

A reporter's guide to West Africa

I have always been interested in the life and history of West Africa. So I decided to take a tour around the three central countries of the region – Senegal, Mali and Cote d'Ivoire.

I contacted a local travel company and they helped me to plan the tour. They booked the flights, booked the hotels, and found a local guide to help me.

Starting in Dakar in Senegal, we planned a trip across the region through Mali and Cote d'Ivoire and back to Dakar – in a few days.

My guide, Moussa, is an expert in the history and culture of these countries. Born in Dakar, he has lived and worked in all 3 countries. Now he helps tourists and travellers.

First I flew to Dakar in Senegal, and arrived at the new international airport. It is very large and impressive.

We met in Dakar on the first day, and I stayed overnight in a 4-star hotel. We had dinner in a restaurant by the sea – we ate 'mafe' with chicken, and it was very good. Here we could watch the sun go down – it was beautiful.

On Day 2 we went out into the city to learn about Dakar. We learned about a terrible history. We took a small boat and visited the historical centre on Ile Goree, where people stayed before going to America as slaves. After this we went to the IFAN Museum of African Art to see the work of artists from Senegal.

On Day 3 we took a flight to Bamako, the capital of Mali, and stayed in a historic hotel. It was very comfortable and in the centre of the city. We went to the market, the Marche de Medina. We visited a nice restaurant and also listened to Malian music in a club.

On Day 4 we took a plane to Timbuktu, to see the ancient history and culture of Mali. There we visited the Djinguereber Mosque - it is very old, built in 1325.

We also visited the Sankore Mosque and the Ethnological Museum, where we could learn more about the history of Mali.

We stayed two nights in a beautiful hotel, made from a traditional house. It is a fascinating city with a very long history.

Back in Bamako, on Day 6 we took a short plane trip to Abidjan where we visited the capital of. The city has beautiful buildings. We visited the big cathedral, Saint-Paul's cathedral, and a large mosque. We also went to see the National Museum and the Cocody Museum of Art, and the Cote d'Ivoire Museum of Civilisations.

On Day 6, we left Abidjan, and we flew back to Dakar where the trip ended. We enjoyed this tour of the heart of West African life.

If you want to have the chance to visit new places, try new food, and meet new people, then come and take a tour of West Africa.

New words for this article

1	to book	to plan and pay for a ticket, hotel
2	impressive	very good, gives a good impression to people
3	terrible	very bad, unhappy
4	slaves	people taken from their families and sold as products
5	historic	very old

Comprehension Questions

- Who planned the tour?
- Who was the local guide?
- What did they visit in Dakar?
- What did they visit in Timbuktu?
- Which museums did they see in Cote d'Ivoire?

- 5 the National Museum and the Cocody Museum of Art, and the Cote d'Ivoire Museum of Civilisations
- 4 They visited the Djinguereber Mosque
- 3 They visited the historical centre on Ile Goree,
- 2 Moussa was the local guide
- 1 a local travel company

Questions de comprehension en lecture

Comprehension questions

Answers