



ECOTOURISM **AT THE HEART OF GABON**

Come to Makokou, North-East of Gabon, and experience the primordial forest surrounded by an extraordinary maze of rivers and waterfalls:

Your guides Bakota, Fang and Bakwélé will show you the marvels and wonders of the forest as they escort you through its rich vegetation and undergrowth; they will explain the **age-old use of its products**, point out the **wildlife** that lives in the forest and make you feel like you are on a treasure hunt: you have to find the animals, track them and creep up on them without them knowing.

Tourism is managed by the local community and is an major source of income for them. Since 1994, ex-hunters and poachers have been acting as tour guides and they are the best defence against killers of elephants and gorillas.

By visiting the forest, you are helping to protect the wildlife.

Trips: Kongou waterfalls; Momba; Kongou and Momba; Langoué; Customised trips

General information – Booking and Info

A joint venture with



Agence Nationale des Parcs Nationaux

Ecotourism at the heart of Gabon – www.gabonrightroutes.org

« Kongou Waterfalls » Trip

Go down one of the last African rivers as yet un-spoilt by Man. Visit the Kongou Falls, one of the most spectacular in Africa. Spend a night in the forest. Short, easy-going walks in the forest are for whoever wants to take part.

The Kongou Falls, on the Ivindo river in the Ivindo National Park, 45 kilometres from the village of Makokou, are among the most spectacular in the whole of Africa. They stretch for 3 kilometres and are laid out in a series of higher and lower falls. To get there, you take a dug-out canoe and travel 3-4 hours by river from Makokou.

The waters of the Ivindo descend slowly between two great walls of virgin forest: the different types of forest make the journey really breath-taking and the chance to be on one of the last African rivers un-spoilt by Man is once in a lifetime. There are many species of birds to be seen, besides the elephants in the forest, the marshbuck and the bushpig. The Kongou camp, which is behind the falls, means you will have the chance to pass the night in an un-spoilt equatorial forest.

A visit to the falls lasts three days (two nights). A shorter stay of two days and one night is available. When the river is swollen, a day trip to the Kongou falls can be made.

Level of difficulty

Easy walks of about 3-4 hours are planned, plus a canoe trip. Children under 12 years of age are allowed to take part with the permission of their parents.

Itinerary : 3 days - 2 nights

Day 1 : morning departure from Makokou (Station de Recherche IRET or Loaloe village) to the Kongou Falls, journey time 3 to 4 hours along the river. In the afternoon, an excursion to the canyon, 2 hours on foot there and back, a visit to the falls, return to camp.

Day 2 : excursion to the falls « Bouilla N'a Ngondé », the biggest in the Kongou expanse. A 90-minute walk to get to a dug-out canoe at the bottom of the falls. Ivindo River crossing at the bottom of the falls, half an hour on foot to get to the *Bouilla N'a Ngondé* falls.

Day 3 : Excursion of 4-5 hours on foot in the virgin forest. The chance for our guides to tell you about their life in the forest and meet some animals. Return to Makokou in the afternoon.

Equipment

- Medical and Travel Insurance are required for the trip
- strong (soles) walking boots, a supply of socks (especially in the rainy season as they get wet easily)
- light-weight long trousers (easy to dry), long-sleeved shirts; avoid brightly coloured clothes (green, grey, beige and brown are best)
- swimming costume
- poncho or lightweight rain-jacket (especially in the rainy season, but also in the short dry season)
- small capacity backpack (30-40 litre)
- sun cream
- insect repellent
- torch
- anti-malaria pills

Prices

Number of people *	Number of days/nights	Price/person
1 person	2 days /1 night	240.000 Fcfa
1 person	3 days /2 nights	320.000 Fcfa
1 person	1 day/0 nights	150.000 Fcfa
2 people	2 days /1 night	160.000 Fcfa
2 people	3 days /2 nights	220.000 Fcfa
2 people	1 day/0 nights	100.000 Fcfa
3 people or more*	2 days /1 night	140.000 Fcfa
3 people or more*	3 days /2 nights	180.000 Fcfa
3 people or more*	1 day/0 nights	75.000 Fcfa
	Additional nights	50.000 Fcfa/person/night

* Group of 6 people maximum. For more than 6 people, bookings must be arranged separately.

The prices do not include extras (beverages and drinks other than water), the overnight stays and meals in Makokou. Travellers should allow at least 25.000 Fcfa/person per night for overnight stays and meals in Makokou. The admission charges for the National Park are not included: 5.000 Fcfa/person/day.

« Momba » Trip

Experience the thrill of exploring one of the most remote areas of Africa in a dug-out canoe and on foot, with neither a road nor a village in sight. On the trail of forest elephants.

The baï di Momba is a swampy expanse of terrain in the middle of the forest that lies outside the Ivindo National Park. It is crossed by one of the branches of the river Mouniandjé, more or less in the area close to the village of Melondo on the Makokou-Okondja road. It can be reached from Makokou:

- in a dug-out canoe along the Mouniandjé river, from Makokou to Melondo camp (12 hours), 4 hours on foot to camp Bougoye, an hour's walk to baï di Momba.
- by car to the village of Melondo (4 hours approx.), on foot from Melondo village to Melondo camp on the banks of the Mouniandjé (7 hour walk), to camp Bougoye (4 hours on foot), an hour on foot to baï de Momba.

