your deck and/or cabin category upfront in writing; it will be on your invoice and online in My Planner at www.oattravel.com/myplanner. However, your cabin number may not be assigned until you arrive onboard the ship. (This is normal procedure for many small ships.) If there's no cabin number on your invoice or online, you can presume it will be assigned later and communicated to you when you board.

Dining

All meals are taken in the onboard restaurant, which acts as the ship's dining room. Meals will be a mix of regional specialties and familiar American standards, and will feature a variety of entrée options including vegetarian. Complimentary beer, wine and soft drinks are served with lunch and dinner. A selection of fine wines is also available for purchase, starting at approximately \$20-30 per bottle (prices vary according to vintage). Travelers may also bring a bottle of their own favorite wine to dinner to enjoy at their table. Should you care to avail yourself of this service, there will be a corkage fee of approximately \$10 per bottle, charged to your cabin account.

If you require a special diet, please request this in advance, you may do so by contacting one of our Travel Counselors. Dining times will vary according to the scheduled daily activities. In keeping with regional custom, dinner may be served at a later hour (around 7:00 pm) than Americans may be accustomed to.

Electricity

Cabins are equipped with 110-volt outlets that are designed to fit American plugs. In your bathroom you will find a dual 110/220-volt outlet, for use with electric shavers. While your bathroom does come equipped with a hairdryer, please do not use any other appliances that heat up, such as hair irons or curlers—they tend to short out.

Getting Ashore

Getting from ship to shore during an ocean-going voyage is not the same experience as on a river cruise—it requires more balance and agility, plus there are more formalities.

- **Balance and agility are needed:** You'll either walk down a gangway—which can be steep, wet, and slippery—or be shuttled to land in a small boat (a process known as “tendering”). We'll use the gangway most of the time, but tenders will be used when the ship cannot dock closely enough for the gangway to reach the shore. Tenders can differ in size, and some of them maybe open with no covering. From time to time we will use the ship's own fleet of Zodiacs—which are small but sturdy open-air boats holding 8-10 people each—as tenders. To get into one of the Zodiacs, you'll need to go down a steep staircase, and then crew members will assist you as you step from the *M/V Corinthian* or *M/V Clio* into the Zodiac.
- **Clothing note:** Since tenders in general (and the Zodiacs in particular) are small open-air boats, they are more susceptible to being splashed by water. You might want to bring a rain jacket or waterproof cover (like a poncho) to protect your clothing while transferring from ship to shore.
- **Expect formalities on arrival in port:** When the *M/V Corinthian* or *M/V Clio* arrives in a new port, she'll need to be cleared by the local port authorities before you can leave the ship. In some cases, the wait will be as short as 30 minutes, but other times it may take up to 2 hours. Your crew will do all they can to make the wait as short as possible and to minimize the inconvenience to you. (For example, you will be asked to leave your passport with the front desk when you first embark on the ship. That way, it is on hand if the port authorities ask to see it.) However, the procedure can be complex and may take a while to complete. Typically the authorities work directly with the crew, but they do retain the right to speak with you as well.

Headsets

On European cruises, complimentary headsets (often called “whisper receivers”) will be provided on most included and optional tours, so that you can hear better over ambient noise. If you use a hearing aid or have a strong preference for a particular type of headphones, we highly encourage you to bring your own headphones/ear buds with you. The plug size is usually the same as that used by smartphones, computer jacks, etc. Headsets will also be available during the pre- and post-trip extensions in Europe, but not on the transfer day to/from the main trip. On cruises to the Middle East, South America, or Antarctica whispers may not be available or may only be available in certain locations—your Trip Experience Leader will let you know onsite.

Internet Access and Email

Limited wireless Internet service (WiFi) is available for free onboard. If you want to use it, you'll need to bring your own device—a laptop, tablet, smartphone, etc.—because the ship does not rent or loan these devices. Instructions on how to connect will be available at Reception. Please keep in mind that our WiFi access onboard is subject to the challenges of travel: ship location, signal availability, and usage volume onboard will affect connectivity and speed. You should expect that there will be times when the Internet is either slow or not available, and that these disruptions can be brief or longer lasting.

Laundry Services

There is laundry service available on board, but no dry cleaning. Prices are per piece of clothing and will be provided to you on board.

Medical Services

There is always a doctor onboard, as well as all of the basic First Aid supplies. All physician's fees will be payable directly to the doctor. All specific medicines are the responsibility of each traveler.

Recreational Facilities

Our ship features a library, a lounge with a bar, a dining room, and a sun deck. The bar is open from approximately 11 am to 11 pm, and features both complimentary drinks (soft drinks, house beer, house wine, and non-alcoholic cocktails/beer) and drinks for purchase (spirits, alcoholic cocktails, bottled beers, and a selection of wines).

Bicycles

We're pleased to offer complimentary bicycle rentals onboard your ship for use during free time, including all of the necessary safety gear, such as a helmet, brightly-colored safety vest, and a lock. Because there is a limited supply of bicycles available, they will be offered on a first-come first-served basis. For more information or if you are interested in using one of the bicycles, please speak to the Front Desk staff or Hotel Manager onboard your ship.

Shipboard Payments

Payment for shipboard expenses can be made by cash or credit/debit card only. For cash, we accept U.S. dollars or Euros (on itineraries in Europe). For credit/debit cards, we accept MasterCard and Visa. Other forms of payment, such as checks, Discover, or American Express are not accepted.

Ship-to-Shore Communications

The ship has satellite telephone connections which allows you to call anywhere in accordance with the current local tariffs. You can purchase phone cards at the reception desk for \$10, which will give you 15-30 minutes' worth call time to the U.S. (depending on which state you are calling).

Smoking Policy

Smoking is prohibited on board, with the exception of a designated outdoor deck area reserved for smokers.

Wheelchairs

The ship is not built to accommodate wheelchairs.

Lost & Found

Any lost or forgotten items found on board the ship will be held for 90 days from disembarkation. After 90 days, all unclaimed items will be discarded or donated.

Ship Specifications

M/V Corinthian

- **History:** Built in 1990; purchased in 2014
- **Size:** 290x50 ft
- **Capacity:** 98 passengers, 56 crew members
- **Layout:** 49 cabins, 5 decks; Elevator-yes

M/V Clio

- **History:** Built in 1998; purchased in 2015
- **Size:** 328x46 ft
- **Capacity:** 89 passengers, 60 crew members
- **Layout:** 45 cabins, 5 decks; Elevator-yes

ABOUT YOUR DESTINATIONS: CULTURE, ETIQUETTE & MORE

O.A.T. Trip Experience Leaders: A World of Difference

During your adventure, you'll be accompanied by one of our local, Trip Experience Leaders. All are fluent in English and possess the skills, certification, and experience necessary to ensure an enriching adventure. As locals of the regions you'll explore with them, our Trip Experience Leaders provide the kind of firsthand knowledge and insight that make local history, culture, and wildlife come alive. Coupled with their unbridled enthusiasm, caring personalities, and ability to bring diverse groups of travelers together, our Trip Experience Leaders ensure that your experience with O.A.T. is one you'll remember for a lifetime.

Spanish Culture

In 1983, the artist Joan Miró created an image for the Spanish Tourist Board that is still used today—a bold red orb encircled by a black shadow, with a vivid yellow penumbra, a star, and the stylized text “España.” Beneath this, the slogan read “Everything under the sun.” It is one of the few bits of advertising that truly captures its subject, for Spain boasts a culture that is strikingly bold, colorful, and lit up by diversity. Phoenicians, Romans, Moors, Jews, Arabs, Goths and many other people have left their imprint here, giving each region a unique cultural identity. In some cases, that identity is very distinct from the mainstream culture, most notably in Galicia, Catalonia, and the Basque Country, which are autonomous communities with their own languages and traditions.

Beyond the regionalism, there is a unifying national identity that is bound up with a deep love of country, a sense of personal honor, and a shared value around sociability that Spaniards are very proud of. That pride is sometimes mistaken by outsiders as haughtiness. But once you get acquainted with a Spaniard, you will usually find that they are informal, candid, and unafraid to show their emotions. Spaniards love to converse and will stick around long after a meal, chatting for hours. This period has a name: *la sobremesa*, which means “over the table.” So don't rush off after your lunch...enjoy a coffee or a digestif, and enjoy the good company.

One reason the *sobremesa* exists has to do with the organization of the typical Spanish day. Spain has some of the longest working hours in Europe—from 9am to 8pm. But there is also a two- to three-hour break in the afternoon, the *siesta*. Once upon a time the *siesta* was a practical way for workers to avoid the midday heat, and recharge their batteries with a little nap. Nowadays, most people do not nap, especially if they work too far from home to commute back for a snooze. Instead, they may linger longer at the table after lunch with colleagues or friends.

Many shops close during the *siesta*, but this is offset by the fact that they remain open late at night. Spain in general is a late-night culture. Most people do not eat dinner until 9pm at the earliest, and it's not unusual to see entire families, children included, socializing in the cafes and plazas until midnight or later. Recently, there has been debate as to whether Spain's traditional working hours make sense. On the other hand, in an age when stress and isolation are serious threats to one's mental and physical health, a forced break to slow down, relax and enjoy some human connection may not be a bad thing.

Among the things Spaniards are proud of is their country's artistic heritage, and here again, we are talking about diversity. You will see it in the striking architecture—from Roman ruins to Mudéjar palaces to Gothic cathedrals and the modernist masterpieces of Antoni Gaudí. Besides contemporary pop music, you are likely to hear Spanish classical guitar, and the flamenco music that arose from the *cante jondo* (deep song) of Andalusia's gypsies. Spanish writer Miguel de Cervantes gave us the first modern novel in 1605 with *Don Quixote*, and others following in his footsteps include the avant-garde Federico Garcia Lorca, Miguel Delibes (a multi-time Nobel nominee), and the contemporary Javier Marías.

As for visual arts, beyond the Golden Age giants like Goya, El Greco, and Velázquez, Spain's modernist pantheon includes Pablo Picasso, Juan Gris, Salvador Dalí, Miquel Barceló, and of course, Joan Miró, who was spot-on about that “everything under the sun” thing.

Religion and Religious Observance

Catholicism became the official religion of Spain in 589 AD, and since then its influence has pervaded every aspect of Spanish society. But the nature of that influence has shifted over the past century. Though 68.5% of Spaniards identify as Catholic, only 14% of them say they attend mass on a weekly basis. Some of this goes back to the Franco era, when the church's connections with the regime caused many Spanish Catholics to be skeptical of the clergy.

Mistrust of the church hierarchy notwithstanding, there is still a deep embrace of the religious traditions that are now embedded in Spanish culture. There is a church in every neighborhood, and Christian symbols are visible throughout the country. Each region or city has a patron saint who is celebrated on his or her dedicated holiday (*santo*) with processions and fiestas. Easter in Andalucía is marked by locals carrying elaborate floats and statues of Jesus and Mary through their towns. The truly devout may make pilgrimages (*romerías*) to religious shrines, the most famous of which is the *Camino de Santiago de Compostela* (the St. James' Way) in the north of Spain. Even those who are not observant may attend mass on holidays, have religious weddings, or baptize their children.

