

THE KITTY: ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMMODATION



Trip Name: Freetown to Dakar

Trip Length: 28 nights

Kitty Price: Approximately €480 Euros

What is the 'kitty'?

The kitty is a group fund paid in addition to the trip price at the start of your trip. The kitty is managed by the crew and the passengers and is used to pay for accommodation for each trip night (be it camping or hotels/hostels), meals whilst camping and all activities listed as included (see below).

The kitty system is unique to overlanding – it's flexible and you can see exactly how your money is being spent. The crew will manage the kitty, but the kitty expense sheets will be open to inspection by everybody at all times so that the whole process remains transparent. If there is money left over at the end of the trip, then you will receive a refund.

The kitty figure detailed above is an estimated price. We will inform you of any changes closer to departure.

Your kitty payment will be collected when you arrive for your trip, usually on the first day at the joining meeting, **and must be paid in cash**. We ask that at least 50% of the kitty price is paid in Euros cash. We can accept the remaining 50% of the kitty price in US dollars. This is because nearly all major currencies in West Africa are tied to the Euro, and trying to change any currency other than Euros or US Dollars can be time consuming and problematic.

Please note that if you are on a combination trip made up of more than one single trip your kitty will be collected in stages and not in its entirety at the start of the first section.

What's included?

All accommodation costs included. Approximately 5 nights in a hostel/hotel, the rest mixed between campsites/campements (with basic facilities) and bush camping (no facilities). The longest stretch without facilities should be 3 nights in a row. There are numerous options on this trip to upgrade from camping to a basic room along the way if you want to pay extra.

All food whilst camping is included in the kitty, though occasionally we might want to put a lunch or dinner on hold whilst camping if we find somewhere funky en route or are invited to eat in a local village.

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Included in this kitty price are a number of music and dance ceremonies that we'll enjoy as a group in Gambia and Senegal, including a traditional 'Koumpo' dance; a Djembe troupe performance; a Kora performance; and an evening of music and dancing with villagers around a number of camps. However, please note, these performances are not always guaranteed to happen!

When we spend 2 nights in a traditional village in the Fouta Djalon with locally prepared meals, guided treks with our eccentric English-speaking host are included in the kitty - though you can opt out of these treks if you wish.

There are no other activities included in the kitty price on this trip. With such an array of activities in the Gambian national parks, the Casamance region in Senegal and the stunning Fouta Djalon region of Guinea, we think it's best to leave it up to you to decide how to spend your free time. Some treks are more strenuous than others, and you might just want a bit of down time, so we will leave it for you to decide what to do with your free time.

As a rough guide, optional extras include:

- Visit Goree Island and the African renaissance monument whilst in Dakar, Senegal
- Various museums in Dakar, Bissau and Freetown
- Pirogue rides, fishing trips, short taxi rides and/or guided nature walks in Gambian National Parks and in the Casamance region of Senegal
- Drumming lessons and Kora lessons in Casamance and Gambia
- Boat trips to various islands in the Casamance region
- Nightlife of Dakar, Bissau and Freetown. Local bands playing and entrance fees accordingly.
- Bush taxis and trekking guides to explore more of the extensive trails, canyons and waterfalls of Guinea's spectacular Fouta Djalon region

* Bush taxis are the best way to get around this area as our truck will not be able to reach a lot of the waterfalls and smaller villages in the Fouta Djalon, as the tracks are not suitable for such a large vehicle

**** All in all approximately €250 Euros should be sufficient to cover the above optional extra activities ****

How much spending money should I bring?

In a lot of the countries we travel through the tourist industry is in its infancy so there isn't too much to spend your money on. Saying that though, we try to make our trips flexible to allow people to do what they want to do when we visit places rather than making it too restrictive – so there will be opportunities for optional excursions/trips at most places we stop at along the way.

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Based upon passenger feedback we suggest that €10 - €20 Euros a day should be sufficient as an approximate 'spending money in addition to kitty' figure. But obviously personal spending can vary a lot depending on the individual and how much you want to eat out in restaurants, drink alcohol, buy souvenirs, upgrade to rooms and use the internet etc. It's always better to over-budget than under-budget!

You may well spend more than this figure when we are in the cities, but remember there will be parts of the trip where we go quite remote and at these times there will be hardly anything to spend your money on, so you will find it balances out accordingly.

Please note that on occasions we will eat out in restaurants when we are camping in towns and cities to break up cooking off the truck, so please bear that in mind when planning your budget.

With regards to what form of money to bring – it is best to bring a mixture of forms of payment. Certainly you do not want to totally rely upon ATM's – they often don't accept foreign bank cards. Paying with a credit/debit card is also very unreliable. We advise you to bring a VISA card if you do want to withdraw cash, as Cirrus/Maestro/MasterCard/American Express are often totally useless in the region.

As a general guide you should bring plenty of cash, predominantly in Euros but also some US Dollars. Traveller's cheques are now almost impossible to change so not worth bothering with.