The terrain of Momba, like most of the wetland in the forests of Central Africa, is essential for the larger species of forest animal, such as the elephant or buffalo. In the forest there are also gorillas, chimpanzees and mandrills. The baï is outside the Ivindo Park and recently has been endangered by a logging operation which is 35 km away (2016).

The trip is organised with the Melondo and Truhaya villages which are 30 km from the baï on the Makokou-Okondja road. Tourism may help reduce exploitation of the forest in the surrounding area and save the baï di Momba.

Level of difficulty

Walks in the forest leisurely and last 3-4 hours at the most, navigation on the river is in a dug-out. This trip is only for adults (over 12 years of age), there is no physical fitness level required.

Itinerary : 4 days - 3 nights

Day 1 : By dug-out along the Mouniandjé river towards camp Milondo situated about 100 km from Makokou. The Mouniandjé has the *Béssi/kaaul* rapids where the canoe has to be steered by your guides. After roughly 8 hours on the river, you spend the night in a half-way camp (Mohoba camp).

Day 2 : The journey down the river continues to the Milondo/Mouniandjé camp at about 5 hours distance. At camp Milondo/Mouniandjé you will meet the team of 4 guides from the villages of Milondo and Truhaya, who are already there to meet you. After a short stop, the trek continues on to the camp at Baï di Momba, which is a two-stage trip of 4 hours. Then, later on, you will have the chance to visit the Baï which is about a one-hour walk from the camp.

Day 3 : Second visit to the baï of Baï (approx. 6 hours depending on the wildlife in the area). There is a tour of the Baï di Momba available. Return to camp Milondo for the night.

Day 4 : From camp Milondo on the Mouniandjé river to Makokou, by two possible routes.

Option 1 : by dug-out along the Mouniandjé river to Makokou, a journey time of 8 hours, less than the trip out.

Option 2 : a 17 km trek to Milondo village, journey time about 7 hours. A car will transport you to Makokou.

Equipment

Please contact us regarding equipment necessary.

- Medical and Travel Insurance are required for the trip
- strong (soles) walking boots, a supply of socks (especially in the rainy season as they get wet easily)

- light-weight long trousers (easy to dry), long-sleeved shirts; avoid brightly coloured clothes (green, grey, beige and brown are best)
- swimming costume
- poncho or lightweight rain-jacket (especially in the rainy season, but also in the short dry season)
- light-weight sleeping bag
- light-weight tent (please, contact us for advice)
- small capacity backpack (30-40 litre), plus a 60 litre backpack for food and extra luggage, carried by the guides
- sun cream
- insect repellent
- torch
- anti-malaria pills

Prices

Number of people *		Price/person
1 person		550.000 Fcfa
2 people		450.000 Fcfa
3 people or more *		350.000 Fcfa

* Maximum number of 8 people per group, in two dug-outs. Larger groups must be arranged separately.

The prices do not include extras (beverages and drinks other than water), the overnight stays and meals in Makokou. Travellers should allow at least 25.000 Fcfa/person per night for overnight stays and meals in Makokou.

« Kongou » and « Bai Momba » Trip

Spending seven days in a forest means you get to know it well and tune in to its fascination and wonder. Your guides are ex-poachers who have “turned their hand” to protecting the wildlife through tourism.

The Ivindo – Kongou and Momba Bai trips can be combined in one trip called « Kongou-Momba » which lasts 7 days and has an overnight stop in Makokou.

Level of difficulty

Only for adults (> 12 years old), there is no physical fitness level required.

Equipment

Please contact us regarding equipment necessary.

- Medical and Travel Insurance are required for the trip
- strong (soles) walking boots, a supply of socks (especially in the rainy season as they get wet easily)
- light-weight long trousers (easy to dry), long-sleeved shirts; avoid brightly coloured clothes (green, grey, beige and brown are best)
- swimming costume
- poncho or lightweight rain-jacket (especially in the rainy season, but also in the short dry season)
- light-weight sleeping bag
- light-weight tent (please, contact us for advice)
- small capacity backpack (30-40 litre), plus a 60 litre backpack for food and extra luggage, carried by the guides
- sun cream
- insect repellent
- torch
- anti-malaria pills

Prices

Number of people *		Price/person
1 person		700.000 Fcfa
2 people		600.000 Fcfa
3 people or more *		500.000 Fcfa

* Group of 6 people maximum. For more than 6 people, bookings must be arranged separately.

The prices do not include extras (beverages and drinks other than water), the overnight stays and meals in Makokou. Travellers should allow at least 25.000 Fcfa/person per night for overnight stays and meals in Makokou. The admission charges for the National Park are not included: 5.000 Fcfa/person/day (first part: Kongou falls).

« Langoué » Trip

To do this trip you must be in good shape, physically speaking. It's a great opportunity to cross the Ivindo Park from the North to the South by dug-out and on foot in 9 days. You pass through forests that had been unexplored by Western ecologists until 2000 and which are still practically unknown.