The second largest religious group in Spain are Muslims, who comprise about 4% of the population. Many are first- or second-generation immigrants from Morocco and other African nations, and they are more likely to be active worshippers than their Catholic counterparts.

Visiting Churches

Many churches run special services that you are welcome to attend. Otherwise, you are welcome to visit outside of services. Most churches have a dress code, but it is loosely enforced. Out of respect, you should try to cover your shoulders and wear long pants or shorts or skirts that reach the knee. If you'll be traveling during warm weather and want to go sleeveless or wear a tank top, then we suggest that you throw a light sweater or cover-up into your daypack. A pashmina-type shawl is ideal for covering shoulders or low-cut blouses, or even wrapping around the waist as a sarong.

Language in Spain

The official language that is spoken throughout Spain is Spanish—specifically, the Castilian form of Spanish. Spanish is a Romance language (along with Catalan, French, Italian, Romanian and Portuguese.) But there are many Spanish dialects and even separate regional languages that are widely spoken such as Catalan (spoken in Catalonia), Gallego (spoken in Galicia), Euskara (spoken in the Basque Country), and Aranese (spoken in parts of Catalonia near the Pyrenees.) What language you speak has social and political overtones, and many Spaniards choose to use local dialects at home or in daily business.

English is the most common foreign language, spoken by 27.7% of Spaniards. It is more widely used by young people, and those numbers are destined to rise given that nearly 90% of school-aged children are now learning English in school. In tourist areas, many signs are in English as well as Spanish.

Useful Phrases

Since many people speak English you should have little trouble communicating. And if you know a little Spanish, your hosts will be very appreciative if you make the effort to speak it. Spain has some colorful slang and idiomatic expressions that you may hear. Here are a few:

- *Vale* is a word you will hear a lot. It just means, “okay,” as in “*Vale, vamos!*” (Okay, let’s go.) Sometimes, it is just tacked onto the beginning or end of a sentence, just as we might do in English.
- *No pasa nada* means “no worries” or “it’s nothing,” and is used as a reply when someone thanks you.
- *Que tal* is the informal way of greeting someone, meaning “what’s up?” or “how are you going?”
- You might have learned that *simpático* means “nice” in Spanish, and it does. But a more informal word to use is *majo* or *maja*. Besides meaning “nice” or “pleasant,” it can also mean “pretty.” So you could say, “*Nuestra líder de la gira es muy maja.*” (Our Trip Leader is very nice.)

Portuguese Culture

Portuguese culture is shot through with the influences of the Celtic, Lusitanian, Phoenician, Germanic, Visigoth, Viking, Sephardic Jewish, and Moorish people who settled here. Set at Europe’s westernmost point, Portugal developed its own easygoing ways, and you’ll notice that the pace of life here is more relaxed than in many other parts of Europe. It is one of the most charming aspects of traveling here.

Most visitors find the Portuguese people to be gracious, courteous and helpful—if a little reserved. Part of that stems from the value they place on modesty and humility. They are careful not to boast, be too loud, or cause offense. The Portuguese are arguably more conservative than their neighbors. They tend to uphold and revere old traditions, and religious and family ties are very strong here. As you come to appreciate those things, you’ll also begin to feel the Portuguese people’s real warmth.

António de Oliveira Salazar, Portugal's onetime dictator from 1926 to 1968, once described the nation's culture in terms of the "Three Fs:" *fado* (the searingly sad folk song), *Fátima* (the Catholic shrine where a miraculous vision is said to have occurred), and *futebol* (soccer). He was being facetious, but there is no denying that the Portuguese people hold these things very dear.

Take *fado*, for instance. This uniquely Portuguese style of folk music is on the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage list. Translating to "destiny" or "fate," *fado* is mournful, and yet, passionate. The songs are often about homesickness, the sea, lost love and longing—things that would be familiar to many a Portuguese seafarer, of which there are many. It is the musical expression of an important concept called *saudade*, a word connoting longing, melancholy, and nostalgia for something lost. But *saudade* is also bittersweet, tinged with beautiful memories. The Portuguese writer Manuel de Melo called it "a pleasure you suffer, an ailment you enjoy."

Some very devout people do make pilgrimages (*romarias*) to religious sites like Fátima, but overall, strict religious observance is on the decline in this predominantly Catholic culture. But that is a matter of church attendance and involvement with the organized church. Religion is still interwoven with the larger culture. Most towns are physically centered around a church, which is the nucleus of social events such as the annual village festa (festival). Most people have strong attachments to their hometowns and tend to remain there, or visit often. Grandparents are often involved in helping to care for children when the parents work, and especially in smaller towns (where homes tend to be larger), they often live with their children as part of the extended family.

As for *futebol* (soccer), Portugal's obsession with the sport borders on the religious, and some of the greatest players in the world (like Luís Figo, Eusébio, and Cristiano Ronaldo) hailed from Portugal, and are national heroes. When a big match is on, the whole country seems to stop to cheer their favorite of the so-called "Three Greatest" teams: F.C. Porto, Sporting C.P., and S.L. Benfica. Head to a local tavern, watch the game with the locals, and you are sure to get swept up in the excitement.

If sports are not your thing, you will surely find many other cultural diversions...Portugal has experienced a renaissance, with many talented young designers, artists, musicians, architects, chefs, and entrepreneurs flocking to cities like Lisbon, Porto, and Guimarães—all of which have been named European Capitals of Culture since the advent of this century.

Religion in Portugal

The majority of Portuguese people (81%) identify as Catholics. However, apart from major celebrations, church attendance is quite low. Even so, Catholicism is deeply entwined with the national and cultural identity. Even those who are not devout still have religious weddings, baptisms, and funerals, and festivals honoring regional saints are still popular. It was only after the 1974 "carnation revolution" that the church and state were officially separated. Dress code in churches is similar to Spain.

Language in Portugal

Portuguese is the official language of Portugal. It is a Romance language (along with Catalan, French, Italian, and Romanian), and is closely related to the Galician language spoken in northwest Spain. About 27% of the people also speak English, and that number is growing.

Useful Phrases

Portuguese people will appreciate the effort (even a fractured one) if you try to learn a few words in their language. Please do not try to speak to locals in Spanish—the Portuguese are sensitive to comparisons with their neighbor and are also very proud of their own language. Since enough people speak English, you should have little trouble getting by. Here are some colorful slang expressions that you may hear:

- *Tchau* is pronounced similar to the Italian word *ciao*, and is used as an informal way to say “goodbye”
- *Okay*, though an English word, is frequently used by Portuguese people as a way to say “it’s fine”.
- *Fixe* means “cool,” but also “nice” and “good.” It can be used in a variety of contexts, such as *Ele é um tipo fixe* (He’s a cool guy) or *a viagem foi muito fixe* (the trip was really nice.)

West African Culture

The culture of West Africa is as diverse as its climate, with each country being an amalgamation of local tribes and customs. Due to West Africa being a primary location of the slave trade, the United States has been influenced heavily by the folklore, music, and traditions the enslaved West Africans brought over with them. One example being the roots and rhythm of what is now known as “jazz”.

Music, history, and traditions are principal elements of West African culture, with *griots*, poet-musicians who tell the stories of their society through music and dance, serving as one of the most highly respected positions in a village. *Griots* are the history-keepers and the story-tellers - essentially living libraries who know every battle, every birth, every death. A good *griot* can spend days speaking, and never once repeat themselves.

A common proverb in West Africa states ‘every time an old man dies, it is as if a library has burned down’.

Religion & Ramadan Festival

Islam is the predominant religion in West Africa, so an understanding of the religion will assist your discoveries. Practicing Muslims are expected to pray five times daily: dawn, noon, afternoon, sunset, and evening. The exact time is listed in the local newspaper each day. The call to prayer, called the *ezan*, is sung or broadcast from minaret towers to remind the faithful that it is time to pray. Friday is the Muslim Sabbath day, so some businesses will be closed or have limited hours.

When visiting a mosque, it is polite to be modestly dressed (no bare shoulders, no short skirts or shorts). You will be asked to remove your shoes before entering. In most mosques, women visitors are not required to cover their hair, but in others you may be asked to do so. Typically, a mosque that requires special dress for female visitors will have pieces to lend or rent.

The biggest religious holiday is Ramadan, a month-long celebration that is meant to teach the values of restraint and charity. To participate, Muslims fast from dawn to dusk. The fast is strict and includes no eating, drinking alcohol, cigarette-smoking, or gum-chewing during daylight hours. But as the sun starts to set, everyone rushes home so they can celebrate iftar—the joyous breaking of the fast. Suddenly the evening comes alive with music, eating, and shopping. The festivities often continue well into the night. The mosques and some streets are decorated with lanterns, special meals are prepared, and nighttime social events and festivals are planned.

If you'll be visiting West Africa during Ramadan, what does this mean for you? Visitors are not required to fast, but out of respect you shouldn't eat, drink, or smoke openly. (It is OK to eat indoors, but you wouldn't sit outside with food.) Expect that some restaurants will be closed and others may not serve alcohol, but your Trip Experience Leader will be on hand to advise you of places to eat. Also, it is important to keep in mind that many of the people you meet will be participating in the fast, so they might not be their usual selves. It helps to have a bit of patience.

Ramadan follows a lunar calendar, so its dates change significantly from year to year, but is usually between the beginning of March and the end of June.

This adventure offers an off the beaten path experience in West Africa. Expect coaches and hotels with lower standards than what we are used to in the U.S. and Europe. A sense of adventure and a willingness to embrace cultural differences is essential.

Getting Around in Portugal

Taxi: Portuguese taxis are a convenient but expensive method of transportation for long rides. If you are just going across town, prices are more reasonable. Officially metered taxis are ivory colored or black with green tops.

Trains: Portugal's railway system is not extensive, but it does operate between major cities. On all train fares, passengers 65 and older will be given half-rate fares upon presentation of passport.

Remember to purchase your ticket prior to boarding the train. Once on board, you may be asked to show your ticket. If you do not have one, you will be charged a hefty fine! Tickets are not sold on the train.

Casino Estoril

One of the most famous casinos in Europe is in Estoril, about a thirty-minute taxi ride from Lisbon (cab fare costing about twenty euros). But before you set off, be sure to bring your passport with you, as it is required for entrance.

Hotel Courtesy in Spain

Like in many other European nations, manners are more formal in Spain than the U.S. Hotel staff will likely address you as “señor” or “señora” and may be caught off guard if you ask a question without greeting them with a quick “hello” or “good day” first. Local staff (and other visiting Europeans) will generally make an effort to be quiet in hallways and common rooms, which are normally used for reading, relaxing, or quiet conversation. For this reason, eating and drinking in any common rooms other than the bar or restaurant is frowned on. If you have any laundry to dry, please keep it inside your room (and not on the balcony).

Getting Around in Spain

Taxi: Taxis are widely available in the area.

Bus: Generally less expensive than both taxi and train travel, bus travel in Spain has increased in recent years.

Trains: Spain has an extensive railway network linking all major towns and cities, and rail travel in Spain is generally comfortable, reliable and often cheaper than many other European countries. Trains are modern and many are high-speed.

Taking Photographs

The etiquette of photographing people in most countries is about the same as it would be on the streets of your hometown. You need permission to take a close-up, but not for a crowd scene. Be especially polite if you want to photograph children or older women. If you want to shoot a great portrait, show interest in your subject and try to have a bit of social interaction first. Then use sign language to inquire if a picture is OK.

