
FREETOWN TO FREETOWN (11 DAYS) SIERRA LEONE ENCOUNTERS



COUNTRIES VISITED: SIERRA LEONE

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Historical & Cultural Immersion:** Explore Freetown's iconic landmarks, learn traditional cooking, experience village life, and witness captivating cultural performances.
- **Nature & Wildlife Encounters:** Hike Sugar Loaf Mountain, visit the Tacugama Chimpanzee Sanctuary, be awestruck by the Wara Wara Mountains, and cruise to Tiwai Island for wildlife spotting.
- **Island Escapes:** Relax on the pristine beaches of Banana Island and Tasso Island, and unwind in tranquil coastal settings.
- **Poignant History:** Confront the sobering past at Bunce Island, the largest British slave castle on the West African coast.

INCLUDES

- 3 nights in Freetown, 1 night in Makeni & 1 night in Tokeh hotels
- 1 night at Tacugama Eco-Lodge
- 1 night in Kabala guest-house
- 1 night at Kwaanma Eco-camp

- 1 night on Banana Island & 1 night on Tiwai Island
- All transport and transfers
- 24-hour airport arrival & departure transfer service (on tour days)
- Services of a local tour leader throughout
- All sightseeing tours as per itinerary
- Entrance fees for visits included in the itinerary
- All meals (starting with dinner on day 1, ending with breakfast on day 11)
- Sierra Leone Entry Visa & Airport Security Fee

EXCLUDES

- International flights (available on request)
- Yellow Fever Certificate (Mandatory for entry to Sierra Leone)
- Travel insurance (compulsory)
- Meals not indicated in the itinerary
- Drinks, snacks and other personal expenses (e.g. laundry)
- Tips for tour leader & driver
- Any other items not mentioned above

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

ARRIVAL & ACCOMMODATION

The trip starts with a transfer from Lungi Airport in Freetown on day 1. Your first night of accommodation is included at the Barmoi Hotel (or similar).

Hotel Barmoi in Freetown offers a delightful escape with its elegant rooms boasting balconies and stunning ocean views. Guests can indulge in delicious meals at the restaurant and bar, unwind by the outdoor pool, or stay active in the fitness center. With its serene atmosphere and convenient location near Lumley Beach, Hotel Barmoi provides a tranquil and memorable experience for both leisure and business travelers.

Trip Joining Point: Barmoi Hotel - Freetown

Start Time Day 1: You can arrive at any time on day 1.

Address: 75C Cape Road, Freetown, Sierra Leone

Telephone: +232 30 960016

Website: <https://www.hotelbarmoi.com/>

Breakfast is included in the below rates.

Room Type	Price	Description
Single Room, en-suite	GBP 105	Per Room (for 1 person)
Double Room, en-suite	GBP 138	Per Room (for 2 people)

AIRPORT TRANSFERS:

Airport Transfers are included in the cost of your adventure. Your airport transfers are only included on the first and last day of the set tour itinerary, plus on any additional days if you book your hotel room with us. If you make your own arrangements for additional accommodation at either the beginning or the end of the tour then you will need to arrange your own airport transfers on these days.

Once you have processed your visa and collected your luggage, you should follow the crowds to the terminal exit to meet up with your Transfer Representative. **Your driver will be waiting along with all the other transfer drivers and will be holding an Oasis or Encounters Travel signboard.**

For any last minute requests please contact the UK office at africa@oasisoverland.co.uk and we will confirm the costs.

FLIGHT INFORMATION

We want to give you as much flexibility as possible when it comes to booking your holiday with us. So, to take account of people with varying travel plans, we don't normally include international flights in the main tour price. We are however very happy to suggest flights to go with the tour. Please contact us with your preferred dates and departure airport and we'll give you a selection of airlines, times and fares to choose from.

Your airport arrival & departure transfers are included on the first and last days of the tour. Nearly all our Sierra Leone tours start and finish in Freetown. You can fly into Freetowns Lungi International Airport (FNA).

We do also sometimes advertise flight inclusive packages from selected airports. Where these are shown on our website, prices are correct at the time of quoting, but are subject to continued availability of the fare used. Prices will be reconfirmed at the time of booking, and we will also provide the flight times and airline details before tickets are issued.

Flight CO2 Emissions:

Traveling by air is an amazing way to explore the world, but flights also contribute to carbon dioxide

(CO2) emissions that impact the environment. By considering the airline's CO2 emissions when you choose your flight, you can help minimize your travel footprint. When selecting your international flights and airline, we do therefore recommend that you try and also take into account the flight CO2 emissions. Some airlines and flight search websites (eg. Google Flights, Skyscanner) do publish this information, so you can compare between your flight options and make an informed decision. Thankfully, many airlines are working towards sustainability efforts, and choosing a greener option allows you to contribute to positive change while still enjoying your incredible adventure.

