
GEEO ITINERARY

Ghana for Illinois College

Day 1: Accra Arrive at any time.

Arrive at any time. There are no planned activities until the Welcome Meeting in the evening. The Accra airport is **Kotoka International Airport (ACC)**.

The tour departs Accra in the morning of day 2, so we may consider arriving a day early in case you experience flight delays/cancellations. This will also give you time to adjust to the time difference and overcome any jet lag. We can book extra hotel nights for you in Accra before and/or after the trip.

Hotel Check-in and Welcome Meeting

Hotel check-in is normally between 2-3 p.m. Check with reception for the exact time and location of the group welcome meeting, typically between 6-7 p.m. Please make every effort to attend this meeting. If you're running late, send a message in the group WhatsApp or call the emergency number on your trip voucher so that your tour leader can let you know where and when to meet the group.

After the meeting, you might choose to get dinner at a nearby restaurant with your traveling companions and your tour leader to further get to know one another.

Joining Instructions

Included Arrival Transfer: A driver will be waiting for you outside the luggage hall with a G Adventures sign. If you are not met at the airport for any reason, please call the emergency number found on your trip voucher. If you are unable to make contact, take a taxi to the start hotel (save your receipt).

Accommodation: Urbano Hotel (*or similar*)

To confirm the hotel that your group will be using, please reach out to us or check your service voucher.

Day 2: Accra/Elmina Travel to Cape Coast. Visit UNESCO's Cape Coast Castle to understand Ghana's slave trade history. Participate in a batik workshop with Global Mamas supporting local women. Transfer to beachfront accommodation in Elmina with free time.

Have breakfast at the hotel and enjoy a welcome briefing this morning with your tour leader before transferring to Cape Coast, the capital of the Central Region in southern Ghana.

After spending some free time for lunch, visit Cape Coast Castle, a designated UNESCO World Heritage site, for an emotional and thought-provoking experience in a monument that reflects a harrowing period in the region's history. The site is notable for its role in the transatlantic slave trade and is now being used as a way to educate visitors and provide more of an understanding of Ghana's recent history. Your group will walk through the castle and view the dungeons, where the infamous "Door of No Return" is located. The visit will finish with the historical museum with information on all of Ghana's forts and castles, including cultural history and traditions, allowing you to leave with a much deeper understanding of the area's complex past.

Next, your group will become acquainted with the African art of traditional batik making during a workshop led by the Global Mamas. This inspiring organization is dedicated to empowering local women to hone their artistic skills and sell their finished products in the fair-trade market, thus enabling them to financially support their own families. Get to know the locals as you work side by side with them, and learn more about daily life here as you observe their technique from wax production to heating,

stamping, and drying. The group will be given their own pieces of cloth to produce designs of their own before the local tailor or seamstress makes it into a shirt or dress for you to take back home. A beautiful way to hold your fond memories of Ghana.

Later, transfer to your beach front accommodation in Elmina where you will have free time to relax and explore the area on your own.

Approximate travel time: 3.5-4 hrs by private vehicle

Accommodation: Lemon Beach Resort (*or similar*)

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 3: Elmina Visit Kakum National Park for its 300-year-old Canopy Walkway, then tour a Stingless Bees project, have lunch at a community organization, walk through Cape Coast town, and end with a Djembe drum lesson in Elmina.

Set off for the spectacular scenery and fascinating wildlife of Kakum National Park, tucked away in the Assin Attandansco Reserve. The park's best-known feature is its 100-foot-high Canopy Walkway, made up of 7 suspension bridges that stretch high about the forest floor, and are over 300 years old.

The National Park covers 375 km (145 mi) of tropical rainforest and gained protected park status after locals fought to protect the wildlife in the area in 1992. There are over 300 types of birds in the area as well as other endangered species. Over 40 different mammal species have been recorded in the park, including forest elephants, leopards, and six different primate species.

From high above the treetops, the walkway will get you incredibly close to the flora and fauna of the region. The 7 bridges are attached to 7 emerging trees, set 40 meters above the rainforest floor. Take a deep breath and walk across them all on this exciting adventure. Return to the park headquarters to discover the excellent array of information at the center.

Afterwards, enjoy an informative visit to a stingless bees project near the national park. There have been nine species of stingless bees identified here in Ghana. While here, learn about their paramount importance to the ecosystem, their medicinal qualities, and visit their hives where you will taste their honey. Travelers can also enjoy the stingless bee walkway and butterfly garden onsite, where many come to feed.

