

AFRICA · WILDLIFE · OFF THE BEATEN PATH · ADVENTURE · ISLANDS



Equatorial Guinea

Africa's only Spanish-speaking country is split between volcanic Bioko Island, home to Malabo and to rainforest beaches where four species of sea turtle nest, and the forested mainland of Río Muni around Bata. Tourism infrastructure is thin and every trip needs careful arrangements, but primates, turtles and a curious Hispanic-African culture reward those who make it.

i Before you go, read the UK government's travel advice for Equatorial Guinea and entry requirements (visas, passport validity). Last updated by FCDO 8 January 2026.

📍 CAPITAL Ciudad de la Paz	💰 CURRENCY Central African CFA franc (XAF) £1 ≈ FCFA 781	🗣️ LANGUAGE Spanish, Fang Bubi, French	📅 BEST TIME Dec–Feb
📅 DAILY BUDGET £100–£380 £££ Expensive	🔌 PLUGS Type C, E 220V · adapter needed	✈️ FLIGHT FROM LONDON 11h via Madrid, Paris or Addis Ababa ~£850–£1,400 return	🕒 TIME ZONE UTC+1 standard time

Equatorial Guinea comes in two very different pieces. Bioko, a volcanic island in the Gulf of Guinea closer to Cameroon than to the rest of the country, holds Malabo, the old colonial port and main gateway, plus cloud forest, the 3,011m Pico Basilé and the remote southern beaches around Ureca. Río Muni, the mainland, is a block of rainforest between Cameroon and Gabon, with Bata on its coast, Monte Alén National Park inland, and Ciudad de la Paz, the purpose-built city that formally replaced Malabo as capital in January 2026 and is still largely under construction. Most visits focus on Bioko, adding Bata by domestic flight if time allows.

This is not a country for casual drop-in travel. Oil wealth has made Malabo expensive, with business-class hotel prices and few budget options, and tourism services are minimal: you will usually need a local contact or tour operator to arrange permits, guides and transport, plus patience at checkpoints. Photography is tightly controlled and bureaucracy can be slow. In return come near-empty forests and beaches, Spanish colonial architecture with an African accent, and wildlife that few outsiders see, from nesting leatherback turtles to drills and Bioko's endemic red colobus monkeys. Check the FCDO travel advice before planning anything, and build plenty of slack into the itinerary.

Top 5 highlights

1

WILDLIFE

Ureca's turtle beaches

On Bioko's wild, rain-soaked southern coast, leatherback, green, hawksbill and olive ridley turtles nest on black-sand beaches, mainly between November and February. Visits are arranged through local conservation programmes or a tour operator, as the beaches are remote and monitored.

2

NATURE

Pico Basilé

Bioko's 3,011m volcanic summit is the country's highest point, reached by a road climbing through cloud forest to the radio masts on top. On clear mornings the view reaches across the sea to Mount Cameroon; permission is usually needed.

3

WILDLIFE

Monte Alén National Park

The mainland's flagship park protects some 2,000 square kilometres of rainforest, rivers and waterfalls, home to forest elephants, gorillas, chimpanzees and mandrills. Facilities are minimal, so trekking requires a guide and advance arrangements.

4

ARCHITECTURE

Malabo's old town and Santa Isabel Cathedral

The twin-towered Gothic Revival cathedral, built between 1897 and 1916 and partly damaged by fire in 2020, anchors Malabo's grid of Spanish colonial streets, where balconied houses survive between government buildings.

5

NATURE

Moka and the Bioko highlands

In Bioko's cool southern highlands, the Bubi village of Moka sits among crater lakes, waterfalls and montane forest. It is the base for walks to the Lago Biao crater lake and for spotting endemic monkeys and birds.

Biggest cities

LARGEST CITY

Bata

≈ 310,000 people

The largest city and mainland hub has a long seafront promenade, a busy central market and a skyline of oil-era towers. It is the gateway to Monte Alén and the Río Muni coast.

2ND LARGEST CITY

Malabo

≈ 300,000 people

Bioko's port city mixes Spanish colonial streets, the twin-spired Santa Isabel cathedral and oil-boom suburbs. It is the main international gateway and the base for the island's forests and beaches.

3RD LARGEST CITY

Ebebiyín

≈ 30,000 people

A trading town in the far north-east of the mainland, close to where the borders of Cameroon and Gabon meet; few visitors stop except when travelling overland.

Ranked by urban-area population where available. Figures are rounded estimates, and sources define city limits differently, so rankings of similar-sized cities can vary.

When to go to Equatorial Guinea

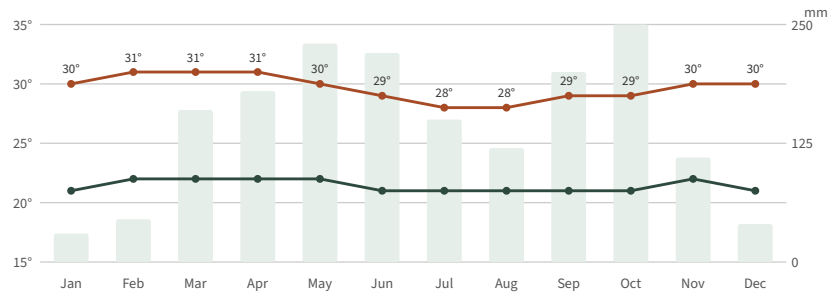
Best time: **Dec–Feb**.



