

THE YEAR OF RETURN GHANA 2019

“JAMESTOWN VA TO JAMES TOWN

ACCRA

AUGUST 19-26, 2019 ITINERARY

PREPARED BY MICHAEL ORLEANS TORCH LIGHT TOURS

DAY 1-(AUGUST 19) ARRIVAL IN ACCRA

ROOTS APARTMENT OR SIMILAR WELCOME DINNER

MEALS: D

- Arrival at Kotoka International Airport; Akwaaba Welcome
- Later this evening, we will host a Meet & Greet Dinner at a restaurant nearby. You'll have an opportunity to try your first taste of local cuisine and get to know your fellow travelers.

DAY 2- (AUGUST 20) “ACCRA CITY TOUR”

ROOT APARTMENT/SIMILAR

MEALS: B, L, D

Having enjoyed your first night in Accra, today is dedicated to an Accra city tour, first visit is W. E. B. DuBois and Pan African Center is a memorial place and a research center, dedicated into a great Pan Africanist who lived and died as a Ghanaian, he came to Ghana at the Age of 95 with 1,000 books to work on African Encyclopedia on invitation of Ghana's first president. At the center we will visit African American Association of Ghana office and join other returnees to participate in some of the yearlong activities earmarked for the “The Year Of Return 2019”. Ghana seeks to invite home all and sundry kith and kin of African descendants on a pilgrimage journey to the motherland to reconnect with their ancestral roots, whilst commemorating 400 years of when the first enslaved Africans landed in America. We also honor our heroes and heroines for fighting for our emancipation and liberty. We continue to visit National Museum, which is ethnographic in nature and gives us an excellent overview of West African culture. During our time here we also get the chance to view and purchase some wonderful examples of traditional crafts. James Town is the next, which is one of the indigenous areas of Accra to learn about the legacies two European Powers British and Dutch left behind and the daily life style of

people of James Town which is a fishing community with a lot of vibrant tourist activities notably is the recent Street Art Festival “Chale Wote” with a lot of fascinating street art works, we will also visit a Brazilian lane, which inhabit Stone Houses which was built by formal enslaved Africans from Brazil who seal their way back to the Guinea Coast after Slave Trade was abolished and some of them ended up in Accra Ghana, some continue to Nigeria others stay in Ghana and integrate very well in Ghana society, during our time in James Town, we will also participate in ongoing rituals and atonements in commemorate the 400 years when the first enslaved African landed in America. Lunch will be taken at a local restaurant serving a selection of West African and continental dishes. In the afternoon we pass by Independence Square and view the enclosed flame of African liberation, which was lit by Kwame Nkrumah himself in 1961. We continue the short distance to the Kwame Nkrumah Memorial Park, final resting place of Ghana’s founder. Set in attractive gardens, there is an adjoining museum, which contains photos, artifacts and an insight into this incredible man’s life. Adjoining the park is the National Cultural Center, which is actually Ghana’s largest outdoor arts and crafts market selling traditional crafts from all over West Africa. After testing your bargaining skills we return to our hotel for our evening meal, the remainder of the evening is for leisure.



DAY 3 (AUGUST 21)

NODA HOTEL

MEALS: B,L,D

After breakfast we depart for Kumasi capital of the Ashanti region to learn about the powerful Ashanti Empire and its people. We will enjoy our lunch upon arrival, We start the day visiting some traditional villages but first we take a visit to the traditional home of Nana Yaa Asantewaa a great female warrior who led the Ashantes in the 1901 war against the British, she was also the Queen Mother of Ejisu Besease, we shall visit her Spiritual Shrine where she fortified herself during the war. Kumasi is regarded as cultural center of Ghana, with its many ancient craft villages within touching distance of the city. Remainder of the day is dedicated to visiting these traditional villages; our next stop is Adanwomasie famous as the birth place of Kente. Adanwomasie produces some of Ghana's finest Kente cloths, many designs of cloth are woven here and some are exclusive only to this region. We will interact with the community, learning about the history behind the many designs. As we walk through the village, we see highly skilled locals weaving outside their homes. The machines that the weavers use have not changed in design for centuries. During our time at Adanwomasie, we have the opportunity to buy excellent quality cloth at very reasonable prices before setting off for the village of Ntunso.

The ancient village of Ntunso, is where Adinkra originates. Adinkra are traditional symbols with meanings, carved from calabash shells, and printed onto traditional cloth using natural dyes made from the bark of certain local trees. Adinkra cloth has been adorned by the Ashanti's for more than 4 centuries and pre dates Kente cloth. Even today most Ashanti's will wear Adinkra cloth for funerals, festivals and other important occasions. During our time here we have the opportunity to make our own strip of Adinkra cloth using symbols with personal significance. We check into our hotel after wonderful day.