Please do not take photographs of military personnel, military compounds, or other official institutions/personnel (such as police). This may result in the confiscation of your camera.

In museums or at archaeological sites, there may be restrictions on using your flash. Please obey any signs or directions by staff; the no-flash rule protects the fragile artifacts and artwork from damage by repeated exposure to light. Occasionally, there may also be a small fee levied by the museum or site for the privilege of taking photos.

Safety & Security

As you travel, exercise the same caution and awareness that you would in a large American city. Don't be overly nervous or suspicious, but keep your eyes open. If you are venturing out after dark, go with one or two other people.

Carry a one-day supply of cash, and your passport, in a travel pouch. Don't leave valuables unattended in your hotel room. Most hotels will offer use of a hotel safe at the front desk or an electronic in-room safe (for which you can set your own personal number). Please utilize this.

Pickpockets may create a sudden distraction. In any sort of puzzling street situation, try to keep one hand on your wallet or money belt. If an encounter with a local turns out to be long and complicated and involves money or your valuables, be very careful.

Portuguese Cuisine

Start with rich farms and Europe's oldest vineyards, add in the bounties of the Atlantic and Mediterranean, season with some Moorish spice, and that is a good beginning for Portugal's unique cuisine. Then, you can ramp it up with a variety of novel ingredients that Portuguese explorers brought home during the 15th-century: African vanilla and cinnamon...potatoes from South America...*piri piri* chilies from Brazil (used in a popular chicken dish)...and citrus from the Orient. Here are a few things Portuguese chefs do with all that variety:

- **Caldo verde:** A classic soup of kale, potatoes, onions, and garlic simmered with olive oil in a clay pot. It is often served with cornbread and sometimes made with ham or sausage.
- **Feijoada à transmontana:** A bean stew with cabbage and sausages. It is often served confit-style in a dish called *rojões*, which features white wine and cumin.
- **Francesinha:** A hefty sandwich of thickly sliced bread stuffed with bacon or pork belly, sliced roasted pork, sausage, beefsteak, fried egg, and cheese.
- **Aletria:** A sweet noodle pudding made with *vermicelli* (angel hair) pasta, milk, sugar, egg yolks, cinnamon, and lemon or orange zest.
- **Cataplana:** Fish and cod cooked with red and green peppers, tomatoes, garlic, wine, and paprika.
- **Pastel de Nata:** A egg custard pastry, iconic to Portugal. Traditionally dusted with a topping of cinnamon.
- **Bacalhau à Brás:** A dish of salted shredded cod, mixed with thin fried potatoes, onions, and egg.

Spanish Cuisine

The 21st century's culinary firmament is lit by a galaxy of superstar chefs from Spain. Among them are the legendary Ferran Adrià (whose former restaurant, El Bulli, launched the "molecular gastronomy" trend), Carme Ruscalleda (the only female chef to be awarded five Michelin stars), octogenarian Juan Mari Arzak (the father of the "New Basque" cuisine), and Jose Andrés, (credited with bringing small plate dining to America). Even if you do not dine in one of their restaurants, they have influenced Spanish chefs in even the humblest establishments, where you might find traditional classics like these:

- **Gambas al ajillo:** Shrimp cooked with Garlic and Chilies
- **Gazpacho:** A chilled soup that hails from Andalusia

- **Jamón Iberico:** A Spanish ham that is dry-cured and hung on the rafters of local bars and restaurants
- **Txangurro:** A baked spider crab stuffed with onions, tomatoes, leeks, brandy, and parsley, topped with breadcrumbs.
- **Pastel Vasco:** A slice of vanilla custard cream with a crunchy crust.

Moroccan Cuisine

Moroccan cooking blends Berber, Arabic, African, Spanish, and French traditions to create a culinary canon that is at once complex and delicate. Sweet and sour dishes were introduced by the Arabs, who borrowed them from Persia. Many breads were introduced by sub-Saharan African cultures. And there is a strong tradition of preserving and pickling fruits and vegetables, a contribution of Morocco's Jewish communities. Some dishes you might find while exploring Morocco include:

- **B'ssara:** A rich soup of dried broad beans swirled with olive oil, sprinkled with cumin, and enjoyed with warm bread.
- **Briouats:** A vegetarian option, *briouats* are crunchy, triangular pockets of *warqa* (phyllo dough) filled with meat, cheese, or vegetables. (There are also sweet varieties.)
- **Bstilla:** A sweet dinner consisting of a flaky casserole of phyllo pastry layered with pigeon or chicken; and flavored with almonds scented with orange flower water, saffron, and cinnamon and dusted with confectioners' sugar.
- **Kefta:** A dish of spiced beef or lamb meatballs simmered with tomatoes and poached eggs.
- **Chermoula:** A popular street food, *chermoula* is a sauce stuffed into grilled sardines and vegetables. The sauce contains a mix of spices, olive oil, fresh coriander, and lemon juice.
- **Babbouche:** A soup of snails in the shell swimming in a garlicky broth.
- **Kaab el ghazal:** Or Gazelle's ankles, a dessert of thin, sugary crescents filled with almonds and orange blossom water.
- **Roze bil heleeb:** A dessert of creamy rice custard topped with shredded coconut and almonds or pistachios, flavored with cinnamon and orange blossom.

Senegalese Cuisine

Much like the culture of Western Africa, the cuisine of Senegal is an amalgamation of the many tribes and cultures that have called the land home. While it was influenced by the invading France, North Africa, and Portugal, Senegalese cuisine at its roots is heavily Wolof, an ethnic group found in Northern Senegal. Common staples of the cuisine include fish (due to the nearby shore), peanuts, couscous, sweet potatoes, lentils, and black-eyed peas. Due to the large Muslim population, it is uncommon to see pork on the menu. When in Senegal, try some of the popular dishes:

- **Chebu jen:** The national dish of Senegal, where fish, rice, and tomato sauce are cooked in one pot. This dish is usually also cooked with onions, carrots, cabbage, hot pepper, peanut oil, lime, and cassava. It can also be cooked with chicken (*chebu ginaar*) or meat (*chebu yap*).

Ghanaian Cuisine

With an abundance of tropical foods such as cassava, plantains, bean, peppers, and tomatoes, many of these ingredients are used in Ghanaian cuisine. Some dishes include:

- **Jollof Rice:** A pot dish of rice cooked in a tomato stew. Typically paired with salad or meat such as chicken or goat.
- **Fufu:** A mixture of cassava, plantain, or yams that is pounded into a sticky paste and served with a mild soup.
- **Kelewele:** A side dish of fried plantains seasoned with spices. It can be served on its own or paired with a stew.
- **Waakye:** Rice and beans, usually black-eyed peas or cow beans, that are cooked together with sorghum leaves. It can be served with a stew or fish.

Togolese Cuisine

Major foods in Togolese Cuisine include nuts, rice, cassava, plantains, and beans. Fish is a common source of proteins as well as chicken and beef. Some traditional dishes include:

- **Ayimolou:** Rice and beans cooked together with spices and tomato sauce added to the top. It is generally shared on one big plate.
- **Gboma Desi:** Spinach that is cooked in a tomato stew. It can be served with rice as well as chicken, beef, or fish.
- **Groundnut Soup:** Made from groundnuts that are ground into a paste-like peanut butter and cooked with uziza seeds (similar to black pepper) and bitter leaf (similar to spinach).
- **Akpan:** A fermented maize yogurt dessert made from combining fermented corn kernels with condensed milk that is refrigerated or cooled in an ice bowl.

Benin Cuisine

Common staple foods in Benin cuisine include rice, beans, yams, and corn. Some traditional dishes include:

- **Kuli-Kuli:** The national dish of Benin. Prepared with ground smashed peanuts that are wrapped in biscuits and deep fried in oil.
- **Aloko:** A fried plantain cooked with spices. It can be eaten on its own or alongside peanuts and other dishes.

- **Yovo doko:** A popular street food and dessert. It is a sweet fritter made from flour, water, yeast, and sugar that is deep fried into a golden crust.
- **Dahomey Fish Stew:** A dish consisting of fillets that are rolled into flour and then fried. It is served typically with rice.

Shopping: What to Buy, Customs, Shipping & More

There may be scheduled visits to local shops during your adventure. There is no requirement to make a purchase during these stops, and any purchase made is a direct transaction with the shop in question, subject to the vendor's terms of purchase. O.A.T. is not responsible for purchases you make on your trip or for the shipment of your purchases.

Returns

If you discover an issue with an item, you should contact the vendor directly and expect that any resolution will take longer than it would in the U.S. We recommend that you keep a copy of all your receipts, invoices, or contracts, along with the shop's contact information. Keep in mind, local practice may vary from U.S. standards, so don't assume that you have a certain number of days after the purchase to speak up or that you are guaranteed a refund.

Crafts & Souvenirs

Portugal

Among the recommended buys in Portugal are Atlantis crystal, Vista Alegre porcelain, pottery, tiles, and gold and silver-filigree jewelry. Other local handicrafts include lace, woodwork, cork products, ceramics, embroidered goods, hand-loomed carpets, hand-knit sweaters, crocheted shawls, brass, copper and pewter ware, and baskets.

Europe Tax-Free Shopping: Many stores in Portuguese cities have adopted the "Europe Tax-Free Shopping" (ETS) system, which allows foreign shoppers to easily recover the Value Added Tax (IVA)—which can be anywhere from 6%-23% depending on the item. Stores that participate in the ETS system will clearly display an ETS sign at the entrance. If you make a purchase, ask the shopkeeper for a tax-free form. When you depart Europe, you show the airport customs official your purchases and tax-free forms. You will then receive a cash refund or a credit to your credit card, approximately four weeks following your return to the U.S., for the total amount of your tax-free allowance.

Spain

Leather goods, from supple suede gloves and elegant calf handbags to wineskins that require careful curing (botas), are excellent purchases. Other good buys are shoes, from classical calf pumps to provincial cloth espadrilles; porcelain by Lladro and pottery by regional craftsmen; and wool rugs made by tapestry makers or simple cotton-rag throws.

Siesta: Throughout Spain, most stores and offices close between 1:30 pm and 5 pm. Then they reopen until 7:30 pm (many close even later). Restaurants generally remain open during siesta. In the larger cities you may find that big department stores will stay open from 10am – 10pm.

Value Added Tax: Known in Spain as the IVA, Value Added Tax is levied on most articles, services, and meals. The IVA ranges from 7% to 21% (luxury items, cars). Depending on how much you spend on certain goods, you may be eligible for a partial refund of this tax. Ask the shopkeeper or salesperson about the VAT at time of purchase. Be sure to save all receipts and forms for Customs.

Morocco

Morocco offers many fine craft items at good prices. Traditional souvenirs include gold and silver jewelry, wood carvings, cotton goods, tapestries, carpets, leather goods, pottery, copperware, brassware, basketry, fine inlaid woodwork, and spices.

Bargaining: Some shops have fixed prices. In the open-air markets prices are usually flexible and negotiating is normal. The only rule is that if you make an offer, you should be prepared to buy at that price. Bring a mix of small bills so that you can pay in exact change. Moroccans enjoy negotiating over prices, and they expect it of their customers.