This trip is a chance to make a North-South crossing of the Ivindo Park by dug-out and on foot, trekking for a number of days. You will cross remote parts of the Park far away from roads and villages and will see the Djidji river and the baï di Langoué, unknown to Western eyes until 2000. The descent along the river Djidji by dug-out and the trek across the forest is like being in a time machine and takes you back to the Central Africa of centuries ago. The climb up Mont Kingue provides an aerial view of the equatorial forest that is unequalled. On the Djidji river there are otters and other animals; in the forest, chimpanzees, gorillas, elephants and mandrills. In the Baï di Langoué there are certain times of the year when elephants, buffaloes and gorillas can be observed in complete safety. If the river is flowing, you will descend the Djidji in a dug-out and if not, on foot.

Level of difficulty

You must be very fit. Children under 14 cannot come on this trip. The trip entails slow treks of 7-9 hours a day. Crossing of Mont Kingue (600-700 m above sea level). In the rainy season, the walk can be more strenuous because of flooded zones.

Itinerary : 9 days - 8 nights

Day 1 : transfer to Makokou- Kongou Falls (3 hours by boat), excursion to the canyon (3 hours on foot), overnight stay in camp Kongou ;

Day 2 : Excursion to the waterfalls « Bouilla N'a Ngondé », (4 hours on foot), return to camp and preparation of bags, overnight stay in camp Kongou ;

Day 3 : Crossing in a dug-out via the left side of the Kongou falls to reach Menamatchema (15 minutes by canoe), set off on foot towards the Djidji river, (7 hours), bivouac in the forest at halfway camp Lassandja;

Day 4 : continuation of the walk to camp Djidji (6 hours), bivouac in the forest on the banks of the Djidji river ;

Day 5 : descent of the river Djidji in a dug-out (if the water is deep enough) (5 hours), otherwise on foot and bivouac in the forest;

Day 6 : set off towards Langoué on foot, cross mount Kingué (6-7 hours), bivouac in the forest;

Day 7 : continue towards Langoué (6 hours), visit to the baï di Langoué, overnight stay in camp Langoué

Day 8 : second visit to the baï di Langoué, overnight stay in camp Langoué or the observation tower to see the wildlife;

Day 9: departure on a quad bike headed for camp Dilo. From camp Dilo, by canoe to Boué station, or once again by quad bike to Ivindo station. Return to Libeville by train.

There is the possibility to stay an extra day at Langoué, making the trip 10 days and 9 nights.

Equipment

Please contact us regarding equipment necessary.

- Medical and Travel Insurance are required for the trip
- strong (soles) walking boots, a supply of socks (especially in the rainy season as they get wet easily)

- light-weight long trousers (easy to dry), long-sleeved shirts; avoid brightly coloured clothes (green, grey, beige and brown are best)
- swimming costume
- poncho or lightweight rain-jacket (especially in the rainy season, but also in the short dry season)
- light-weight sleeping bag
- light-weight tent (please, contact us for advice)
- small capacity backpack (30-40 litre), plus a 60 litre backpack for food and extra luggage, carried by the guides
- sun cream
- insect repellent
- torch
- anti-malaria pills

Prices

Number of people *	Price/person
1 person	800.000 Fcfa
2 people	650.000 Fcfa
3 people	550.000 Fcfa
4 people or more*	450.000 Fcfa

* Group of 6 people maximum. For more than 6 people, bookings must be arranged separately.

The prices do not include extras (beverages and drinks other than water), the overnight stays and meals in Makokou and the train for Libreville. Travellers should allow at least 25.000 Fcfa/person per night for overnight stays and meals in Makokou. The admission charges for the National Park are not included: 5.000 Fcfa/person/day. During the trek from Kongou to Langouè, natural spring water is provided.

Customised Trips

We organise other types of trip upon request. Trips can be varied in itinerary or length and longer stays in the forest can be planned. The practically unexplored zones of the forest can be visited by agreement with the Ivindo Park.



General information

Getting to Makokou

To get to Makokou :

- By taxi brousse or Bus. There are a number of buses and taxis brousse that depart everyday from Libreville for Makokou. The Société gabonaise de Transport runs 1 or 2 50-seater buses to Makoko everyday. The société Etoile Transport, JC Transport, Dino Transport, and others leave from Libreville to Makoko everyday. Allow about 10-12hours journey time. Tickets about cost 15-20.000 Fcfa/person.
- By train: train from Libreville to Boué (night train, arriving at 3am), then taxi brousse booked in advanced for Makokou (3-4 hour).
- By air: flight from Libreville – Makokou (not available since 2015, but could be an option).

Seasons / Climate – Makokou Region

- **Long dry season** (July-September): infrequent rainfalls, mild temperatures (22/25°C), not much sunlight: poor photographic opportunities owing to scarce daytime illumination.
- **Short dry season** (December-February): scarce rainfalls and plenty of sunlight.
- **Wet season** (the rest of the year): frequent rainfalls, variable temperatures and abundant sunlight for photos.

Booking and Info

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