DAY 4 (AUGUST 22)

NODA HOTEL

MEALS: B,L,D

Our final destination is Elmina but first we will embark on city tour of Kumasi, with a visit to Manhyia Palace museum, which houses regalia, paraphernalia and real good ornaments which tells the history, tradition, continuity and customs of Ashantes. We continue to visit National Cultural Centre. The cultural center is found in one of the oldest suburbs of Kumasi. There is a wonderful craft market here and during our leisurely tour we have the opportunity to visit the Prempeh II Jubilee museum which offers an excellent overview of Ashanti history, short distance is Okomfo Anokye sword which has defied all human strength to pull it out, it was planted there by famous priest Okomfa Anokye who conjure the golden stool from the heaves. We will enjoy our lunch after wonderful time and continue our journey to Elmina, stopping at Assin Manso, was one of the major slave market during the slave trade, Ndonkor Nsuo (Enslaved African River). This river is where enslaved Africans were checked for fitness and bathed before being transported to Cape Coast for shipment to the Americas and Caribbean. After we continue our journey to the coast and check into our hotel upon arrival, the remainder of the day will be spending at leisure and relaxations.

DAY 5 (AUGUST 23)

ELMINA BEACH RESORT

MEALS: B,L,D

One of the highlights of the trip is a visit to Kakum tropical rainforest to experience the much talked about Canopy walkway, the uniqueness of the park lies in the fact that it was established at the initiative of the local people, it is one of the only 3 locations in Africa with a canopy walkway, which is 350 meters (1,150 FT) long and connects seven tree tops, the park is also notable for a lot of endangered species of fauna in the park. We enjoy lunch at Han's Cottage Hotel near Kakum, built over a lake containing Nile crocodiles and set in a beautiful location surrounded by tropical guinea rainforest. After lunch we will continue to Elmina, stopping at Simiw village to pay a courtesy call on chiefs and elders of the village and participate in traditional naming ceremony and "The Right to Return Atonement and Rituals Ceremony" to formally welcome you back home. Elders of the community will pour libation to call on our ancestors and welcome you back. There will be drumming, dance and other rituals performed.

Upon arrival in Elmina our first stop will be Elmina fishing market to visit the boat builders, building colourful fishing boats using traditional tools and methods. We will also visit the Elmina castle built by the Portuguese in 1482 which is the oldest European building in Sub Saharan Africa. This castle is steeped in history and played a prominent part during the tragic transatlantic enslaved African trade era. There is an informative museum inside which concentrates on local history and it is designated a world heritage site by UNESCO. After spending the afternoon in Elmina, we return to our hotel to relax and later in the day join we can optionally participate in Cooking Lessons, explore the fragrant and exotic flavours of Ghana and West Africa finest cuisine and take the recipe back home.

DAY 6 (AUGUST 24)

ROOT APARTMENT/SIMILAR

MEALS: B, L, D

We check out of our hotel and head to Accra, but first we will visit Cape Coast Castle also designated as a world heritage site by UNESCO. Built by the British in 1665 at the height of slavery and played a major role in holding enslaved Africans in waiting of slave ships to ship them to the New World. We will walk through the Male and Female dungeons and the infamous "Door of No Return". There is a historical museum inside, which explains the whole history of the castle and Cape Coast itself, as well as a souvenir shop which sells literature on all of Ghana's forts and castles, as well as the cultural history and traditions of Ghana. We will continue our journey to Accra, en-route stop to enjoy our lunch at a restaurant, upon arrival in Accra we will proceed to join Chale Wote Street Art festival at JamesTown Accra, which is an

alternative platform that brings art, music and dance performances out of the street and targets exchanges between scores of local and international artist.



DAY 7 (AUGUST 25)

ROYAL SENCHI

MEALS: B, L, D

After leisurely breakfast we will check out our hotel and our final destination is Royal Senchi Resort, suited along the Volta river, en-route we will stop at Shai Hills Forest Reserve, a savannah grassland which is inhabitant by large groups of Olive Baboons, some antelopes, green and spot nosed monkeys, some ostrich and recently introduce of zebras to the park. The forest reserve also have an archaeological site of the ancient Shai people who used to reside in the area but were ejected by the British in 1892, they were living in caves as hideout from slave riders and other invaders, we will hike to one of the caves to witness some of the activities by the ancient Shai tribe. After we continue to check into our hotel, enjoy our lunch and the reminder of the day will be at leisure, we can go cruising on the Volta River, horse ride and others.

DAY 8 (AUGUST 26)

DEPARTURE

MEALS: B, L, D

Sadly your final day with us, after leisurely breakfast, we check out of our hotel and depart for Accra, we check out of our hotel and depart for Accra, and we may have the opportunity to pick up any last minute souvenirs as we visit Ghana's largest arts and crafts market. We then enjoy an early farewell meal before your transfer to the airport and departure after an unforgettable 8 Day Heritage Tour experience with us.