Many shops in Morocco are closed on Fridays. If they are open, they may close from mid-day prayer until early afternoon.

Senegal

Senegal is known for its quality fabrics, which can be purchased by the meter or custom-made into clothing at specialty tailor shops. Also be on the lookout for jewelry, masks, and sculptures.

Bargaining: Some shops have fixed prices. In the open-air markets prices are usually flexible and negotiating is normal. The only rule is that if you make an offer, you should be prepared to buy at that price. Bring a mix of small bills so that you can pay in exact change.

U.S. Customs Regulations & Shipping Charges

For all things related to U.S. Customs, the ultimate authority is the U.S. Bureau of Customs & Border Protection. Their website, www.cbp.gov has the answers to the most frequently asked questions. Or you can call them at **1-877-227-5511**.

The top three points to know are:

- At time of writing, your personal duty-free allowance is \$800 for items brought with you. Items totaling more than \$800 are subject to duty fees.
- **Items shipped home are always subject to duty when received in the U.S.** Even when the shop has offered to include shipping and duties in the price, this typically means shipping to the nearest customs facility and payment of the export duties—not door-to-door shipping or payment of the import duties. All additional duties or shipping charges would be your

responsibility. Unless an item is small enough to send by parcel service (like FedEx), chances are you will need to arrange shipping or pick-up once the item is in the U.S. and will need to pay customs duties.

- It is illegal to import products made from endangered animal species. U.S. Customs & Border Protection will seize these items, as well as most furs, coral, tortoise shell, reptile skins, feathers, plants, and items made from animal skins.

DEMOGRAPHICS & HISTORY

Portugal

Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** Portugal contains 35,556 square miles, including the Azores and Madeira islands. The Madeira island group occupies 305 square miles. The main island of Madeira is 35 miles long and about 13 miles across at its widest point.
- **Capital:** Lisbon
- **Language:** Portuguese
- **Geography:** Portugal's mainland terrain is mountainous, pastoral, and earthy. Its interior moors and flatlands are circumscribed by 500 miles of gorgeous coastline with long stretches of sandy beaches. Madeira consists of two inhabited islands, Madeira and Porto Santo, and two groups of uninhabited islands. The largest island is Madeira. It is volcanic and mountainous, with its highest peaks in the interior rising to over 6,000 feet. The island contains nearly 100 miles of coastline, but no beaches (except one tiny one at Prainha near the eastern tip of the island). The north coast is untamed and less populated; the western end is forested and cool; and the eastern tip consists of barren reddish rock that extends into the blue sea.
- **Population:** 10,421,117 (Estimate)
- **Religion:** Roman Catholic, 81%, Christian and other, 19%
- **Time Zone:** Portugal is ahead of U.S. Eastern Time by five hours; Central Time by six hours; Mountain Time by seven hours; Pacific Time by eight hours.

National Holidays: Portugal

In addition to the holidays listed below, Portugal celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter and Corpus Christi. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit www.timeanddate.com/holidays.

01/01 New Year's Day

04/25 Liberty Day

05/01 Labor Day

06/10 Portugal Day

08/15 Assumption of Mary

10/05 Republic Implantation

11/01 All Saints' Day

12/01 Restoration of Independence

12/08 Feast of the Immaculate Conception

12/25 Christmas Day

Portugal: A Brief History

Portugal's earliest tribes occupied the Tagus valley, the Alentejo and Estremadura as far back as 8,000 BC. Later, Neolithic clans built hilltop forts called castros in northern Portugal, and around 700 BC these were occupied by Celtic Lusitanians. They were fierce, which led the Carthaginians (who had settled on the south coast) to recruit them around 200 BC to fight off the Romans. The Celtic Lusitanians proved their worth—while it only took Rome seven years to conquer Gaul, it took them nearly 200 to subdue Iberia. By the time that was accomplished, Rome had colonies in Lisbon, Evora, Santarem, and Beja.

Christianity reached Portugal near the end of the 1st century, and by the 3rd century, bishoprics had been founded at Lisbon, Braga, and other towns. As Visigothic invaders crossed the Pyrenees, they made their way to Portugal. But since they ruled from Toledo, their influence was not strong. This made it easy for the Moors, who arrived soon after 711 AD. Portugal's Moors settled mainly in the south, and brought many agrarian reforms as well as a love of culture. They established Muslim supremacy, but allowed Christians and Jews to worship, work, own property, and freely engage in business. Though their cities were grander and larger in Spain, they still left an enduring impact on Portuguese culture.

The Christian Reconquest had some early victories in Portugal, taking Porto back from the Moors by 868 and Coimbra by 1064. Meanwhile, a small kingdom was coalescing around the old Roman settlement of Portus Cale. It was controlled by the kings of Leon and Castile until 1139, when Afonso Henriques won a battle and proclaimed himself King of Portucale. The Algarve was reconquered in 1264, the capital was moved from Coimbra to Lisbon, and Portugal's land boundaries have since remained almost unchanged.

But Portugal's imperial ambitions had no boundaries. In 1415, King John conquered the North African trading post of Ceuta. Under his son Prince Henry the Navigator, advances were made in shipbuilding, navigation, and cartography; and Portuguese *caravels* sailed the coast of Africa. Madeira and the Azores were colonized, and over the next century, explorers like Bartolomeu Dias and Vasco da Gama expanded the empire from Africa to India and southeast Asia, and to Brazil.

In 1580, Spain invaded Portugal and held it for 60 years. Although the Portuguese independence was restored in 1640, Portugal kept fighting back frequent Spanish raids to take over again for about 28 years. By that time, Dutch, English, and French competitors had surpassed Portugal's colonial might. The country's fortunes mostly waned over the next centuries. Portugal was able to end a five-year occupation by Napoleonic forces with the help of Britain. But that alliance did Portugal no good when the 1890 British Ultimatum was delivered, requiring Portugal to give up its claim to land between Mozambique and Angola. Still, Portugal fought in World War I on the Allied side.

A weak postwar governments led to a military coup in 1926, in which Antonio Oliveira Salazar became a Finances Minister, before progressing to dictator in 1933, ruling for almost 40 years. He kept Portugal neutral in World War II, but granted naval and air bases to the Allies after 1943. Portugal joined NATO as a founding member in 1949, but did not gain admission to the United Nations until 1955. Salazar suffered a stroke in 1968 and died in 1970. In 1974, a socialist military coup ended the Salazar era. It was called the "carnation revolution" since civilians placed flowers in the rifles of the military. Directly afterwards, most of Portugal's former colonies were granted their independence. With EU membership in 1986, Portugal entered the European mainstream.

Since the debt crisis of 2008, Portugal's economy has made progress. The government deficit has fallen, as has unemployment. But some of this has been achieved by austerity measures that have hit the young, teachers, health care workers, and others. The future will call for the same kind of resolve and innovation that drove Portugal's golden Age of Discovery so long ago.

Spain

Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** The mainland occupies approximately 195,364.5 square miles. Off Spain's east coast in the Mediterranean are the Balearic Islands (1,936 square miles), the largest of which is Majorca. Sixty miles west of Africa are the Canary Islands (2,808 square miles).
- **Capital:** Madrid
- **Languages:** Spanish, Basque, Catalan, and Galician. In resort areas, many people also speak English, French, and German.
- **Geography:** Spain's topography consists of a broad central plateau that slopes to the south and east, crossed by a series of mountain ranges and river valleys. It is a land of both towering peaks and endless beaches, as well as fertile landscapes and high, dry plains. Principal rivers are the Ebro in the northeast, the Tajo in the central region, and the Guadalquivir in the south.
- **Population:** 47,325,360 (estimate)
- **Religions:** Roman Catholic 67.8%, atheist 9.1%, other 2.2%, non-believer 18.4%, unspecified 2.5%
- **Time Zone:** Spain is six hours ahead of U.S. Eastern Time.

National Holidays: Spain

In addition to the holidays listed below, Spain celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit www.timeanddate.com/holidays.

01/01 New Year's Day

01/06 Epiphany

05/01 Labor Day

08/15 Assumption of Mary

10/12 Hispanic Day

11/01 All Saints Day

12/06 Constitution Day

12/08 Immaculate Conception

12/25 Christmas

Spain: A Brief History

Spain has been continuously inhabited for 1.2 million years, but the bulk of our knowledge about Spain's earliest people begins around 1100 BC, when Phoenicians established trading colonies along the southern coast. These attracted the Greeks; and around the same time, Celts descended in the north, establishing hill villages known as *castros*, many of which still stand in Galicia and northern Portugal.

The Romans arrived in Spain around 206 BC, but had to defeat the Carthaginians for it. Afterwards, the Romans still had a fight on their hands: The Iberian tribes resisted for 200 years. Today, in places like Mérida, Córdoba, Segovia, and Tarragona, you can see remnants of Roman roads, bridges, aqueducts, temples, and amphitheaters. Towards the end of their dominion, the Romans also brought Christianity. But Pax Romana crumbled as Visigoths and Franks swept over the Pyrenees.

The civilized heights of Rome were not equaled until the Moors arrived from North Africa around 711 AD. The enlightened Islamic civilization they established was called Al-Andalus, and it lasted for nearly 800 years. Islamic cities such as Córdoba, Seville, and Granada flourished. Throughout Al-Andalus, Christians, and Jews lived under some restrictions, but were free to worship, work, own property, and trade. When the rest of Europe was struggling through the Dark Ages, the city of Córdoba became a beacon of enlightenment with a celebrated university, palaces, gardens, observatories, libraries, street lamps, and running water. Mathematics, astronomy, literature, music, and architecture flourished.

Córdoba's star began to dim in the 11th century as the caliphate broke into dozens of small kingdoms. Infighting opened a crack for northern Christians to pry open, and the Christian Reconquest pushed south. The last stronghold of the Moors, Granada, fell to King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella in 1491. They instituted a 300-year campaign of terror, the Spanish Inquisition, which sought to root out heretics through the confiscation of property, imprisonment, torture, and execution. It required Muslims and Jews to convert to Christianity or leave Spain, thereby ending a source of valuable cultural contributions.

But Spain's fortunes continued to rise. In 1492, Christopher Columbus opened up the New World to Spain's imperial ambitions. Spain amassed tremendous wealth and a vast empire through Columbus' conquest of the Caribbean, as well as the conquest of Mexico by Cortes (1519-21) and Peru by Pizarro (1532-33). In 1588, Philip II sent his Armada to invade England, but its defeat cost Spain its supremacy. After centuries of dwindling losses, Spain's overseas empire ended with Cuban independence in 1898.

Spain remained neutral during World War I, but was unable to avoid the upheavals that arose in its aftermath. Civil war erupted in 1936, pitting right-wing Nationalists under Francisco Franco against socialist, communist, and centrist Republicans. Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy supported Franco with planes, weapons, and 92,000 troops, making Spain a testing ground for WWII. Franco declared the war over in 1939, but there was no peace. In the ensuing years, his regime killed 100,000 intellectuals, teachers, and dissenters. After World War II (which Spain sat out), a UN-sponsored boycott plunged the nation into "years of hunger." They didn't wane until the 1950s, when U.S. aid and tourism infused the economy. When Franco died in 1975, Juan Carlos I took the throne and Spain transitioned to democracy.

