



RECONNAISSANCE TRIP

In the heart of Biafra

NIGERIA



10 days

29 November - 08 December 2024

English speaking tour leader

The 'unforgettable' of the trip:

- The **Ijaw fishing village** on Okrika Island in the **Niger River Delta**
- **Umuahia, the 'capital of Biafra'** and the war museum
- **Igbo mask** evolutions and the **Ohafia ancestral shrine**
- **British colonial architecture** in Uyo and Calabar
- Meeting with the **Oron**, famous for their funerary statues, and meeting with the King
- The **mandrill conservation project** in the Cross River State
- The boat excursion to an **ethnic Efik village**



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Biafra was an independent country from 1967 to 1970, but fierce repression by the Nigerian armed forces quickly dashed any separatist hopes. Despite the trauma of the war, still felt in the region, the former Biafra is an extraordinary place to explore, with its rich natural and cultural heritage, traditional ethnic groups, ancestral temples and ancestral mask cults.

The trip will begin in Port Harcourt, Nigeria's oil capital, where we will meet the Ijaw fishing community of Okrika Island and learn about Iria rituals and body painting practices, characteristic of south-eastern Nigeria.

From the coast, we will move to Umuahia, the former capital of Biafra where the new country was proclaimed on 30 May 1967. Here, we will visit the War Museum with interesting artefacts of the fighting Biafrans. We will head into the heart of Igboland in the town of Ohafia, where we will be able to admire Igbo masks and enter the ancestral shrine that holds some of the oldest surviving statues in Africa (outside museums). We will reach the Cross River State, a beautiful natural area with forests and creeks on the border with Cameroon. In this river and coastal area we will meet two ethnic groups, the Oron and the Efik, who were once skilful traders, first with the Portuguese and later with the British, and visit the Pandrillus mandrill reserve. We finally arrive in Calabar, one of the oldest colonial settlements in coastal Nigeria, with its old wooden houses, colonial church and museum, housed in the old British governor's house.

Reconnaissance trip with Leonardo F. Paoluzzi and Spanish anthropologist Joan Riera.

Reconnaissance trips, to know

Before proposing a new destination, we at Kanaga Africa Tours personally test each itinerary, visiting the places/sites we are going to propose, selecting accommodation, choosing trustworthy guides and drivers, and the right vehicles for our explorations. These trips are called reconnaissance trips, **opportunities for discovery that we have decided to open to some of our loyal travellers**, being aware that:

- has **lower costs** than the 'finished' tour that will be sold on our site, as the agency does not charge any margin and the tour leader does not receive a fee, just to partly cover the costs of the reconnaissance;
- is carried out in **small groups of selected people**;
- there is **less rigidity on the programme** (it will be a 'travel trace' and not a 'travel programme') and more openness towards the definition of the itinerary;
- there is a **greater possibility of unforeseen events**, linked to the quality of the hotels, the preparation of the local guides, the openness/interest of certain sites, ... but the **presence of an experienced guide** will make up for any difficulties.

NB: bookings through intermediaries such as travel agencies are not accepted for reconnaissance trips.



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Day 1: Friday 29 November

Outward flight/Port Harcourt (PHC)

Flight to Port Harcourt. Meeting with the Kanaga Africa Tours staff, assistance with the exchange of Euros and the possible purchase of a local phone card. Accommodation in a hotel and overnight stay in double rooms with services.

Day 2: Saturday 30 November

Port Harcourt/Okrika Island/Port Harcourt

Breakfast at the hotel. In the morning, departure for OKRIKA ISLAND, an important centre for the coastal Ijaw people, an ethnic group that makes its living from fishing, trade and, in recent times, from the gas and crude oil extraction industries around Port Harcourt. Despite their contact with modernity, the Ijaw have kept alive various ceremonies such as the Iria ceremony, which consists of the fattening and painting of the bodies of girls of marriageable age, which we can witness. Simple lunch with a local family and return to Port Harcourt. In the afternoon, visit the city museum and some old colonial buildings. Overnight stay at the hotel.

Day 3: Sunday 01 December

Port Harcourt/Umuahia

Breakfast at the hotel. Departure to the north, on the way visit an IGBO VILLAGE. Arrival in UMUAHIA, an important political and cultural centre for the Igbo people as this was the last 'capital' of Biafra before the surrender in 1970. Lunch in a restaurant or hotel. In the afternoon, visit the city museum, which focuses on the history of the secessionist state, with interesting war vehicles handmade by the Biafra army. We also visit the bunker where General Ojukwu declared the secession of south-eastern Nigeria, giving it the name Biafra Bay (or the Gulf of Biafra, which is part of the Gulf of Guinea). Accommodation in a hotel and overnight stay in double rooms with services.