PASSPORTS

Your passport must be valid for at least 6 months **AFTER** your trip finishes. This is a general requirement for all of the countries we travel to on our trips.

If you have dual nationality you can only use one passport for the entire trip. It is your responsibility to ensure you have all the relevant visas you require.

VISAS

Sierra Leone

- **Trans Africa - Southbound & Northbound trips:**

All nationalities require a visa for Sierra Leone. We will obtain this visa whilst on the trip.

- **Sierra Leone Small Group Adventures:**

All nationalities require a visa and for most (including United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, European, British) we will arrange the visa for you free of charge prior to arrival. To facilitate this, our sales team will request a copy of your passport which will be used to issue your arrival visa.

Lungi Airport Security Pass:

The Lungi Airport Security Pass, officially called the "Securipass," is a mandatory fee for all passengers arriving at and departing from Freetown International Airport (FNA) in Lungi, Sierra Leone. We have included the cost of your arrival security pass in the price of your tour and proof of this will be sent to you prior to departure (your airport rep will also have a copy of this). When departing from Lungi Airport it is also necessary to pay for a second Securipass which can be paid in USD cash at \$25 per person (or can be prepaid online at - <https://securipass.sl/>). For ease, we recommend paying in cash upon departure.

VACCINATIONS AND HEALTH

You should ensure you are fully insured for medical emergencies, including emergency evacuation and repatriation.

Recommended vaccinations and health precautions vary depending on your travel history and health conditions. It's crucial to consult your doctor or a travel clinic for the most up-to-date information on vaccinations and health advice for Sierra Leone. Ensure your routine vaccinations are up to date, including those for occupational risks, lifestyle, and any underlying health conditions.

In addition, consider the following vaccinations for Sierra Leone:

Yellow Fever: A yellow fever vaccination certificate is required for entry into Sierra Leone.

Other recommended vaccinations: Tetanus, Typhoid, Hepatitis A, Polio, Diphtheria, Hepatitis B, Rabies.

Malaria is present in Sierra Leone and anti-malarial medications are recommended.

For the latest travel health information, consult your doctor or refer to reliable sources like the CDC or WHO websites.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

It is a compulsory requirement that you have adequate travel insurance before you join any Oasis trip and at the very least are insured for all necessary medical and repatriation costs incurred.

You will be asked to provide the following details if you have not already done so: travel insurance company name, insurance policy number & insurance emergency telephone number. You will also be required to give a copy of your policy with this information to your Tour Leader on arrival with confirmation that the policy duration is sufficient to cover you for the entire duration of your trip. It is also wise to leave a copy of your insurance policy with a friend or relative for safe keeping.

We believe that your safety and holiday enjoyment are very important. It is a mistake to think that "it will never happen to me". It is also very important that you are covered for all the activities that you may wish to undertake while on our trip. It is extremely important that you check the full extent of your cover related to 24 hour Medical Emergency Assistance. In the event of you needing medical treatment you want to know that you have the best cover available to you. Your policy should include adequate Medical Emergency and Repatriation cover as well as Cancellation, Baggage and Personal Liability cover. You need to be aware of EXACTLY what activities your policy covers you for. Please note that skiing is not usually covered in most insurance policies. Please note also that many of the areas we visit are not as developed as the UK and we have no control over the availability or standard of medical and repatriation services and facilities in the areas we visit and these do not form any part of our contract with you.

You should also note that passenger liability insurance covering vehicles, particularly in Third World

countries, may be unavailable or inadequate; it is therefore important that your insurance cover makes sufficient provision for you and your dependents in the event of an accident.

We are happy to refer our UK based travellers to the travel insurance specialists [Campbell Irvine](#) who have a policy suitable for overlanding which covers most of the adventure and sporting activities on our trips.

Please be aware that most travel insurance policies will not cover you if you are visiting areas against government travel advice. If your trip will go through areas like this (for example, some of our Trans Africa routes through West Africa) then you may need to look at an alternative policy for these sections, for example [Battleface](#) or [SafetyWing](#).

For further information, check out the [Travel Insurance](#) section of our website.

MONEY, BUDGETS AND LP

The local currency in Sierra Leone is the Leone (SLL). The Leone can fluctuate in value against the British Pound and the US dollar. You don't need to obtain Leones before your trip, as exchange facilities are available at the airport, banks, and some hotels. It's helpful to have small denomination notes and coins on hand for tips, restrooms, and small purchases. ATMs are available in major towns, and some shops accept VISA/Mastercard or Amex, but may add fees – it's wise to confirm before paying. Traveler's cheques are not recommended due to limited acceptance and potential high fees. You may find that some stores, particularly in Freetown will also accept USD.