When the 2008 global economic crisis plunged Spain's economy, the conservative government enacted harsh austerity measures. Youth unemployment reached 60%, and by 2017 over 87,000 workers left Spain, creating a brain drain. Recently, the government rolled out a "Return Plan" to lure them back. Also in 2017, a referendum in Catalonia backed separation from Spain. Madrid imposed direct rule, though polls show that 68% of Spaniards prefer dialogue with Catalonia.

Morocco

Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** 172,414 square miles
- **Capital:** Rabat
- **Languages:** Arabic and Berber are the official languages; French and Spanish are also spoken.
- **Location:** Morocco is bordered by Algeria in the east, Mauritania in the south, the Atlantic Ocean in the west, and Spain in the north.
- **Geography:** Morocco's landscape varies from coastal lands near the Atlantic Ocean to mountainous regions to the Sahara Desert.
- **Population:** 37,984,655 (Estimate)
- **Religions:** Muslim 99%, Other 1%
- **Time zone:** Morocco is on Central European Time, six hours ahead of U.S. EST. When it is 5am in Washington D.C., it is 11am in Rabat. Morocco does not observe Daylight Savings, therefore Morocco is only 5 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time when Daylight Savings is in effect.

National Holidays: Morocco

In addition to the holidays listed below, Morocco celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit www.timeanddate.com/holidays.

01/01 New Year's Day

01/11 Anniversary of the Independence Manifesto

05/01 Labour Day/May Day

07/30 Feast of the Throne

08/14 Anniversary of the Recovery Oued Ed-Dahab

08/20 Anniversary of the Revolution of the King and the People

08/21 Youth Day

Morocco: A Brief History

Morocco is unique for having been occupied by one group of people for all of its recorded history—people who have rarely been subjugated by outside forces. The Berbers or Imazighen (men of the land) have endured for millennia. They are not a homogenous group, but comprise various tribes who share some ethnic lineage. Nor were all Berbers nomads despite the stereotype. Most Berbers were farmers, but connected to fellow Berber traders and horsemen who developed semi-permanent encampments as they forged trade routes.

The Berbers often frustrated Roman attempts to govern them, though their rebellion was not always violent but often based on shrewd alliances and gamesmanship. Most Berbers continued to practice their traditional, animist religions. They also borrowed from other African and Egyptian religions, and as the millennium turned, many Berbers were Christian or Jewish.

In the 7th century AD, the Ummayyad Arabs conquered the Middle East in less than a decade, but needed 70 years to subdue Morocco's Berbers. They brought the Arab language, architecture, civil codes, and mostly, the new religion of Islam. Its ideals resonated with traditional Berber values and its adoption was widespread, rapid, and willing. But the Arabs were never able to unify the region politically. Though they enlisted Berber vassals to lead their conquest of Iberia, the sprawling caliphate proved difficult to manage, paving the way for Arab-Berber dynasties such as the Almoravids, Almohads, and Nasrids, who presided over Moorish Iberia, called al-Andalus. These dynasties have ruled Morocco continuously from the 8th century to the present.

When the Moors were expelled from al-Andalus in 1492, Muslim and Jewish refugees brought their cultures back to Morocco, enriching the Imperial Cities of Fez, Marrakesh, Rabat, and Meknes. Rulers rose and fell for 140 years and in the 1630s, the Alaouite family overthrew the Saadis, establishing a line that rules to this day. In the late 1800s, Morocco's strategic location and natural resources attracted France, which took control by 1912. Spain hung onto a small protectorate on the coast, Tangier was made an international zone, and Rabat became the capital. When Berbers rebelled in 1926, it took 25,000 Spanish-French troops to subdue them.

During WWII, Morocco was ruled by Vichy France, which was a Nazi puppet. But independent-minded Casablanca provided crucial support for the Allied North African campaign. *After the war in 1944*, Morocco demanded freedom, and France was eventually pressured to grant it.

Mohammed V returned from exile in 1955; Morocco won its independence in 1956; Mohammed V crowned himself king in 1957; and handed power to his son, Hassan II, in 1961. Hassan II earned the people's affection in 1975 when he led the Green March into the Western Sahara to force Spain to hand over the province. More than 350,000 volunteers marched that day, but the dispute between Morocco and the western separatist Polisario Front still simmers.

Mohammed VI took the throne in 1999, and advanced many liberal policies including women's rights. In 2002, he married Salma Bennani, a computer science engineer, and many believed it symbolized the acceptance of modern roles. In 2004, the government imposed changes to family law geared toward lifting the gender inequality and protecting children. During the Arab Spring of 2011, Mohammed VI reacted with a deftness that eluded other leaders, announcing constitutional reforms, ceding more power to parliament, and making Berber an official state language. But Mohammed VI has increasingly been criticized for repressing freedom of speech, and the nation still struggles with poverty, unemployment, and corruption in the justice system.

Events that Shaped the 20th Century:

Morocco's Battle Against Colonialism

Situated at the entrance of the Mediterranean, with the Atlantic to the west and the Strait of Gibraltar to the north, Morocco has historically been a strategic location to control.

France had always shown an interest in fully conquering Morocco for centuries, interested in the land for its access to the Atlantic and Mediterranean, as well as its border with French-controlled Algeria. While France had slowly been taking over Morocco from the Algerian border and had their increasing military influence recognized by most world powers following the signing of the Treaty of Algeciras, France wanted more. And, on March 19, 1907, the assassination of Émile Mauchamp, a French doctor, in Marrakesh by an anti-French occupation mob, was just the reason they needed.

After snapping up more towns along the Algerian border, including Bechar and Oujda, France began their assault in earnest. The Moroccan people, incensed by the encroachment of the French and the disregard for their own sovereignty, responded by killing nine European laborers. Surprising the French, the Moroccans then managed to take back Casablanca. On August 5th, 1907, France retaliated and bombed Casablanca, destroying the city and killing thousands of Moroccans. France pushed into the region of Chaouia, a campaign that lasted 7 years, ending in France's control over the region. France also encroached from the east, using their Algerian border to facilitate their invasion.

The tribes of Morocco, instead of banding together against France, split their allegiance, with the sultan of Morocco, Abd al-Aziz bin Hassan, doing little to oppose France. The people of Fez however, called for war and instead supported the sultan's older brother, Abd al-Hafid. This devolved into a brief civil war, with Sultan al-Aziz gathering an army before marching to Marrakesh to confront his older brother's forces. The Sultan's army was ambushed in the Battle of Marrakesh, and Sultan al-Aziz was forced to flee back behind French lines in Casablanca, where he later announced his abdication.

Sultan al-Hafid took power and nothing changed. The French were still encroaching on Moroccan sovereignty, with their campaign in the region of Chaouia. By 1911, a rebellion broke out against Sultan al-Hafid and he was besieged at his palace in Fez, forcing him to call upon the French to protect him. The French forces used this opportunity to take Fez.

Following the rebellion, Sultan al-Hafid, under duress, signed the Treaty of Fez, recognizing French control of certain areas of Morocco and giving the French Resident-General absolute power over both internal and external affairs. In the aftermath of the failed rebellion in Fez, France had managed to maneuver themselves into the position of power they had wanted from the start.

The Moroccan people reacted violently in a series of riots that became known later as the Bloody Days of Fez. During the riots, many Moroccan soldiers, under French commanders, joined the riots, attacking their commanders before moving to the European and Jewish quarters of Fez. Believing the Jewish populace to be helping the rioters, the French commander ordered the Jewish quarter be shelled. According to the Moroccan historian, Mohammed Kenbib, 66 Europeans, 42 Moroccan Jews and some 600 Moroccan Muslims were killed over the course of the two days of rioting.

After signing the treaty and retreating to Rabat, Sultan al-Hafid abdicated in favor of his youngest brother, Yusef.

The French Colonial Administrator, Hubert Lyautey, worked to maintain Morocco's independent culture, focusing instead on colonial education and urbanization, rather than the traditional assimilation route taken by France in Algeria and Tunisia. He worked closely with the Sultan, allowing the sovereign to retain cultural, practical, and religious power in Morocco.

When World War I and World War II swept through Europe, France recruited from the Moroccan infantry, with thousands of Moroccans making up the Moroccan Brigade, fighting for the French with little to no recognition.

Following World War II, Sultan Mohammed V, who succeeded his father, Sultan Yusef, in 1927, called for Moroccan Independence. Becoming the face of Morocco's independence movement, Sultan Mohammed V aligned himself with a series of nationalist movements and call for Morocco to join the Arab League. Demonstrating in front of huge crowds, he appealed for independence in several momentous speeches, including the Tangier Speech.

On August 20th, 1953, Sultan Mohammed V was forced out of Morocco by French authorities, exiled to Corsica, and later Madagascar, with his immediate family. In his place, France installed Mohammed Ben Aarafa, Sultan Mohammed V's first cousin once removed. The "French Sultan" was not recognized by the Moroccan people, and, in response, the nationalist movement bombed the central market in Casablanca on Christmas Eve 1953.

Supported by Libya, the National Liberation Front in Algeria, and Egypt, the nationalist movement managed to put pressure on the French and forced them to renegotiate Sultan Mohammed V's exile in 1955. Upon the Sultan's return, he managed to negotiate Morocco's independence and French Morocco became the Kingdom of Morocco with Mohammed V established as King on August 14th, 1957.

Senegal

Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** 75,955 square miles
- **Capital:** Dakar
- **Languages:** French (official), Wolof, Pular, Jola, Mandinka, Serer, and Soninke
- **Location:** Senegal is bordered by the Atlantic Ocean to the West, Mauritania to the North, Mali to the East, and Guinea and Guinea-Bassau to the South. Senegal completely surrounds The Gambia.
- **Geography:** Senegal is composed of low, rolling plains.
- **Population:** 15,020,945 (Estimate)
- **Religions:** Muslim 95.9%, Christian 4.1%
- **Time zone:** Senegal is on GMT, five hours ahead of U.S. EST. When it is 6am in Washington D.C., it is 11am in Dakar.

National Holidays: Senegal

In addition to the holidays listed below, Senegal celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter, Ascension Day, and Korite. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit www.timeanddate.com/holidays.

01/01 New Year's Day

04/04 Independence Day

05/01 May Day

08/15 Assumption of Mary

11/01 All Saints' Day

12/25 Christmas Day

Senegal: A Brief History

Early History

The region of modern Senegal was a part of the larger region called Upper Guinea by European traders. Before the arrival of European settlers, the history of the Saharan region is mainly characterized by the consolidation of settlements in large state entities – the Ghana Empire, the Mali Empire and the Songhai Empire. The cores of these great empires were located on the territory of the current Republic of Mali, so current-day Senegal occupied a peripheral position.

The earliest of these empires is that of Ghana, probably founded in the first millennium by Soninke and whose animist populations subsisted by agriculture and trade across the Sahara, including gold, salt and cloth. Its area of influence slowly spread to regions between the river valleys of the Senegal and Niger.

