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EQUATORIAL GUINEA

Monte Alen National Park

Located on mainland Equatorial Guinea (a small country between Gabon and Cameroun), the Monte Alen Park is quite entirely covered by primary and secondary rainforest. It had been spared from logging because of the rugged terrain. It covers an area of around 1,200km² and has a dense network of watercourses. Walking with guides and porters of the fang group people, you will discover an exceptional rainforest and abundant fauna as elephant, gorilla, sitatunga, mandrill, giant frog (up to 4 kg) and many birds.

➤ Highlights :

- **Discover of a rarely visited country** where tourism really means « **welcome !** » and where spanish is spoken.
- **Approach of African rainforests through hills and rivers** of Monte Alen National Park.
- **Discover of a large variety of flora and fauna** and especially **western lowland gorillas** .
- **Short transfers by vehicle, itinerant walk** that leads you little by little in the forest.



➤ Suggested programm : 7 days : Gorilla Tracking

- Day 1 : **Bata - Monte Alen** : appointment in the morning at hotel Panafrica in Bata. Transfer to Monte Alen by véhicule (2h) in the afternoon. Visit visitors center at Monte Alen. Night at Monte Alen hotel in double rooms.
- Day 2 : **Monte Alen – Misergue - Esamalan** : Transfer by 4x4 car (1h30 on unpaved road) to Misergue where the walk begins. A 5 hour walk in the forest on good « layons » and some elephant trails. Night at Esamalan camp.
- Days 3 & 4 : **Esamalan** : gorilla tracking. Night at Esamalan camp.
- Day 5 : **Esamalan - Atoc Lake** : a 7 hour walk through the hills to reach beautiful Atoc Lake. Night at Atoc camp.
- Day 6 : **Atoc Lake** : Excursion around Atoc Lake to observe elephants, sitatungas, buffalos, mandrills, and small primates. Night at Atoc camp.
- Day 7 : **Atoc lake - Monte Alen - Bata** : a 4 hour walk – Shower and lunch at Monte Alen hotel. Transfer by vehicle to Bata in the afternoon.

Gorilla tracking : a ranger leads a group of maximum 4 people. Walking should be silent and is not always easy when you have to step over trees or cross rivers. You have to wait, to observe and sometimes leave without success to look for a better trail. But when encounter occurs, it is so magic !

The programm may be changed for security or wheather reasons or because of any problem. ECOFAC, its leaders and local guides will always do their utmost to find the better solution, even by changing the route. When you go to discover other cultures and mentalities you have to accept and respect differences.

➤ Conditions :

- **Logistic** :
 - Guiding : 1 ranger and 1 guide for 4 people maximum for wildlifewatching.
 - Transportation : by bus or 4x4 car between Bata, Monte Alen and Misergue, by walking for wildlifewatching.
- **Accommodation / catering** :
 - **Hotel Monte Alen** : comfortable
Capacity : 10 self contained double-rooms . Restaurant serves european food.
 - **Camp at lake Atoc**: rustic
Capacity : 3 double-rooms, outdoor toilets. It is possible to add tents ??? Cook.
 - **Esamalan Camp** : (equipped with radio communications) - rustic
Capacity : 4 double-rooms, outdoor toilets. It is possible to add tents ??? Cook.
- **Level and security** :
 - Hiking in the park is challenging and requires a good physical condition.
 - Visits are organised for groups of a maximum of 6 persons.
 - Children under the age of 12 are not accepted.
 - Visiting a reserve can be dangerous if simple rules of common sense and security are not observed. Follow the instructions of the guides at all times when hiking in the forest.
 - It is strongly recommended to take an insurance for medical evacuation.

- **Seasons :**

- December, January, February : dry season. Good period for visits : relatively dry with comfortable temperatures.
- March, April, May : rainy season : frequent rain, very hot. Excellent lighting for photography.
- June, July, August : dry season. Very little rain, comfortable temperatures (22/25°) but not much sun. Constantly overcast with poor lighting for photography. Low water in the rivers.
- September, October, November; rainy season. October and November very wet indeed. Rivers very high and temperatures high.

➡ **Prices :**

➡ **Practical Information :**

- **Health**

- Vaccination against yellow fever is compulsory
- anti-malarial treatment is essential.
- Check polio, tetanus and B.C.G.
- Meningitis (A+C), Hepatitis (A+B) and Typhoid are recommended.

- **Formalities, language and currency**

- valid passport (at least 6 months) and visa.
- Official language : spanish
- Local currency is the Franc CFA : 100 F CFA = 1 FF. Credit cards are not used. It is recommended that visitors bring foreign currency (US\$) that can be changed without any problem in hotels and restaurants.

- **Flights and local time**

- Local time is GMT + 1
- From Europe, Malabo, capital city of Equatorial Guinea can be reached by Iberia and Spainair, and then an internal flight reach Bata ; Also Bata can be reached by Air Gabon from Libreville. Air Equatorial Guinea flies to Gabon and Cameroun.

➡ **To know more about wildlife :**

- **elephant** : the forest elephant is relatively common, tracks are numerous, and you are quite likely to come across them while walking in the forest. The elephant is naturally timid and sighting are likely to be furtive.
- **sitatunga** : beautiful marsh-living antelope usually seen at lake Atoc
- **gorilla** : groups of gorillas are followed daily by park guides at Essamalan. Gorilla tracking is done by following trail from the night before. The chances of seeing a group are quite good.
- **mandrill** : these are impressive monkeys, very large and the males with remarkable colorations. They are usually seen when feeding on the ground in primary forest. They live in very large groups.
- **small primates** : *C. cephus*, *C. nictitans*, *C. satanas* are usually seen in the forest when walking between Atoc and Essamalan
- the **giant frog** : the largest amphibian known ; the size of a football and weighing up to 4 kilos. Seen in the Lana and Woro rivers.