



See Another Africa - Gabon #1: Gabon Your Way

Where: Loango National Park

When: June is a good month to try the walk across the park, but I am flexible.

Duration: Seven Days

Estimated cost, based on two people: 1728 Euros or 2453 USD

Estimated cost, based on four people: 1447 Euros or 2054 USD

(exchange rate euro/USD as of Aug 04, 2011)

Loango National Park is actually comprised of what used to be two protected reserves, without a road connecting the two. If you want to experience both sectors of the park then you must fly in and out of Port Gentil, from where you can access the northern part, followed by flying in and out of Gamba, from where you can access the southern part. There is an alternative to this, if, like me, you dislike backtracking. You cross the park on foot and by motorized boat. We need to go in the dry season (June to October) to undertake this walk.

We begin by flying or boating to Port Gentil from Libreville, Gabon's capital. We then take a three hour navette (boat shuttle) to the town of Omboue. At Omboue we are met and transferred by 4 x 4 to Enamino Eco-lodge, run by Gabonese wildlife guide Philippe and his French wife Nanou. Philippe's resume includes 15 years experience guiding in the Loango area, including for National Geographic Society explorers and photographers. We spend two full days at Enamino. Our activities will include safari trekking inside the park, and a motorized boat trip up the Mpivie River and to various neighboring lagoons. We will visit the Mission Ste Anne (where there is a famous church built by Gustave Eiffel), and Ile aux Gorilles, or Gorilla Island, where there is a project for orphaned western lowland gorillas. The following day we spend on a boat safari to an area of the park known as Akaka. We camp overnight. This mobile camp is provided by Enamino. Here we meet guides from Setta Cama Lodge which is located in Setta Cama village, just outside the southern sector of the park. This new set of guides accompanies us on a forest trek of 18 kms (11 miles), a distance we should cover in about six hours. A final boat ride to Setta Cama Lodge completes our traverse from north to south. We have a final day at Setta Cama Lodge where we can book an additional excursion to the Ndougou Lagoon. We return to Libreville by flight from Gamba. We may have to tweak this program depending upon local flight schedules early in 2012. Boat departures to and from Port Gentil depend on the tides so flexibility is required. Possible day of departure from Libreville is a Saturday and our return the following Friday. It is possible for you to extend your travels in Gabon. I am happy to advise you on additional destinations and experiences in the country.