A contemporary empire of Ghana, but less extensive, the kingdom of Tekrur was its vassal. Ghana and Tekrur were the only organized populations before Islamization. The Kingdom imported wool, copper and pearls and exported gold and slaves. Indeed, the growth of a vast empire by Arab-Muslim Jihads is not devoid of economic and political issues and brought in its wake the first real growth of the slave trade. This trade called the Arab slave trade provided North Africa and Saharan Africa with slave labor. The Tekrur were among the first converts to Islam, certainly before 1040.

The arrival of Europeans engendered autonomy of small kingdoms which were under the influence of Djolof. Less dependent on trans-Saharan trade with the new shipping lanes, they turn more readily to trade with the New World. The decline of these kingdoms can be explained by internal rivalries, then by the arrival of Europeans, who organized the mass exodus of young Africans to the New World. Ghazis, wars, epidemics and famine afflicted the people, along with the Atlantic slave trade, in exchange for weapons and manufactured goods. Under the influence of Islam, these kingdoms were transformed and marabouts played an increasing role.

European Colonialism

The first French settlement in Senegal dates back to the Dieppe Mariners in the 14th century. In the mid-15th century, several European nations reached the coast of West Africa, vested successively or simultaneously by the Portuguese, the Dutch, the English and French. Europeans first settled along the coasts, on islands in the mouths of rivers and then a little further upstream and opened trading posts.

The “trade” and the slave trade intensified in the 17th century. In Senegal, the French and English competed mainly on two issues, the island of Gorée and St. Louis. On 10 February 1763 the Treaty of Paris ended the Seven Years’ War and reconciled, after three years of negotiations, France, Great Britain and Spain. Great Britain returned the island of Gorée to France. As the premier colonial power, it then acquired, among many other territories, “the river of Senegal, with forts & trading posts St. Louis, Podor, and Galam and all rights & dependencies of the said River of Senegal.”

Under Louis XIII and especially Louis XIV, the privileges were quite extensively granted to certain French shipping lines, which still faced many difficulties. In 1626 Richelieu founded the Norman Company, an association of Dieppe and Rouen merchants responsible for the operation in Senegal and the Gambia. It was dissolved in 1658 and its assets were acquired by the Company of Cape Vert and Senegal, itself expropriated following the creation by Colbert in 1664 of the French West India Company.

The Company of Senegal was in turn founded by Colbert in 1673. It became the major tool of French colonialism in Senegal, but saddled with debt, it was dissolved 1681 and replaced by another that lasted until 1694, the date of creation of the Royal Company of Senegal, whose

director, Andre Brue, would be captured by the Damel of Cay and released against ransom in 1701. A third Company of Senegal was founded in 1709 and lasted until 1718. On the British side, the monopoly of trade with Africa was granted to the Royal African Company in 1698.

Grand Master of the naval war of Louis XIV, Admiral Jean Estrées seized Gorée on November 1, 1677. The island was taken up by the English on 4 February 1693 before being again occupied by the French four months later. In 1698 the Director of the Company of Senegal, Andre Brue, restored the fortifications. But Gorée became English once again in the middle of the 18th century.

The excellent location of St. Louis caught the attention of the English, who occupied it three times for a few months in 1693, then during the Seven Years' War of 1758 until it was taken by the Duc de Lauzun in 1779, and lastly 1809 in 1816. In 1783 the Treaty of Versailles returned Senegal to France. Appointed governor in 1785, Knight Boufflers focuses for two years to enhance the colony, while engaged in the smuggling of gum arabic and gold with signares. In 1789 people of St. Louis write a List of Complaints. The same year the French were driven out of Fort St. Joseph in Galam and kingdom of Galam.

The Europeans were sometimes disappointed because they hoped to find more gold in West Africa, but when the development of plantations in the Americas, mainly in the Caribbean, in Brazil and in the south of the United States raised a great need for cheap labor, the area received more attention. Politico-military instability in the region was compounded by the slave trade.

The Black Code, enacted in 1685, regulated the trafficking of slaves in the American colonies.

Slavery was abolished by the National Convention in 1794, then reinstated by Bonaparte in 1802. The British Empire abolished slavery in 1833; in France it was finally abolished in the Second Republic in 1848, under the leadership of Victor Schoelcher.

The Four Communes of Saint-Louis, Dakar, Gorée, and Rufisque were the oldest colonial towns in French controlled west Africa. In 1848, the French Second Republic extended the rights of full French citizenship to their inhabitants. While those who were born in these towns could technically enjoy all the rights of native French citizens, substantial legal and social barriers prevented the full exercise of these rights, especially by those seen by authorities as full blooded Africans.

Most of the African population of these towns were termed *originaires*: those Africans born into the commune, but who retained recourse to African and/or Islamic law (the so-called "personal status"). Those few Africans from the four communes who were able to pursue higher education and were willing to renounce their legal protections could "rise" to be termed *Évolué* ("Evolved") and were nominally granted full French citizenship, including the vote. Despite this legal framework, *Évolués* still faced substantial discrimination in Africa and the Metropole alike.

On 27 April 1848, following the February revolution in France, a law was passed in Paris enabling the Four Quarters to elect a Deputy to the French Parliament for the first time. On 2 April 1852 the parliamentary seat for Senegal was abolished by Napoleon III. Following the downfall of the French Second Empire, the Four Quarters was again allowed a parliamentary seat which was granted by law on 1 February 1871. On 30 December 1875 this seat was again abolished, but

only for a few years as it was reinstated on 8 April 1879, and remained the single parliamentary representation from sub-Saharan Africa anywhere in a European legislature until the fall of the third republic in 1940.

It was only in 1916 that originaires were granted full voting rights while maintaining legal protections. Blaise Diagne, who was the prime advocate behind the change, was in 1914 the first African deputy elected to the French National Assembly. From that time until independence in 1960, the deputies of the Four Communes were always African, and were at the forefront of the decolonisation struggle.

Independence

In January 1959, Senegal and the French Sudan merged to form the Mali Federation, which became fully independent on 20 June 1960. The transfer of power agreement with France was signed on 4 April 1960. Due to internal political difficulties, the Federation broke up on 20 August 1960. Senegal and Soudan (renamed the Republic of Mali) proclaimed independence. Léopold Senghor, internationally known poet, politician, and statesman, was elected Senegal's first president in August 1960.

The 1960s and early 1970s saw the continued and persistent violating of Senegal's borders by the Portuguese military from Portuguese Guinea. In response, Senegal petitioned the United Nations Security Council in 1963, 1965, 1969 (in response to shelling by Portuguese artillery), 1971 and finally in 1972.

After the breakup of the Mali Federation, President Senghor and Prime Minister Mamadou Dia governed together under a parliamentary system. In December 1962, their political rivalry led to an attempted coup by Prime Minister Dia. The coup was put down without bloodshed and Dia was arrested and imprisoned. Senegal adopted a new constitution that consolidated the President's power.

Senghor was considerably more tolerant of opposition than most African leaders became in the 1960s. Nonetheless, political activity was somewhat restricted for a time. Senghor's party, the Senegalese Progressive Union (now the Socialist Party of Senegal), was the only legally permitted party from 1965 until 1975. In the latter year, Senghor allowed the formation of two opposition parties that began operation in 1976—a Marxist party (the African Independence Party) and a liberal party (the Senegalese Democratic Party).

In 1980, President Senghor retired from politics, and handed power over to his handpicked successor, Prime Minister Abdou Diouf, in 1981.

Senegal joined with The Gambia to form the nominal confederation of Senegambia on 1 February 1982. However, the envisaged integration of the two countries was never carried out and the union was dissolved in 1989. Despite peace talks, a southern separatist group in the Casamance region has clashed sporadically with government forces since 1982. Senegal has a long history of participating in international peacekeeping.

Abdou Diouf was president between 1981 and 2000. Diouf served four terms as President. In the presidential election of 2000, he was defeated in a free and fair election by opposition leader Abdoulaye Wade. Senegal experienced its second peaceful transition of power and its first from one political party to another.

On 30 December 2004, President Abdoulaye Wade announced that he would sign a peace treaty with two separatist factions of the Movement of Democratic Forces of Casamance (MFDC) in the Casamance region. This will end West Africa's longest-running civil conflict. As of late 2006, it seemed the peace treaty was holding, as both factions and the Senegalese military appeared to honor the treaty. With recognized prospects for peace, refugees began returning home from neighboring Guinea-Bissau. However, at the beginning of 2007, refugees began fleeing again as the sight of Senegalese troops rekindled fears of a new outbreak of violence between the separatists and the government.

Abdoulaye Wade conceded defeat to Macky Sall in the election of 2012. Sall served two terms as the President of Senegal, and was succeeded by Bassirou Diomaye Faye in 2024.

Ghana

Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** 92,098 square miles
- **Capital:** Accra
- **Languages:** English is the official language of Ghana.
- **Location:** Ghana borders Côte d'Ivoire to the West and Togo to the East. To the South is the Gulf of Guinea and Atlantic Ocean.
- **Geography:** Ghana is mainly flat, with small mountains located in the northern part of the country.
- **Population:** 31,072,945
- **Religions:** 71% Christian, 18% Muslim, 5% Indigenous
- **Time Zone:** Ghana is on Greenwich Mean Time (GMT), four hours ahead of U.S. EST. When it is 2am in Washington D.C., it is 6am locally.

National Holidays: Ghana

In addition to the holidays listed below, Ghana celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter and Eid ul-Fir. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit www.timeanddate.com/holidays.

01/01 New Year's Day

01/07 Constitution Day

03/03 Independence Day

8/04 Founders Day

09/21 Kwame Nkrumah Memorial Day

12/25 Christmas Day

12/31 New Year's Eve

Ghana: A Brief History

Ghana is praised for its rich history, with the first signs of inhabitation dating almost as far back as 10,000 B.CE. The country's name is derivative of the medieval trading empire founded by the Soninke people, titled after its emperor, the Ghana, which is translated as "Warrior King" in the Soninke language. Around the 11th century, the Dagomba people founded the warrior kingdom of Dagbon in Northern Ghana while the Akan people founded state of Bono in the South. Sea trade with Europe began in the 15th century, as the Akan people controlled most of the gold in Ghana. With this gold they actively traded with the Portuguese, British, as well as other Europeans and neighboring Akan tribes. Due the vast amount of gold found in Ghana, it was given the name and referred often to as the "Gold Coast".

Many forts and castles were built in order to protect the trade interests of Europeans, some of which still stand on the Ghanaian coastline to this day. For many centuries, trading with European powers centered heavily around gold. However, the trade revolving around gold would eventually give way to the lucrative slave trade in the 17th century. In 1807, the Slave Trade Act, which advocated for the abolition of the slave trade, was signed by British parliament.

Slavery itself however, continued in Ghana until 1874, when the country was officially declared a British colony. As a British colony, Ghana's economy would continue on to grow by exporting gold, coca, as well as coffee. As the accumulation of wealth went on to further develop the nation, the people of Ghana yearned to rule over themselves. Many nationalist movements, namely the Convention People's Party, were established with this aim in mind. By 1957, Ghana became the first African nation to achieve independence from colonial rule under Kwame Nkrumah, who led the fight for independence and became Ghana's first president. Inspired by Ghana, many African countries sought and declared independence in the following decade. Ghana today has a medium level of human development and is set to improve further.

