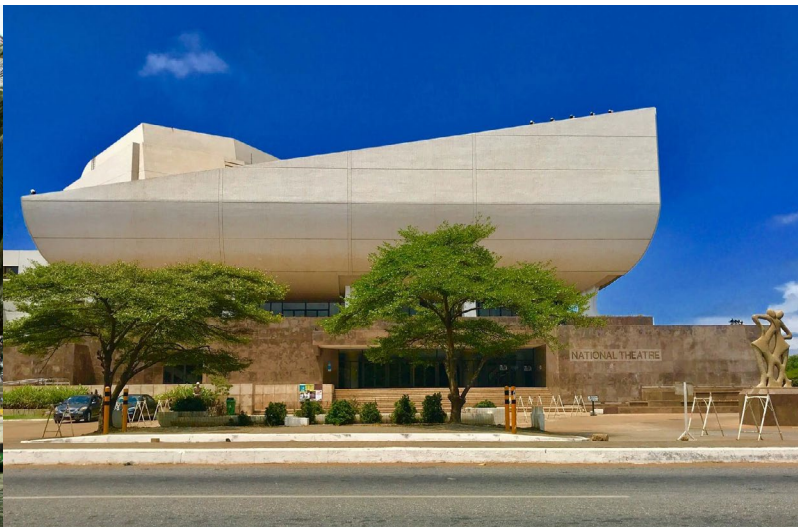




GHANA, YOUR GATEWAY TO AFRICA

From the energy of Accra and the history of Cape Coast to Ghana's food, landscapes and warm hospitality, a journey with Jata Tours is an invitation to experience the country through the eyes of the people who call it home.



can tell you about within the confines of this magazine, but one thing is for sure: Ghana is here and waiting to welcome you to share its ancient land and modern dreams.

ARRIVING IN ACCRA

Shortly after touching down at Kotoka International Airport in the nation's capital, Accra, I met with my fellow travellers at La Villa Boutique Hotel. Here, tucked away in the cosy neighbourhood of Osu, I got my first taste of Ghanaian hospitality. Our relaxed "Welcome to Ghana" group meal was a lovely way for our award-winning Ghanaian guide, Bonney Laaye, to introduce himself and for us to introduce ourselves to one another.

Our first morning in Accra found us exploring the crowded, busy and, at times, a little bewildering Makola Market. As the sights, sounds and aromas all vied for attention, one couldn't escape the slightly electric feeling of actually living in the moment. This was Africa; the Africa I had hoped to find, even dreamed of finding.

As the aromatic fragrance of cinnamon, mace and woodsmoke wafted over me from a myriad of spice sellers and kebab stands, I was filled with a blissful feeling of connection with my fellow human beings in a way I had never experienced before. This was only the first morning of the first day of my trip and I was already hooked. There was more, so much more to come, as I let Ghana wash over me like a dream come true.

The historic harbour community of Jamestown, the memorial park to Ghana's first president, Kwame Nkrumah, with its statues and fountains, and the impressive National Theatre of Ghana made for a fantastic and intoxicating introduction to the country.



CONFRONTING THE PAST

The next day I took a deep breath as our coach pulled out onto the westbound highway, heading for the historic slave-trading forts of the Gulf of Guinea. It was several hours later that I finally breathed out, as the brilliant white edifice of Cape Coast Castle came into view.

An eye-opener for some, a cathartic experience for others, these ancient forts are places where the past is confronted and where wounds may begin to heal. These sites were fundamental to the transatlantic slave trade, and walking through them brings visitors face to face with a period of history that many still struggle to come to terms with.

Irrespective of the personal impact of the forts on those who visit, these symbols of both oppression and hope are, without doubt, unforgettable places of profound and striking beauty. Like Ghana, each of us is a story, and inside ourselves resound the echoes of the stories of those whose very lives led to our own. People and countries may well endeavour not to repeat the sins of the past, but echoes never really fade away.

BEYOND GHANA'S SADDER PAST

Venturing beyond the legacy of Ghana's sadder past, we headed into the tropical landscape to experience the majesty of nature at its finest before travelling to Charlestina Beach Resort for two days of oceanside luxury. After another night dining in the capital, we continued our journey to Lake Volta, one of the world's largest artificial lakes by surface area.

We swam in fresh waterfalls surrounded by Ghanaian rainforest and enjoyed an onboard buffet during a cruise across the lake. There were moments for history, moments for reflection and moments simply to enjoy being in one of the most beautiful corners of West Africa.



GHANA: ONE BIG HEART

A geographically small nation of around 92,000 square miles, home to numerous ethnic groups, more than 80 living languages and one big heart, Ghana's official language is English. With its easy culture, organic food, kind-hearted people and tropical weather, Ghana welcomes you with its warm embrace as you are seduced by the incredible tapestry woven into the life force that shapes this magical land.

Ghana and Ghanaians relish welcoming the curious, the adventurous and those with a re-found spirit, showcasing the country's beauty and culture in a way that is infused with natural warmth, hospitality and generosity of spirit.

At Jata Tours, we differ from many West African tour companies in that we are 100% Ghanaian-owned and staffed. Ghana is our land and our home. Our award-winning and experienced guides' main aim is to give guests an easy and enjoyable experience. Our small groups are generally made up of around 15 to 20 guests who, while free to socialise, also have plenty of opportunity to take time out for themselves.

At Jata Tours, we earnestly believe that a Ghanaian adventure should be so much more than just a break. It should feel like a breakthrough.



AND THEN THERE IS THE FOOD

It wasn't just the music, the dance or the marriage of the people to the rhythm of life that I was finding so irresistibly spellbinding. The food was a delicious surprise. From peanut soup, tasty jollof rice and palm wine to drop doughnuts and mangoes that tasted like sunshine, my tummy was already thanking me for the trip!

Food is part of the rhythm of life here. Meals are shared, conversations flow and before long you begin to understand that Ghana is not simply somewhere you visit. It is somewhere you experience.

That is why I am going back. And this is why you should go too. Forget what you know, or think you know, about Africa. Ghana is waiting to welcome you; her people are ready to share their ancient land and your modern dreams.

So, what are you waiting for? Take your first step and discover Ghana for yourself.

ABOUT JATA TOURS

Jata Tours is a 100% Ghanaian-owned and staffed tour company offering small-group journeys through Ghana. With experienced, award-winning local guides, Jata Tours introduces guests to Ghana's history, culture, food, landscapes and people while providing an easy and enjoyable way to explore the country.

Groups are generally made up of around 15 to 20 guests, allowing plenty of opportunity to socialise while still having time to relax and enjoy the journey independently.

To find out more about forthcoming tours or to make an enquiry, visit [jatatours.com](https://www.jatatours.com).