While in Sierra Leone, you'll need money for drinks, snacks, souvenirs, tipping and personal expenses like laundry. These are generally paid for in Leones.

Personal spending needs vary, but as a guideline, we suggest budgeting at least USD 10-15 per person per day. If you plan on shopping or purchasing alcoholic drinks, you may want to allow more.

There is no local payment on this small-group tour.

Tipping in Sierra Leone is not compulsory, but it is a common practice to show appreciation for good service. While service charges are sometimes included in hotel and restaurant bills, small tips are also welcomed by staff. When tipping, consider the quality of service and the local context. A typical tip for services like baggage handling or a small act of kindness could range from 10,000 to 30,000 Leones. Remember to tip discreetly and with a smile.

It is customary to tip local guides and drivers for where good services has been received. We suggest coordinating tips as a group at the end of your tour. You should not feel obliged to tip any particular amount, and should consider your personal budget. We are often asked to provide a guide however, and can suggest that approx. USD 5-7 per person per day would be appropriate.

ENTRANCE FEES

The price of this tour includes the cost of entrance fees to visits included in the tour itinerary. Should you wish to visit any monument that is not included in the standard tour itinerary, the entry ticket for this is not included.

WHAT TO TAKE

Luggage: Suitcases, rucksacks, or fabric holdalls are all suitable for your trip to Sierra Leone, however due to the number of accommodation changes, you may find using a rucksack easier to handle. A small daypack is also recommended for carrying essentials during the day. Your main luggage will usually be left at your accommodation, and porters are often available to assist with heavier bags.

Luggage Limits: There are no specific luggage limits for this tour. However, airlines typically have restrictions, usually between 20kg and 25kg for checked luggage and 5kg to 10kg for carry-on luggage. Confirm with your airline before departure.

Clothing: Sierra Leone has a tropical climate, so pack lightweight and breathable clothing. Evenings and higher altitudes can be cooler, so bring layers for varying temperatures. Formal attire is not necessary. Long sleeves and trousers offer protection from mosquitoes and are recommended for modesty, particularly for women. While shorts and T-shirts are acceptable in tourist areas, it's best to dress respectfully and avoid overly revealing clothing. When visiting villages or religious sites, ensure your shoulders and knees are covered. We also recommend bringing along a good pair of hiking boots/shoes.

Other items: A light sleeping sheet or liner can provide comfort, and a light sleeping bag might be needed for cooler nights. Essentials include a sun hat, sunscreen, sunglasses, a basic first aid kit, toiletries, a small towel, a money belt, a small torch, a camera, chargers and battery packs.

CONTACTING HOME

The internet and WiFi are available in many towns / cities you will visit. Do bear in mind that the connections can be unreliable and will not always be as fast as you are used to at home. If a lot of people try to use the internet at the same time the speed will be slower still, especially if trying to make Skype calls or upload photos / videos. During periods of the trip where we are wild camping, internet will be less common.

Some travellers choose to take an unlocked mobile phone with them and buy local SIM cards or E-Sim in each country, allowing them to use mobile data. If you particularly want or need regular internet access this may be a good option. Telephone calls can be expensive usually £1 to £5 for a

three minute call.

Online Diaries - A great variety of free "travel blogs" are now available online, they are a good way of keeping relatives and friend up to date with what you are doing and a good place to upload photos, collecting messages as well as keeping a record for yourself.

RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

Before you go

- Remove unnecessary packaging before you go - waste disposal facilities are often stretched or non-existent in the places we visit. To avoid unnecessary pollution of local water supplies take environmentally friendly toiletries with you.
- Why not invest in a wind-up or solar-powered torch or media player before you travel or at least rechargeable batteries.
- Learn some of the local language and read up on the local history/culture before you go. You'll get so much more out of your trip.
- Why not pack some pens/pencils exercise books in your rucksack and they can be donated to a local school or project while you're away. You can also purchase these items cheaply, locally which will help local businesses.
- Take a sturdy water bottle with you from home that you can re-use throughout your trip. We carry large quantities of purified water with us on our Expedition vehicles and it is much better for the environment if you drink this, rather than purchase bottled water along the way. (It also saves you money).
- Water-to-Go: Oasis Overland have partnered with Water-to-Go to help reduce the number of plastic water bottles consumed during a trip. Water-to-Go is a filtration system that eliminates over 99.9% of all microbiological contaminants including viruses, bacteria, chemicals and heavy metals from any non-salt water source. Click [here](#) and enter the code OASIS15 to purchase your [Water-to-Go](#) products at 15% discount. Water-to-Go will then donate a further 15% to Oasis Overland Charity projects.

While you're travelling

From experience gained in running trips, we have developed our own practical and manageable environmental policy which all of our crew practice on the trips we operate, and they will share this information with you at the start of your trip. We welcome your input on this, plus any new ideas you may have, to improve our existing procedures. As a guide here's a few tips to bear in mind.