Togo

Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** 21,925 square miles
- **Capitol:** Lomé

- **Location:** Togo is bordered by Burkina in the North, Ghana to the West, and Benin to the East. To the South is the Gulf of Guinea and Atlantic Ocean.
- **Geography:** Togo is a narrow strip of land distinguished by a rolling savanna in the North, woodland plateau and forests in the Central region, and coastal plains to the South.
- **Language:** French is the official language; Ewe and Kabiyé are also spoken
- **Population:** 8,278,737
- **Religions:** 43.7% Christian, 35.6% Traditional Animist, 14% Sunni Muslim, 5% Other
- **Time Zone:** Togo is on Greenwich Mean Time (GMT), four hours ahead of U.S. EST. When it is 2am in Washington D.C., it is 6am locally.

National Holidays: Togo

In addition to the holidays listed below, Togo celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter and Eid al-Fitr. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit www.timeanddate.com/holidays.

01/01 New Year's Day
 05/25 Africa Day
 05/26 Ascension Day
 7/9 Tabaski
 12/25 Christmas Day

Togo: A Brief History

Prior to the arrival of Europeans in the 15th and 16th centuries, little is known about the history of Togo. However, archeological finds indicate that various tribes who migrated from nearby areas populated the region and settled in nearby coastal areas. In the late 15th century, the Portuguese were the first to set foot in the country followed by other European powers soon after. Until the 19th century, the coast of West Africa had become the central hub of the slave trade, thus naming Togo and the surrounding area "The Slave Coast". Towards the end of the 19th century, many European powers in a desperate attempt to demonstrate strength and international power, divided the remaining regions of the African continent that had not yet been colonized. In 1884, Germany declared a protectorate, in which Togo would go on to become the Germany colony of Togoland for the next 30 years.

During the First World War, the German colony was invaded by the British and French, resulting in the unconditional surrender of German sovereignty. By 1920, Togoland was divided amongst the Allied Forces, with western Togoland under the administration of the British known as "British Togoland" and the east under the control of the French. In 1946, both the British and France placed their regions in Togoland in the United Nations Trusteeship, designed to supervise the government of trust territories and lead them to self-government or independence. Under the United Nations Trusteeship, British Togoland rapidly advanced to self-government, with the northern part of the British colony joining the Gold Coast. Together, the Gold Coast and British Togoland would be renamed the independent nation of Ghana in 1957. The area of Togoland ruled by the French would go on to become an autonomous republic within the French Union in

1956. This was short lived as by 1960, the country declared independence. The country's first president was unfortunately assassinated within three years by military coup leader Gnassingbé Eyadéma, who would be president for the next 38 years. Following his death in 2005, he was immediately succeeded by his son Faure Gnassingbé, who remains the current president of Togo.

Benin

Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** 44,310 square miles
- **Capital:** Porto- Novo
- **Language:** French is the official language.
- **Ethnicity:** 38.4% Fon, 15.1% Adja & Mina, 12% Yoruba, 8.6% Fula, 6.1% Ottamari, 4.3% Yoa-Lokpa, 2.9% Dendi, 2.8% Other
- **Location:** Benin Borders Togo to the West and Nigeria to the East. To the South is the Gulf of Guinea and Atlantic Ocean
- **Geography:** Benin is flat with a coastal region that is low, flat, and sandy with tidal marshes and lagoons.
- **Population:** 12,123,198
- **Religion:** 48.5% Christian, 27.7% Muslim, 2.6% Indigenous
- **Time zone:** Benin is on West Africa Standard Time (GMT+1), five hours ahead of U.S. EST. When it is 2am in Washington D.C, it is 7am locally.

National Holidays: Benin

In addition to the holidays listed below, Benin celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter and Ascension Day. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit www.timeanddate.com/holidays.

01/01- New Year's Day

01/10- Voudoun Festival

05/01- Labor Day

06/29- Tabaski

8/01- Independence Day

11/01- All Saints Day

12/25- Christmas Day

Benin: A Brief History

The historical kingdom of Benin was formed by the Edo people and prospered from the 13th to 19th century, making it one of the oldest and highly developed kingdoms in West Africa. The capital, also known as Benin, was the center of a network of trade that was controlled by the *oba*, or king. Artists who belonged to prominent family guilds worked exclusively for the king and became well

known for using materials such as brass, wood, and ivory. The first European power to arrive in Benin were the Portuguese in the 15th century. A strong trading relationship would be formed, as the Portuguese sought after gold, artwork, and eventually slaves. Between the 15th and 16th centuries, the rulers of Benin captured many of their neighbors and sold them as slaves in return for European goods such as brass and guns.

Like many countries in West Africa, Benin was a central hub for the slave trade and became part of what was known as the “Slave Coast”. During the 1800s, the power of Benin began to dwindle as a result from multiple civil wars. During this time, the British sought to expand their own trade in the area. This was forbidden by the ruling Oba which resulted in the execution of British envoys by the Benin people. In 1897, the capital of Benin was overtaken and burned to the ground by British forces in retaliation. By the late 19th century, Benin was colonized by the French and became part of French West Africa. However, at the height of decolonization Benin had become a self-governing state in 1958 and reached full independence by 1960. The political system in Benin today is democracy with a president as head of government. The economy of Benin remains underdeveloped, with a large portion of the population living in poverty.

RESOURCES

Suggested Reading

Portugal

A Concise History of Portugal by David Birmingham (2018, History) This condensed, illustrated history offers an introduction to Portugal's people, culture, and evolving role in contemporary Europe.

A Small Death in Lisbon and ***The Company of Strangers*** by Robert Wilson (1999 and 2001, Fiction) Both these political thrillers are set in Portugal with flashbacks to World War II, when the supposedly neutral nation was a hotbed of espionage.

Baltasar and Blimunda by Jose Saramago (1998, Historical Fiction) Written by the winner of the 1998 Noble Prize for Literature, this historic romance offers detailed insight into what life was like in Portugal in the late 18th century. Set in 1711, in the midst of the terrors of the Inquisition and the plague, it follows a seemingly mismatched couple as they discover the wonders of love.

The Portuguese: The Land and Its People by Marian Kaplan (1991, History) A travel guide and history book all in one that takes you from the Moorish Invasion to the Age of Discovery to modern times.

Spain

A Million Steps by Kurt Koontz (2013, Travel Narrative) Follow the author as he walks the Camino de Santiago—a pilgrimage route in Spain that stretches more than 400 miles—a journey that is both physical and spiritual.

Sister Queens: The Noble, Tragic Lives of Katherine of Aragon and Juana, Queen of Castile by Julia Fox (2011, biography). The daughters of Ferdinand and Isabella each lost positions of power—one to the whims of England's Henry VIII, and the other to madness.

The Shadow of the Wind by Carlos Ruiz Zafon (2005, Fiction) A mix of mystery, romance, and hauntings abound in this international bestseller, set in 1950s Barcelona.

The Last Jew by Noah Gordon (2000, Historical Fiction) A sweeping tale of survival during the Spanish Inquisition.

Traveler's Tales: Spain edited by Lucy McCauley (1995, Anthology) Incisive, lyrical musings on all aspects of Spain, written by luminaries such as Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Calvin Trillin, and Barbara Kingsolver.

Morocco

In the Country of Others by Leïla Slimani (2020, Historical Fiction). Set in French-colonized Morocco following World War II, Mathilde settles into life in Morocco with her husband, Amine. Mathilde, a proud Frenchwoman, struggles with the unfamiliar sociality expectations as her husband, a soldier turned farmer, faces opposition as a Moroccan man married to a French woman. This award-winning novel views an interracial love story through the lenses of Morocco's fight for independence from French colonialism.

The Last Storytellers by Richard Hamilton (2011, Anthology) Wander through Marrakech's legendary Jmaa el Fna square, and among the snake charmers, musicians, jugglers and hawkers, you may occasionally notice a storyteller holding court. As the tradition of publicly recounting folktales or fables slowly dies, Hamilton has here collected the best of these engaging stories.

Horses of God by Mahi Binebine (2010, Literary Fiction). On May 16th, 2003, Casablanca suffered the deadliest attack in Morocco's history with fourteen suicide bombers killing forty-three people and over a hundred people were injured in the attacks. *Horses of God* views the attacks, perpetuated by young adults from the shantytowns of Sidi Moumen, from one of the suicide bombers looking back on his life after death. Starting from childhood, Binebine raises four young boys through poverty and violence to a desperate bid for purpose in religious extremism.

The Caliph's House, A Year in Casablanca by Tahir Shah (2006, Memoir). An entertaining account of the transformation of a ruined palace in Casablanca. Shah is a marvelous storyteller, interweaving Moroccan customs, history, black humor, and portraits of neighbors into one work.

Dreams of Trespass, Tales of a Harem Girlhood by Fatima Mernissi (1994, Memoir). This memoir captures the true story of Mernissi's life growing up in a Fez harem during World War II. The harem was not an exotic seraglio of concubines but rather a part of the house where all the women of a family are secluded.) A coming of age story with vivid and often hilarious detail.

Senegal

Three Strong Women by Marie NDiaye (2009, Literature) The story of three women, two Senegalese women who journey to France and a French-born woman who travels to Senegal to aid a relative, whose lives become intertwined as they discover their own strength.

So Long a Letter by Mariama Ba (1979, Memoir) An award-winning narrative by a Senegalese woman struggling with the tradition of polygamy and the difficulties faced by well-educated Muslim women in West Africa. Translated from the original French, *Une Si Longue Lettre*.

God's Bits of Wood by Sembene Ousmane (1960, Literature) This story follows a strike staged by workers on the Dakar-Niger railway in the late 1940s.

Ghana

Remote Control by Nnedi Okorafor (2021, Science Fiction) An alien artifact turns a young girl into Death's adopted daughter in this sci-fi tale of community and female empowerment.

Homegoing by Yaa Gyasi (2016, Historical Fiction) In 18th century Ghana, two half-sisters are born in separate villages, unaware of each other. One is married off to an Englishman and the other is captured during a raid in her village and sold into slavery.

Wife of the Gods by Kwei Quartey (2009, Mystery) Darko Dawson, a Ghanaian-American Detective, is ordered by his cantankerous boss to leave behind his loving wife and young son in Ghana's capital city to lead a murder investigation.

The History of Ghana by Roger Gocking (2005, History) An overview of Ghana from the emergence of precolonial states through increasing contact with Europeans that led to the establishment of formal colonial rule by Great Britain at the end of the 19th century.

Togo

Tales of Togo: A Young Woman's Search for Home in West Africa by Meredith Pike-Baky (2020, Biography) A story about an idealistic woman who sets off in 1971 to live and work in a remote community in sub-Saharan Africa.

Faure Must Go by Dwayne Wong-Omowale (2018, Political Science) Faure Must Go explores the history of the Togolese Republic and the struggle against the oppressive and brutal dictatorship of Faure Gnassingbé.

Do They Hear You When You Cry by Fauziya Kassindja (1998, autobiography) This true story chronicles the life of Fauziya Kassindja, who fled her African homeland to escape female genital mutilation.

Benin

Dawn to Dusk: Folk Tales from Benin by Iro Eweka (1966, Fiction) A recorded collection of oral Edo (Benin) folktales.