Day 4: Monday 02 December

Umuahia/Ohafia

Breakfast at the hotel followed by an IGBO DANCE on the outskirts of Umuahia. We continue on to OHAFIA, a sacred city for the Igbo people: here we find the last great religious temple dedicated to the ancestors, built in the 18th century and jealously protected by the custodians of the sanctuary. This temple has survived tribal wars, British colonisation, the Biafra War and the massive conversion to Christianity. After a sacrifice of animal blood and palm wine, necessary to appease the spirits of the ancestors, we have access to the interior where we can admire the apotheosis of Igbo art and one of the best examples of vernacular architecture in West Africa. Simple lunch with the royal family. In the afternoon we will attend the IGBO MASK DANCE. Accommodation in a hotel and overnight stay.



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Day 5: Tuesday 03 December

Ohafia/Uyo

Breakfast at the hotel. Departure south for the city of UYO, an important trade hub between Igboland and the Calabar Atlantic coast. Visit to the city museum and lunch at the hotel. In the afternoon we will visit the former wooden house of the British governor Lord Luggards and attend a MASK DANCE. Overnight stay in a hotel, in double rooms with services.

Day 6: Wednesday 04 December

Uyo/Oron

Breakfast at the hotel. Departure for the river town of ORON, capital of the tribe of the same name, famous for its wooden funerary statues. On arrival we visit the museum, once one of the richest in Nigeria, but heavily looted during the Biafra war, where a small example of the ancient wood carvings remains. Lunch in a restaurant or hotel. In the afternoon, a meeting with the PEOPLE OF KING ORON in his palace. Overnight stay in a hotel, in double rooms with services.

Day 7: Thursday 05 December

Oron/Calabar

Breakfast at the hotel. Departure by motor boat to the town of CALABAR, one of the oldest colonial towns in Nigeria, through canals and dense mangroves. Arrival and visit to the old wooden houses, the colonial church and the museum, located in the house that once belonged to the British governor. Lunch in a restaurant or hotel. In the afternoon, visit the MANDRILLUS FOUNDATION to learn about the endemic primate species of the Cross River State (including the Cross River Gorilla, West African chimpanzees and the rare mandrill). Overnight stay in a hotel, in double rooms with services.

Day 8: Friday 06 December

Calabar/Creek Town/Calabar

Breakfast at the hotel. Boat excursion to the village of CREEK TOWN, where we will meet the local chief, learn about the Efik alphabet and admire some of the old two-storey wooden buildings. Return to Calabar for lunch in a restaurant or hotel. In the afternoon we will attend a MASK DANCE in a popular neighbourhood. Overnight stay in a hotel, in double rooms with services.



Northern Emirates and Durbar

NIGERIA

Day 9: Saturday 07 December

Calabar/Port Harcourt

Breakfast at the hotel. Day dedicated to the transfer to Port Harcourt, with possible stops in villages along the way. Lunch box. On arrival, accommodation in the hotel, free dinner and overnight stay in double rooms with services.

Day 10: Sunday 09 December

Port Harcourt (PHC)/Return Flight

Breakfast at the hotel. Transfer to the airport in time for your return flight, end of services.



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Northern Emirates and Durbar

NIGERIA (NIA03PS241129)

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Individual participation fee in double room (min. 6/max. 12 pax)

3,590 €/pax



Supplements:

- Enrollment fee: **free!**
- Single room: 490 €
- Service visa: 400 €/passport
- Extension Benin City: on request

The fee includes:

- English/Spanish speaking anthropologist;
- English-speaking local guides;
- Visits and excursions as scheduled;
- Transfers by minibus, including drivers, fuel and tolls;
- Half-board meals as mentioned in the itinerary;
- 9 nights in hotels, in double rooms as mentioned in the itinerary.

The fee does not include:

- The visa for Nigeria;
- Insurance for cancellation, health, luggage;
- Air flights;
- Possible internal flights to Port Harcourt;
- Drinks and mineral water;
- All dinners;
- Photographic tips;
- Tips and expenses of a personal nature;
- Everything mentioned in 'Supplements';
- Anything not expressly mentioned in "the fee includes".