- Don't waste water. It is a scarce resource in many of the places our trips visit. On all our Ultimate and Overland Expeditions we carry large quantities of purified water with us. We encourage you to refill your own water bottles from this supply, rather than purchase bottled water along the way- much more environmentally friendly and saves you money.

- Never buy endangered species or endangered habitat products. Apart from the fact of it being illegal it also encourages the trade to continue.
- Look after and preserve the areas we visit. Be careful about stepping on coral reefs or trekking on undesignated tracks.
- Buy locally made crafts and products helping to support the local economy.
- Don't feel when bargaining that you have to get the cheapest price possible just for the sake of it. Pay what the item is worth to you & don't worry about what someone else has paid.
- Try the local food and drinks - this will help to support local farmers and food sellers. Sitting in a local cafe is also a great way to meet local people.
- Dispose of litter appropriately on your trip. This includes cigarette butts. Not only does litter look unsightly it can be lethal to wildlife.
- Where any toilet facilities exist, however unsavoury they might seem to you, they should be used. Where they do not, always bury your waste and make sure it is never near (at least 30m) a water source.
- When game viewing do not encourage your guides to get too close to the wildlife so that their natural behaviour is impeded.
- Respect local customs, traditions and beliefs of the people in the different regions that you travel through.
- Do not take photos of people, ritual events or special places unless you have asked first. Dress appropriately according to local codes and show respect around religious festivals.
- Recycling is almost non-existent in many of the areas and countries we visit - we do the best we can with limited resources & space on our vehicles.
- For books dedicated to travelling more responsibly & ethically see: www.tourismconcern.org.uk

Community Projects - Oasis are active in raising awareness and providing support to a number of projects and local schools where we believe we can make a positive difference. More information on the [projects we support](#).

SECURITY

The UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) offer country-specific advice, regarding not only security but also entry regulations, local laws and customs and health. We strongly recommend all travellers visit the FCDO website, or the equivalent in their home country, to familiarise themselves with local conditions and issues in the countries they plan to visit before committing to a trip with us. You can view their website [here](#).

If you have any questions at all about the safety or security of your trip, please do not hesitate to contact us and we will be happy to discuss your trip in more detail.

In cities - All major cities have their share of petty crime (just like our cities) and sensible precautions need to be taken. Wearing expensive looking jewellery or watches and carrying cameras will draw

unnecessary attention to you. Leave valuables such as passports and excess money in your hotel safe (we recommend carrying a copy of your passport details page at all times). You may find a simple money belt is more discreet than a bag. Always be aware of your surroundings and when approached by people you do not know, use your common sense. At night in cities it's best to use a taxi, rather than walking around the streets, single women in particular need to be careful and we would suggest that it is safer to be in a group.

Oasis does not take responsibility for clients' personal items and we advise you to not take items of value that are not essential for the journey.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

It is a compulsory requirement that you have adequate travel insurance before you join any Oasis Trip, and at the very least are insured for all necessary medical & repatriation costs incurred if you need them.

You will be asked to provide the following details on the Traveller Information Form that you send in to us after making your booking. If you have not already done so: travel insurance name, insurance policy number & insurance emergency telephone number. You will also be required to give a copy of your policy with this information to your Tour Leader on arrival with confirmation that the policy duration is sufficient to cover you for the entire duration of your trip. It is also wise to leave a copy of your insurance policy with a friend or relative for safe keeping.

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We offer tailor made Overland Adventure Travel Insurance that covers most of the adventure and sporting activities on our trips.

For further information on the insurance we offer, the activities covered and costs, check out the [Travel Insurance](#) section of our website. UK residents can purchase the insurance we recommend directly through [Campbell Irvine](#).

RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

Before you go

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- Take a sturdy water bottle with you from home that you can re-use throughout your trip. We carry large quantities of purified water with us on our Expedition vehicles and it is much better for the environment if you drink this, rather than purchase bottled water along the way. (It also saves you money).
- **Water-to-Go:** Oasis Overland have partnered with Water-to-Go to help reduce the number of plastic water bottles consumed during a trip. Water-to-Go is a filtration system that eliminates over 99.9% of all microbiological contaminants including viruses, bacteria, chemicals and heavy metals from any non-salt water source. [Click here](#) and enter the code OASIS25 to purchase your Water-to-Go products at 25% discount.

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- Dispose of litter appropriately on your trip. This includes cigarette butts. Not only does litter look unsightly it can be lethal to wildlife.

