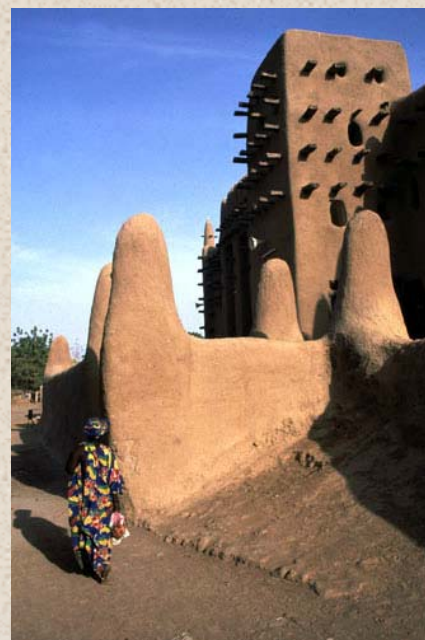


Mali – The Road to Timbuktu

Tour Code MA

Departing 16 November 2009

A detailed and comprehensive journey through Mali, one of West Africa's most intriguing and historically rich countries. It houses the world's largest mud-brick mosque at Djenne and is also home to one of the continents most extraordinary and ancient peoples, the Dogon. Mali is also the most geographically wide-ranging country in the region, where we are able explore the fringes of the Sahara at the fabled caravan town of Timbuktu and journey down the great Niger River at the busy port town of Mopti



Mud Mosque, Djenne
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ITINERARY

Day 1 Fly to Bamako – Monday 16 November

Late afternoon departure from London Heathrow Terminal 2 with Royal Air Maroc via Casablanca for Bamako, the capital of Mali

Day 2 Arrive in Bamako. Afternoon City tour – Tuesday 17 November

Early morning arrival and transfer to the Hotel Mandé for two nights. In the afternoon we have a city tour of Bamako, located on the river Niger. We include the excellent National Museum before a visit to the fascinating artisan market. We enjoy a welcome dinner at a local restaurant (B,D)

Day 3 Drive to Segou – Wednesday 18 November

As we head east through Mali's fertile region we stop at Old Segou, the country's 18th century capital with its decorative Bambara architecture. Arriving at Segou at lunchtime we spend the afternoon visiting this fascinating riverside town. Overnight at the Hotel L'Independence (B,D)

Day 4 Drive to Mopti. City tour and river cruise – Thursday 19 November

This morning we head north to the port town of Mopti located on a junction of the Niger and Bani rivers. A hive of activity with a bustling market and busy harbour area, the town is a wonderful place to wander and soak up the atmosphere. We have arranged some afternoon sightseeing, followed by a relaxing evening boat journey aboard a *pinasse*, the local river transport. One night at the Kanaga hotel (B,D)

Day 5 Drive to Timbuktu – Friday 20 November

A full day drive by comfortable 4WD takes us to the fabled city of Timbuktu. The most enigmatic name in every traveller's dictionary set on the edge of the Sahara. Two nights at the Colombe hotel (B,D)

Day 6 In Timbuktu – Saturday 21 November

The morning is spent exploring this fascinating ancient caravan city with its historic buildings, explorers houses and mud-brick mosques. In the afternoon we board our 4WD's for an exhilarating drive across the Saharan dunes to encounter the famous Tuareg nomads along our route (B,D)

Day 7 Return to Mopti – Sunday 22 November

An early morning departure by 4WD following the Niger river south to Mopti. Two nights at the Kanaga hotel with dinner (B,D)

Patrick Syder Travel

Escorted Cultural Tours – Zenobia House, 23 Bowmans Close, Steyning, West Sussex BN44 3SR
Tel/Fax: +44 (0)1903 879737 email: info@sydertravel.com www.sydertravel.com

Day 8 In Djenne – Monday 23 November

A full day excursion to visit the world's largest mud-brick building, the 15th century mosque at Djenne. Wonderfully preserved and in close proximity to the town's weekly market, a colourful affair! The afternoon is spent in Djenne at your leisure before our short return drive to Mopti (B,D)

Day 9 In Mopti. Drive to Bandiagara – Tuesday 24 November

A morning at leisure in Mopti to enjoy the sights and sounds of Mali's beating heart. This afternoon we drive to the remote region of the Bandiagara escarpment, home to the country's mysterious Dogon peoples. We have two full days to learn about this ancient tribe. Three nights at the Cheval Blanc hotel in Sanga (B,D)

Day 10 Visit Dogon villages – Wednesday 25 November

Today we head in our 4WD's to the more remote southern end of the escarpment to see the lesser-visited Dogon villages. We will learn about the tribe's unique way of life, its animist beliefs, ancient worship and strange burial rituals. Picnic lunch provided. (B,L,D)

Day 11 Visit Dogon villages. Witness Mask Dance – Thursday 26 November

We continue our insight into Dogon culture with a walk to the nearby village of Sanga before boarding 4WD's and descending into the northern end of the escarpment. Here our visit includes the thrilling 'Fetes des Masques', a frenzied ritual dance performed for us by local village men dressed in animal masks. Picnic lunch provided (B,L,D)

Day 12 Drive to Segou – Friday 27 November

Leaving the Dogon country behind us we head west to Segou. Arriving at lunchtime we have the afternoon at leisure, perhaps to take relax on a *pirogue* on the Niger or shop for objets d'art at the Grand Marche. Overnight at the Hotel L'Independence (B,D)

Day 13 Drive to Bamako – Saturday 28 November

We drive south to the capital this morning and transfer to the Hotel Mande. The afternoon is left free to enjoy some leisure time perhaps relaxing around the pool or revisiting some of the local markets. We enjoy a sumptuous farewell dinner in a local restaurant (B,D)

Day 14 Fly to London – Sunday 29 November

We transfer to the airport in the early hours for our Royal Air Maroc flight via Casablanca arriving into Heathrow airport in the mid afternoon (B)

Cost £2095.00 per person in twin room (excludes international flights) Single supplement charge £450.00



Dogon Man, Bandiagara Escarpment
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Price includes –

- ▶ Tour accompanied from London by Patrick Syder
- ▶ Specialist Malian guide for the duration of the tour
- ▶ All transportation - private a/c bus in Bamako and quality a/c 4WD Land cruisers exclusive to the group
- ▶ Full sightseeing programme including entrance fees
- ▶ Sunset sail on the Niger River
- ▶ Sahara desert excursion in Timbuktu
- ▶ Best available hotels on a half board basis plus two picnic lunches and Bamako restaurant dinners
- ▶ All departure taxes
- ▶ All airport transfers
- ▶ Porter, hotel and restaurant staff gratuities

Not included – travel insurance, visa fees, drinks, lunches, guide and driver gratuities, Royal Air Maroc international return flight (cost from £550.00 with Polani Travel, ATOL 5311)

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