Then, enjoy lunch at Cape Coast's Baobab Foundation, a community organization dedicated to supporting children with disabilities and those who've missed educational opportunities. Their vegetarian restaurant is staffed by former street children who now contribute to community development. Your visit directly supports this impactful initiative working to secure brighter futures for vulnerable youth.

Finish off the day with a one-hour-long Cape Coast walking tour before returning to Elmina accommodations, where the group will experience a traditional Djembe drum lesson and performance led by a top local instructor.

Approximate travel time: 2.5-3 hrs by private vehicle

Accommodation: Lemon Beach Resort (*or similar*)

Meals included: Breakfast | Lunch

Day 4: Elmina/Ankasa After breakfast, visit Beyin coastal village. Afternoon canoe trip through Amasuri wetlands to Nzulezu Stilt Village. Later, transfer to Ankasa Reserve Lodge in rainforest with optional night walk after dinner.

After breakfast, the group will drive to Beyin, a coastal village notable for its beautiful beaches, historic fort castle, and serving as a museum of Nzema culture.

In the afternoon, set off through the beautiful Amasuri wetlands in a traditional dugout canoe to find the

community of Nzulezu Stilt Village. Legend has it that the community here migrated from Watala, part of the ancient Ghanaian Empire 600 years ago after being driven from their homes during conflict. It's said that a snail led them to this remote location where they would be safe, and the community decided to build their homes over the lake for additional protection. The snail is now sacred to this community and is not eaten here as it is in other parts of Ghana. Surprisingly, the community members here are mainly farmers and not fishermen as you would expect. The boat ride is a major highlight as the wetlands are beautiful, marshy swamps that are important for native and migratory birds. It's a perfect afternoon with outdoor activity and interactions with the local community.

Later, travel to Ankasa Reserve Lodge, connected to the Nini-Suhien National Park. This park protects an area of over 500 square kilometers of pristine, wet, evergreen upper Guinea rainforest. Historically, this habitat played an important role in the lives of Ghanaians as it was their main source of water and food. The area protects many endangered mammals and is home to many wonderful birds and wildlife. On arrival, check into the Ankasa Reserve Lodge and enjoy your lovely surroundings with a free evening.

Approximate travel time: 6-6.5 hrs by private

Accommodation: Ankasa Reserve Lodge (*or similar*)

Meals included: Breakfast | Dinner

Day 5: Ankasa Visit the Bamboo Cathedral by bike or 4x4. Learn about local ecology, then enjoy lunch at the lodge. Explore Ankasa Village to understand subsistence farming lifestyle and try local food. Return for dinner with optional night walk available.

Visit the remote Bamboo Cathedral, where the stalks of these plants have grown towards each other, forming tall arches over the path. You have two choices on how to get to this location. The first is pedaling 9km one way from the main entrance gate on a mountain bike, or you can choose to ride in a 4x4 from the lodge. If you choose to bike, you will need to leave a bit earlier than the rest of the group. A full morning is dedicated to the forest, where your guides are on hand to identify any birds or mammals the group may come across during your journey to the Bamboo Cathedral.

Return to the lodge for an included lunch before visiting the Ankasa Village and community. Their remote community is made up mainly of subsistence farmers living in basic mud houses, trading their produce at the local markets to enable them to buy items and provide for their families. Spend time with the farmers that live here and learn more about their local customs, even trying a delicacy like Gari, or pounding FuFu.

Arrive back to the lodge in the evening for an included dinner and free time. An optional night walk is available for those looking for a more active evening amid nocturnal nature.

Accommodation: Ankasa Reserve Lodge (*or similar*)

Meals included: Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

Day 6: Ankasa/Brenu Achinum Visit Brenu Akyinim's beaches and lagoon. Enjoy free time at the beachfront location. Explore local villages and coastal lagoons, and end with an included waterfront dinner.

Travel by private vehicle to Brenu Akyinim, with its scenic beaches and serene lagoon nearby. There will be a stop for lunch on your own en route to break up the journey.

Upon arrival the group will have free time to enjoy this beach front location. Relax at the beach, explore the local villages and coastal lagoons. Tonight, gather for an included dinner overlooking the water.

Approximate travel time: 5 hrs by private vehicle

Accommodation: Brenu Beach Lodge (*or similar*)

Meals included: Breakfast | Dinner

Day 7: Brenu Achinum/Accra Visit St. George Castle in Elmina, a fishing market, a traditional boat building workshop, and the Kwame Nkrumah memorial. Enjoy a group dinner with optional nightlife afterwards.