- Where any toilet facilities exist, however unsavoury they might seem to you, they should be used. Where they do not, always bury your waste and make sure it is never near, (at least 30m) a water source.
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- Do not take photos of people, ritual events or special places unless you have asked first. Dress appropriately according to local codes and show respect around religious festivals.
- Recycling is almost non-existent in many of the areas and countries we visit - we do the best we can with limited resources & space on our vehicles.
- For books dedicated to travelling more responsibly & ethically see: www.tourismconcern.org.uk

WHAT TO EXPECT

LIFE ON THE ROAD

You will be travelling within a group size ranging from 4 to 12 people, so come with an open mind and ready to make new friends! You will be accompanied on your adventure with an experienced Local English speaking guide. They are knowledgeable and passionate about all things Sierra Leone!!

Accommodation

Our tours in Sierra Leone feature a mix of accommodations, ranging from 3-star hotels in Freetown, to local guest houses, eco-lodges and pre-erected tents in other parts of the country.

As an emerging tourism destination, not all accommodations are able to provide the same level of comfort and facilities as hotels in Europe or North America and services such as wifi may not always be available. When outside of Freetown you may experience occasional power outages and poor internet connectivity.

Freetown, Makeni & Tokeh:

In these locations we use comfortable 2 to 3-star accommodations with private facilities. Due to the more remote location of Makeni, you should expect a lower level of accommodation here.

Takugama, Kabala, Boma Village, Tiwai & Banana Islands:

In these more remote parts of the country, there are fewer accommodation options, though the accommodations we've chosen to include we believe will add to your overall experience. In Takugama you will stay in basic but comfortable eco-lodge chalets which are located within the jungle surrounding the Takugama Chimpanzee Sanctuary. In Kabala you will stay a local guesthouse, rooms here are clean and comfortable but basic. As part of the Heritage Trail, we have included 1 night close to Boma Village and 1 night on Tiwai Island where you will stay in tents or huts. Finally, on Banana Island you will stay at the Bafa Resort which offers pre-erected tents which straddle the edge of the forest and shore line. These tents offer basic accommodation in a truly magical location.

On Tiwai and Banana Island, toilet and shower facilities are communal. In Boma Village, due to the nature of this stay, toilet facilities are basic and will be either shared community toilets or 'bush' toilets.

Please check the Accommodation tab on the tour page or download these Tour Notes for details of the normal hotels used. On our group tours, these hotels may change from time to time for other properties of a similar standard. If you would like to guarantee a particular hotel, please request a tailor-made tour.

Accommodation is based on twin, triple or double en-suite rooms/cabins with air conditioning. All couples will be given a private double room/cabin. Triple cabins are not available on Nile cruise boats.

Please check the Single Room Supplement option for details on room sharing options and charges for solo travellers on this tour.

Transport

Our trips feature a mix of different transport options. We want you to feel like you're really experiencing the country you're travelling through, but at the same time we want you to finish journeys refreshed enough to enjoy the next stage of the tour. In Sierra Leone road journeys will be in minivans appropriate to the final group size. As we include a number of island visits on this tour (Banana Island, Tiwai Island, Bunce Island and Tasso Island) our itinerary will also feature a number of boat/ferry journeys. When visiting Banana Island and Tiwai Island, you will travel in smaller speedboats and whilst visiting Bunce and Tasso Islands, you'll travel onboard larger boats, which may be shared with other passengers.

Vegetarians / Vegans / Coeliac / Gluten & Lactose intolerance

Our Tour Guides will always do their best to cater for any dietary requirement or intolerance whenever possible. However we don't cater for fussy eaters. It must be remembered that the variety of dishes available may not be the same as available to meat eaters. If there is anything in particular you require in your diet or because of an allergy or would miss from home, it would be best to bring these with you. Remember that when eating out in local restaurants & hotels sometimes being vegetarian or food allergies / intolerances are still not widely known about or understood by many local people. i.e. Vegetarians or Vegans will often be offered fish or chicken in error. Most large towns and cities, or areas used to tourists, will often have more choice but please be aware that it will probably not be as varied as you are used to when eating out at home.

TRIP ITINERARY

Arrive in Freetown. Transfer to city centre hotel by boat

Upon arrival at Lungi International Airport (FNA), you'll be greeted by the warm hospitality of Sierra Leone. Our friendly representatives will be waiting to meet you upon arrival.

From there, you'll embark on a scenic boat journey across the beautiful Sierra Leone River to Freetown, the vibrant capital city. This ferry ride offers stunning views of the coastline and a chance to get a first glimpse of this captivating country. The remainder of the day is free for you to settle in and begin exploring this West African capital. (*Dinner*)

Overnight: Hotel Barmoi (or similar)

Full day exploration of Freetown and evening cooking class

This morning, embark on a captivating exploration of Freetown, a city steeped in history and brimming with vibrant culture. Your journey begins at the esteemed Old Fourah Bay College, perched atop Mount Aureol. Founded in 1827, it holds the distinction of being the oldest Western-style university in Sub-Saharan Africa. Wander through its historic halls, where generations of scholars have pursued knowledge, and learn about its profound impact on education across the continent.