Snares without End by Olympe Bhely-Quenum (1960, Fiction) A psychological tale in which fate ensnares the life of an innocent protagonist who is wrongfully accused of adultery.

A Short History of Benin by Jacob Egharevba (1936, History) Egharevba opens with a brief History of Benin and discusses various titles, title societies, and associated guilds.

Suggested Films & Videos

Portugal

Porto (2016, Drama) An American expatriate and a French woman spend one intense night together in the titular Portuguese city. Years later, they try to make sense of their connection, the transience of joy, and haphazard nature of life. Filmed in 35, 16 and Super 8 mm, this film sees Porto through a novel and striking lens.

Night Train to Lisbon (2013, Drama) A Swiss schoolteacher (Jeremy Irons) prevents the suicide of a young Portuguese woman, who then disappears. Soon thereafter, he visits a bookshop where he discovers a puzzling memoir written during the Salazar era. Consumed by the idea that he may not be living his life to the fullest, he travels to Lisbon to unravel the mysteries.

No Reservations: Lisbon (2012, Season 8, Episode 4) Emmy award-winning chef and social critic Anthony Bourdain visited Lisbon just as it was on the verge of becoming a travel sensation. Enjoy his witty commentary, local encounters, and mouth-watering presentations of Lisbon's culinary pleasures.

Amália (2008, Documentary) This biopic tells the story of Amália Rodrigues, Portugal's Queen of Fado.

Lisbon Story (1994, Drama) A straightforward tale of a German sound engineer who falls in love with Lisbon. Director Wim Wenders takes you through a city that he obviously loves, offering the beauty of old houses, narrow streets, the sounds of the city, a haunting soundtrack, and the lives lived in Portugal's capital.

Spain

Pain and Glory (2019, Drama) Antonio Banderas earned a Best Actor nomination for his portrayal of a legendary director flashing back through his past, and facing a present filled with loss, memory, physical ailments, and imagination. This thinly-veiled autobiographical sketch from director Pedro Almodovar is a rueful reflection on creativity, wrapped up with warmth, humor, and vivid glimpses of life in late 20th-century Spain.

Ocho Apellidos Vascos (released in the U.S. as *Spanish Affair*, 2014, Comedy) Two of Spain's most disparate cultures collide as a jilted bride from the Basque Country goes to Seville, where a skillful Andalusian ladies man is frustrated by his inability to woo her. A fun and warm-hearted look at the differences between northern and southern Spain.

The Way (2010, Drama) A grieving father (Martin Sheen) honors his lost son's desire to finish the journey of a lifetime by competing the historical pilgrimage on the Camino de Santiago. Along the way, he meets other trekkers with their own stories to tell.

Pan's Labyrinth (2006, Fantasy) From director Guillermo del Toro. Following Spain's bloody civil war, young Ofelia enters a world of unimaginable cruelty when she moves in with her new stepfather, a brutal military officer. Armed only with her imagination, Ofelia discovers a labyrinth and a faun who offers her a path to saving herself and her mother. The lines between fantasy and reality begin to blur, and before Ofelia can turn back, she's at the center of a ferocious battle between good and evil.

All About My Mother (1999, Comedy) When her 17-year-old son is tragically killed in a car accident, Manuela sets out to reconnect with her son's father and ends up forging new connections with an outrageous transvestite, a pregnant nun, and her son's favorite actress. This 1999 Oscar winner for Best Foreign Language Film is another from director Pedro Almodovar, whose other acclaimed works include *Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown* and *Volver*.

Morocco

Changing Times (2004, Comedy/Drama) A French engineer (Gérard Depardieu) contrives a job in Tangier in order to reconnect with a lost lover of thirty years (Catherine Deneuve.) Various other characters and subplots cast an interesting light on modern urban Moroccan life.

Le Grand Voyage (2004, Drama). Driving his dad to Mecca for the Islamic pilgrimage is not what Reda, a French-Moroccan teenager, had planned. But plans change in this emotional road trip that explores the generational and cultural divide experienced by the many Moroccan immigrants. In French and Arabic with subtitles.

Ali Zaoua: Prince of the Streets (2000, Crime Drama). Four homeless young boys in Casablanca dream of a better life. When their leader is killed by a rival gang, the three remaining boys are determined to give him a proper funeral, but are faced with the rival gang and their own uncertainties as they try to gather the resources needed.

Hideous Kinky (1999, Drama) Kate Winslet plays a free-spirited, single British mother who decamps with her daughters to Morocco to find herself. Optimistic despite financial and personal setbacks, she remains dangerously oblivious to the needs of her children. A thoughtful look at Morocco's 1970s hippie mystique, and its reality.

The Sheltering Sky (1990, Adventure/Drama) An unhappy American couple ventures deep into the North African desert in the hopes of rekindling their relationship. The farther they go, the more the chasm between them widens. Directed by Bernardo Bertolucci, starring Debra Winger and John Malkovich, and featuring Paul Bowles, who wrote the book.

Useful Websites

Overseas Adventure Travel

www.oattravel.com

Overseas Adventure Travel Frequently Asked Questions

www.oattravel.com/faq

International Health Information/CDC (Centers for Disease Control)

www.cdc.gov/travel

Electricity & Plugs

www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/plugs-and-sockets

Foreign Exchange Rates

www.xe.com/currencyconverter
www.oanda.com/converter/classic

ATM Locators

www.mastercard.com/atm
www.visa.com/atmlocator

World Weather

www.intellicast.com
www.weather.com
www.wunderground.com

Basic Travel Phrases (80 languages)

www.travlang.com/languages

Packing Tips

www.travelite.org

U.S. Customs & Border Protection

www.cbp.gov/travel

Transportation Security Administration (TSA)

www.tsa.gov

National Passport Information Center

www.travel.state.gov

Holidays Worldwide

www.timeanddate.com/holidays

History & Culture

en.wikipedia.org

Useful Apps

Flight Stats

Track departures, arrivals, and flight status

LoungeBuddy

Get access to premium airport lounges around the world

Timeshifter

Personalized tips for avoiding jetlag, based on neuroscience and your own data

GoogleMaps

Maps and directions anywhere in the world

Triposo

City guides, walking maps, and more – and it works offline

Rome2rio

Where to go, what to see, and what to do in more than 160 countries

Flush or Sit or Squat

Find a clean toilet anywhere

Uber

Ride sharing around the world

Visa Plus and Mastercard Cirrus

ATM locations

Shows the location of the nearest ATM in your network

TunnelBear

Provides a secure VPN (virtual private network) that will encrypt your browsing data when you use a public WiFi network

What's App, Skype, or Signal

WiFi calling anywhere in the world

Duolingo, FLuentU, or Babbel

Learn dozens of foreign languages

Google Translate

Fast and simple translations

XE

Currency conversions

SizeGuide

Clothing and shoe sizes in all countries

Best Units Converter

Converts currency, mileage, weights, and many other units of measurement

Tourlina

For women only, it connects you with other female travelers

Happy Cow

Locate vegan and vegetarian eateries in 195 countries

Eatwith

Dine with locals all over the world

Meetup

Connects you with locals who share your interests

Skyview

Identifies constellations and heavenly bodies

Travello

Find travel friends on the road

ALIX for One

Created by and for women, it identifies solo-friendly dining spots in major international cities

TripWhistle

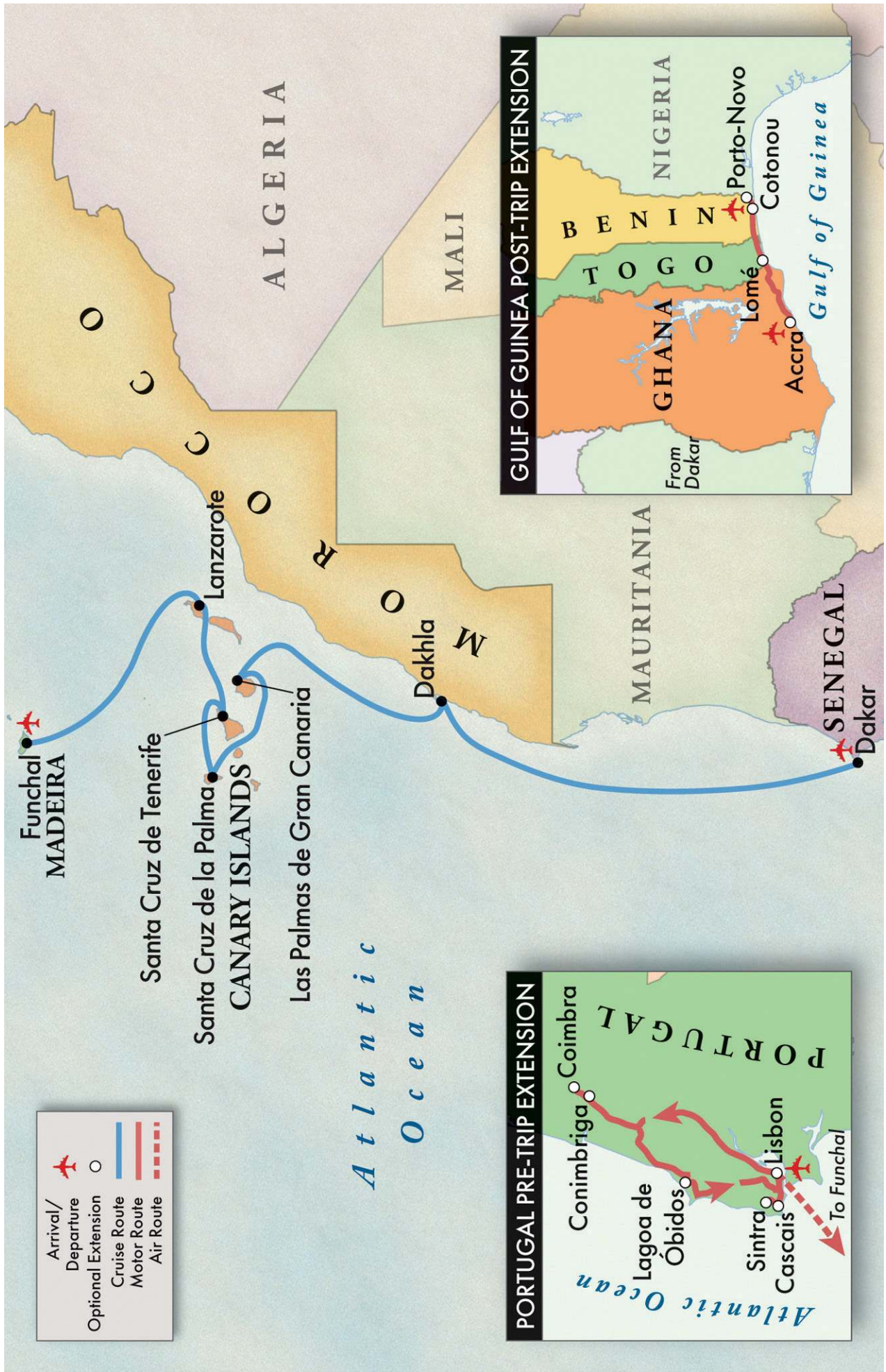
Maps your location and provides emergency numbers for police, medics, and more

GeoSure

Safely navigate neighborhoods around the world

Chirpey

For women only, connect with other women, find out what's safe, meet up, and more



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