Start the day in Brenu Achinum with an optional early morning lagoon kayaking experience; watch the sunrise and enjoy nature. Afterwards, we take a 30-minute walk through the local fishing community of Brenu Akyinim, then head back to our beachfront hotel.

After breakfast, we travel back to Accra by private vehicle. Along the way, we will stop in the fishing town of Elmina to visit the Castle of St. George, a UNESCO World Heritage site. Next, we visit the local fishing market and watch traditional boat builders at work, observing methods and tools that have been used for centuries.

Lunch will be on your own in the town of Anomabo.

We'll arrive in Accra by early afternoon. Our first activity in the city will be a visit to the Kwame Nkrumah Mausoleum and Memorial Park, the final resting place of Ghana's first president. After the visit, we will transfer to our hotel and enjoy free time to relax or wander around the city before an included group dinner at one of the most popular restaurants in Accra. Choose to return to the hotel after or head out to experience Ghana's nightlife.

Approximate travel time: 3.5 hrs by private

Accommodation: Urbano Hotel (*or similar*)

Meals included: Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner

Day 8: Accra Start with a Ghana Fantasy Coffins tour, followed by the Jamestown historic walk. Later visit the Artist Alliance Gallery and Makola Market. Lastly, visit the Black Star Gate and Independence Square before farewell lunch and airport transfer. Your flight must depart no earlier than 9 PM.

The morning begins with a group visit to Ghana's Fantasy Coffins, which are a unique and creative way this country honors loved ones and celebrates their path to the afterlife. Check out the many different designs and learn about Ghana's lively funerary practices.

During your visit the group will see all manner of coffin designs that one could be buried in, from cars and airplanes, to cocoa pods, cigarette packets, bottles of beer, and crocodiles. You'll experience an entirely new take on death and what it can look like to celebrate the lives and passions of those dearest to us.

Then, transfer to the historical community of Jamestown for a walking tour through the structures that predate the Colonial era, and gain a true picture of old Accra with its many European influences. Due to the efforts of local preservationists, the community is able to provide travelers with an excellent idea of what it was like during Ghana's colonial past. See the 30m high lighthouse constructed by the British in 1871. Admire the colorful fishing boats on the beach, and continue to Fort James, a British trading post which in 1673 fell under Danish rule. Also of interest here are the Brazilian stone houses, built by formerly enslaved African's who resided in Brazil and made their way back to Africa after the slave trade was abolished. This area in Accra is also famous for producing many world champion boxers like Africa's greatest, Azuma Nelson.

Next, immerse yourself in Accra's vibrant art scene at the Artists Alliance Gallery, a beachfront venue showcasing traditional and contemporary works from across Ghana and neighboring countries. Browse exquisite paintings, carvings, furniture, jewelry, fabrics, and photography—ensuring something for every taste.

Later, plunge into the lively Makola Market where vendors offer herbal remedies, traditional textiles, local

foods, and daily essentials. Practice the customary art of bartering and, if hunger strikes, sample authentic street cuisine for a true taste of Ghanaian culture.

Finally, conclude your cultural journey at the Black Star Gate and Independence Square, the city's ceremonial heart. Here stands the eternal flame of African Liberation, ignited by Kwame Nkrumah in 1961. Your guide will reveal the profound significance of this historic site to Ghanaians as you explore different areas throughout the square.

Afterwards, attend a farewell lunch in the late afternoon before the group heads together to the Accra airport where your tour comes to an end. Your flight must depart no earlier than 9 PM. If you need to extend your stay in Nairobi, we can help you book post-tour accommodation.

Want more adventure? Book two or more [GEEO programs](#) in the same school year and receive a discount! GEEO will give you 10% off of the lesser value program(s) (up to 3 programs per year).

If you would like to extend your time abroad but don't see another GEEO program that interests you, let us know. We can work with you to find a trip from our tour operator's much larger catalog. Their tours are open to the general public and not designed specifically for educators, but we can still offer you and your travel companions a discounted educator price on any additional tours that you book.

Meals included: Breakfast | Lunch

****Itinerary Disclaimer:*** While it is our intention to adhere to the routes described on our website, there is a certain amount of flexibility built into the itinerary and on occasion it may be necessary, or desirable, to make alterations. The itinerary is brief, as we never know exactly where our journey will take us. Due to our style of travel and the regions we visit, travel can be unpredictable. The information on our website is a general guide to the tour and region, and any mention of specific destinations or wildlife is by no means a guarantee that they will be visited or encountered. Additionally, any travel times listed are approximations only and subject to vary due to local circumstances.