Next, descend into the heart of Freetown, where the iconic Cotton Tree stands tall. This majestic tree has witnessed centuries of history, serving as a symbol of hope and freedom since the arrival of freed slaves in the late 1700s. Pause for a moment of reflection at the nearby Peace and Cultural Monument, a poignant tribute to Sierra Leone's resilience in overcoming conflict and striving for unity.

Immerse yourself in the nation's captivating past at the Sierra Leone National Museum. Explore fascinating exhibits showcasing the country's diverse cultural heritage, from traditional masks and intricate carvings to historical artifacts that tell the story of Sierra Leone's journey through time. Continue your exploration at the Peace Museum, a testament to the power of reconciliation and the enduring human spirit. Discover inspiring stories of individuals and communities working together to build a brighter future after years of civil war.

Venture into the heart of the city's colonial past with a visit to the Gate Way to the King's Yard. This historical landmark offers a glimpse into the era when Freetown served as a key trading post and a refuge for freed slaves. Then, prepare to be swept away by the vibrant energy of Big Market, a bustling hub of local life. Wander through its labyrinthine alleys, where vendors proudly display their wares, from colorful fabrics and fragrant spices to fresh produce and handcrafted souvenirs.

As lunchtime approaches, savor the authentic flavors of Sierra Leone at Way Li Restaurant. Meaning "sweet" in the Fullah language, Way Li offers a delectable array of traditional dishes, each bursting with unique flavors and spices.

After lunch, you'll have a chance to see the impressive State House, the official residence and workplace of the President of Sierra Leone. Originally known as Fort Thornton, this stately building has played a significant role in the country's political history. Next, proceed to the Parliament Building, a striking architectural landmark constructed with assistance from Israel. Embark on a guided tour

through its grand halls, including the well of parliament, and gain insights into Sierra Leone's democratic processes.

As evening descends, prepare for a truly immersive cultural experience. Head to Treat Food Concept, a culinary haven founded by Susan Senesi, a passionate chef and champion of women's empowerment. Join Susan for a hands-on home cooking class, where you'll learn the art of preparing authentic Sierra Leonean dishes from scratch. Under her expert guidance, you'll chop, stir, and simmer, discovering the secrets behind the country's rich culinary traditions. As you create your own delicious meal, Susan will share fascinating stories and insights into the cultural significance of each dish. Finally, gather around the table and savor the fruits of your labor, enjoying a delightful dinner filled with flavor, conversation, and the warmth of Sierra Leonean hospitality. (*Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*)

Overnight: Hotel Barmoi (or similar)

Hike Sugar Loaf Mountain and visit Tacugama Chimpanzee Sanctuary

Towering over Freetown is Sugar Loaf Mountain, a lush forested peak that forms a dramatic backdrop to the city. Reaching 727 meters above sea level, this natural wonder is part of the Western Area Forest Reserve, a protected area that provides a haven for diverse flora and fauna. We'll take a hike up Sugar Loaf mountain this morning, which generally takes 3 to 4 hours. We recommend bringing along good hiking shoes/boots for this hike as the terrain can be steep in parts. Once you reach the top, you'll be rewarded with beautiful views of the surrounding landscape.

Later, venture to the Tacugama Chimpanzee Sanctuary, nestled in the rainforest just 40 minutes from Freetown. Established in 1995, this sanctuary is dedicated to rescuing and rehabilitating orphaned and abandoned chimpanzees. Observe these incredible primates in their semi-wild habitat within the 100-acre reserve as they swing through the trees, play, and socialize. Learn about the sanctuary's conservation efforts and the importance of protecting these endangered animals.

For a truly unforgettable experience, you'll spend the night in one of Tacugama's eco-lodge chalets. These basic but charming chalets are nestled amongst the trees, offering a unique opportunity to immerse yourself in the rainforest and fall asleep to the sounds of nature. Wake up to the calls of the chimpanzees and enjoy breathtaking views of the surrounding landscape. (*Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*)

Overnight: Tacugama Eco Lodge Chalets

Explore Makeni before experiencing traditional village life in Rogbonko village

After breakfast overlooking the lush rainforest, bid farewell to the chimpanzees of Tacugama and embark on a journey to Makeni, a bustling city in the heart of Sierra Leone. As you travel through the countryside, observe the changing landscape, from rolling hills and verdant fields to vibrant villages and bustling market towns.

Upon arrival in Makeni, we'll have a city tour that unveils the unique character of this regional hub. Explore its lively markets, where vendors offer a colorful array of goods, from fresh produce and aromatic spices to handcrafted jewelry and traditional textiles and discover historical landmarks that tell the story of Makeni's past.

Next, we'll venture off the beaten path to the charming village of Rogbonko, a hidden gem nestled amidst the tranquil countryside. Here, you'll have the opportunity to experience authentic rural life in Sierra Leone. Receive a warm welcome from the village chief and engage in a traditional ceremony to pay your respects to the local customs.

Immerse yourself in the daily rhythms of village life, participating in hands-on activities that offer a glimpse into the local culture. Learn the art of traditional cooking, using fresh ingredients and time-honored techniques to create flavorful Sierra Leonean dishes. Discover the intricate skill of basket weaving, crafting your own unique souvenir to take home. Engage with the friendly villagers, as you gain a deeper understanding of their way of life.

As the sun begins to set, bid farewell to the welcoming community of Rogbonko and return to Makeni where you'll spend the night. *(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)*

Overnight: Royal Hotel (or similar)

Visit the Wara Wara Mountain in Kabala. Evening cotton weaving experience and cultural dance performance

After breakfast, prepare to be awestruck by the natural wonder of the Wara Wara Mountains. Your journey takes you to Kabala, a town nestled amidst a landscape of breathtaking beauty. As you approach, the majestic Wara Wara Mountains rise before you. These imposing rock formations, sculpted by centuries of erosion, inspire awe and wonder. Explore the surrounding landscape, where hidden waterfalls cascade down rocky slopes and lush valleys cradle traditional villages. Hike through the foothills, breathing in the fresh mountain air and marveling at the panoramic vistas that unfold before you.

In the afternoon, delve into the rich cultural heritage of Kabala with a visit to a local cotton weaver. Witness the intricate process of transforming raw cotton into vibrant textiles, a tradition passed down through generations, maybe even try your hand at the loom.

We'll return to our hotel for dinner before a vibrant folklore and cultural dance performance. The rhythmic beats of traditional drums will fill the air as dancers, adorned in colorful costumes, tell stories of ancient legends and celebrate the spirit of Sierra Leone. *(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)*

Overnight: Weindays Guesthouse (or similar)

Join the Heritage Trail with a stop in Boma Village, learn about the legend of a local giant and stay in an Eco-Camp

Today's journey takes you to Kabala, where the mighty Sewa River meets the Waanje, forming the Kittam River that eventually flows into the Atlantic. From there, you'll embark on a heritage trail, venturing deep into the heart of Sierra Leone's cultural heritage. Your destination is the unique village of Boma, situated along the Moa River near Nainiati (Sand Island).

Boma stands out among the villages on the heritage trail because it's led by a female chief. Legend has it that a genie prophesied Boma would only prosper under a woman's leadership. You'll have the chance to experience the daily life of this fascinating community, witnessing their dances and rituals firsthand.

Your visit to Boma includes an encounter with local folklore at the grave of a "giant," where you'll hear the captivating story of an ancient war between giants and dwarves. You'll also stand in awe of the Boma Cotton Tree, a towering symbol of the village's harmonious relationship with nature. This majestic tree, the last of its kind in the surrounding area, is believed to protect Boma from strong winds and storms.

Immerse yourself in the tranquility of rural life as you spend the night at Kwaanma Eco-Camp ("Far Away"). This unique accommodation allows you to connect with nature and experience the serenity of the Sierra Leonean countryside. (*Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*)

Overnight: Kwaanma Eco-Camp

Hike to a mystical village, encounter local legends. Cruise to Tiwai Island for pygmy hippo & chimpanzee spotting

After breakfast, embark on a scenic walk to the neighboring village of Nainiahun, meaning "Sand Village." Your journey will take you along winding bush trails, through verdant rice paddies, and past fragrant cocoa and kola nut plantations. Along the way, you'll cross clear streams and observe the local way of life, gaining insights into the daily rhythms of rural Sierra Leone.

Nainiahun is known for its artisanal diamond mining, which draws together people from the Temne and Mende tribes, hoping to strike it rich in the surrounding swamps. Here, you'll visit "Kote Wulehun" (Large Stone Village), a fascinating cultural heritage site shrouded in mystique. Legend has it that during tribal wars, community members would seek refuge among these massive rock formations, where they could become invisible at will.

Before entering this mystical place, you'll remove your shoes as a sign of respect. Venture into the heart of Kote Wulehun, home to porcupines, bats, and other wildlife. Protected by traditional decree, this area serves as a testament to the community's commitment to conservation through their cultural beliefs. Listen as the Nainiahun elders share captivating stories of elves, invisibility spells, and powerful rituals. They will then perform a libation pouring ceremony, offering blessings for your onward journey.

After this enchanting encounter, enjoy a delicious meal prepared with locally sourced ingredients, savoring the flavors under the shade of swaying palm trees. Replenished and refreshed, continue your journey on foot to the banks of the Moa River. Here, a boat awaits to transport you to the secluded paradise of Tiwai Island.

As the day progresses, embark on a captivating boat ride upriver, keeping your eyes peeled for the elusive pygmy hippopotamus. Return as the sun dips below the horizon, painting the sky with vibrant hues. Throughout your boat trip, soak in the spectacular scenery of Tiwai Island and the neighboring mainland. Observe playful monkeys leaping through the trees, identify some of the 135 bird species that call this area home, and watch for the occasional crocodile basking in the sun.

In the late afternoon, venture into the depths of the rainforest with experienced guides to track chimpanzees and observe endangered monkey species in their natural habitat. This immersive experience offers a rare glimpse into the rich biodiversity of Tiwai Island and the importance of conservation efforts to protect this fragile ecosystem. *(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)*

Overnight: Tiwai Island

Travel from Kent Beach to Banana Island. Explore the island and spend time relaxing on the beach

Leaving the wildlife haven of Tiwai Island, your journey continues to the captivating Banana Island. You'll first travel to Kent Beach, where a boat awaits to transport you across the shimmering waters to this idyllic island. Step ashore and discover a unique blend of history and natural beauty.

Banana Island offers a glimpse into the past, with remnants of Portuguese infrastructure from the 1800s and a rich cultural heritage shaped by the Krio people, descendants of freed slaves who settled here. Explore the vibrant local communities, where you'll encounter warm hospitality and a fascinating blend of traditions.

Your destination on Banana Island is Bafa Resort, a secluded haven nestled amidst lush greenery and pristine beaches. This eco-friendly resort provides a tranquil escape, allowing you to unwind and immerse yourself in the island's serene atmosphere. Accommodation here is in pre-erected teepee style tents. *(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)*

Overnight: Tents at Bafa Resort

Leave Banana Island, time to relax at River No. 2

After a week of adventure and cultural immersion, it's time to unwind and soak up the sun at River No. 2. Depart Banana Island and head to this picturesque coastal destination, where golden sands and crystal-clear waters await.

Here, you have the option to simply relax and bask in the warmth of the tropical sun, or embark on a leisurely stroll along the pristine beach. Take a refreshing dip in the ocean, feel the soft sand between your toes, and let the tranquil atmosphere wash away any lingering stress.

Later, you'll check in to the Estuary Resort, your haven for the night. This charming resort offers comfortable accommodations and a relaxed ambiance, perfect for unwinding after a busy week of exploration. *(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)*

Overnight: Estuary Resort (or similar)

Explore the sober history of Bunce Island before visiting the idyllic Tasso Island

Today, you'll delve into a poignant chapter of Sierra Leone's history with a visit to Bunce Island. Departing from Tokeh, you'll embark on a boat journey that takes you along the scenic Sierra Leone River to this once-infamous site.

Bunce Island holds a somber significance as the largest British slave castle on the West African Rice Coast. Established around 1670, this fortified trading post served as a major hub for the transatlantic slave trade. For over a century, tens of thousands of African captives were held here in horrific conditions before being transported across the Atlantic to North America and the West Indies. Walk through the ruins of the castle, where the stark remnants of slave quarters, dungeons, and trading houses paint a vivid picture of the island's dark past. Reflect on the profound human impact of the slave trade and its enduring legacy.

After your visit to Bunce Island, a wave of emotions likely washing over you, a change of scenery awaits. You'll journey to Tasso Island, a tranquil paradise offering a stark contrast to the somber history of Bunce Island. This idyllic island is known for its pristine beaches, lush vegetation, and laid-back atmosphere. Relax on the sandy shores, swim in the turquoise waters, and soak up the tranquility of this tropical haven. It's the perfect place to reflect on the day's experiences and find solace in the beauty of nature. *(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)*

Overnight: Hotel Barmoi (or similar)

Transfer back to Lungi Airport for departure

Today you'll have free time in Freetown until transferring to the sea-coach for your transfer back to Lungi Airport. *(Breakfast)*

OPTIONAL EXCURSIONS

Optional Excursions are paid for on the day and organised during your trip, so you can decide whilst travelling which activity you may want to do. Prices listed are only a guide and may be dependant on fluctuating exchange rates and minimum numbers. Please see below for more details.

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We feel that having optional excursions gives a greater degree of flexibility and independence to our group members; independence to decide how much your spending budget can afford; flexibility to decide when and what time of day or with whom to visit a particular site, rather than for example, with the whole group at a pre-ordained time.

You pay for the optional excursions to the local operator, ensuring the money stays with that operator in the local community and this ensures as well, that you are paying the true price for any optional excursions you want to do. This also applies to accommodation costs before and after the trip. Please note that the prices of optional excursions quoted are approximate as local prices can and do change. Please see the relevant trip page for the Optional excursions you can do on that trip and a list of prices.

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