■ Best ■ Good ■ Mixed ■ Poor

Average climate in Malabo

— High °C — Low °C — Rain (mm)



Festivals & events

Jan, Dec

Christmas and New Year

The most widely celebrated time of year in this largely Catholic country, with midnight masses, family feasts and traditional Bubi balélé dancing on Bioko.

Oct

Independence Day

12 October marks independence from Spain in 1968 with parades, official ceremonies and music in Malabo, Bata and towns across the country.

How much does Equatorial Guinea cost?

SHOESTRING

£100

per person / day

≈ FCFA 78,081

hostels, street food, buses

MID-RANGE

£200

per person / day

≈ FCFA 156,162

3-star hotels, restaurants, some taxis

COMFORTABLE

£380

per person / day

≈ FCFA 296,707

4-star+, guided trips, private transfers

Estimates per person per day, excluding flights. Prices vary by season and city.

Food to try

Pepesup

Pepper soup: a fiery, thin broth of fish, chicken or meat with hot peppers and local spices, Equatorial Guinea's version of a dish found all along the Gulf of Guinea.

Grilled fish with plantain and cassava

Whole fish from the Malabo and Bata markets, grilled over charcoal and served with fried plantain, boiled cassava and a fierce chilli sauce.

Malamba

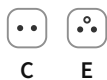
A home-brewed alcoholic drink of fermented sugar-cane juice, sweet and potent, sold in markets and villages and shared at celebrations.

Getting around

Daily domestic flights between Malabo and Bata are the practical way between island and mainland; ferries exist but are slow and irregular. Paved roads link the main towns on Bioko and in Río Muni, but frequent police and military checkpoints mean carrying your passport and copies at all times. Shared taxis run set routes in Malabo and Bata; for anywhere rural, hire a car with a driver through your hotel or a tour operator.

Practical information

PLUGS & VOLTAGE



220V — bring a UK-to-C/E adapter

DIALLING CODE

+240

TAP WATER

Not safe — drink bottled or treated water

TIPPING

Not customary in local places; in hotels and upmarket restaurants used by expatriates, around 10% is appreciated where service isn't already included.

ETIQUETTE

Greet people formally in Spanish and dress smartly. Never photograph government buildings, the presidential palace, airports, soldiers or police, and stay calm and courteous at checkpoints.

MAIN AIRPORTS

Malabo International Airport (SSG), Malabo; Bata International Airport (BSG), Bata

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Ambulance: **3101**

Police: **666 404040** or **666 303030**

Source: FCDO “Getting help”

TIME ZONE

UTC+1 (standard time)

DRIVING

On the right

Visas & entry for Equatorial Guinea

Shown for a British passport.

Visa required — apply before you go

You must have a visa to visit Equatorial Guinea. Short-term visas are valid for 90 days. For longer stays you must apply at local police stations.

From the UK government's FCDO entry requirements for British passport holders — read the full page for passport validity, permits and exceptions.

Health & vaccinations



See a travel health nurse, GP or travel clinic **6–8 weeks before you go**. Make sure routine UK vaccinations (such as MMR and diphtheria-tetanus-polio) are up to date.

RECOMMENDED FOR MOST TRAVELLERS

Hepatitis A Tetanus Typhoid Yellow fever

SOMETIMES ADVISED — DEPENDS ON YOUR TRIP, ACTIVITIES AND HEALTH

Chikungunya Dengue Hepatitis B Measles Rabies Tuberculosis

YELLOW FEVER CERTIFICATE

A yellow fever certificate is only required if you arrive from (or transit through) a country with yellow fever risk — not if you fly direct from the UK. There is a risk of yellow fever in parts of the country — vaccination may be advised.

MALARIA

High risk of malaria

- There is a high risk of malaria in Equatorial Guinea: antimalarial tablets recommended.

Source: TravelHealthPro (National Travel Health Network and Centre), checked 21 October 2026. This is a summary, not medical advice.

Public holidays in Equatorial Guinea

The next 12 months. Banks, offices and some sights may close, and transport and hotels get busy around these dates.

Tue 8 Dec 2026	Immaculate Conception
Fri 25 Dec 2026	Christmas Day
Fri 1 Jan 2027	New Year's Day
Mon 8 Mar 2027	International Women's Day
Thu 25 Mar 2027	Maundy Thursday
Fri 26 Mar 2027	Good Friday
Sat 1 May 2027	International Labour Day
Mon 3 May 2027	International Labour Day (observed)
Tue 25 May 2027	African Liberation Day
Thu 27 May 2027	Corpus Christi
Sat 5 Jun 2027	President's Day
Mon 7 Jun 2027	President's Day (observed)
Tue 3 Aug 2027	Armed Forces Day
Sun 15 Aug 2027	Constitution Day
Mon 16 Aug 2027	Constitution Day (observed)
Tue 12 Oct 2027	National Independence Day

National holidays only. Dates based on lunar calendars can move by a day or two depending on official announcements.

Useful phrases in Spanish

ENGLISH	SPANISH	SAY IT
Hello	Hola	OH-lah
Thank you	Gracias	GRAH-see-ahs
Please	Por favor	por fah-VOR
Excuse me	Perdone	pehr-DOH-neh
How much is this?	¿Cuánto cuesta?	KWAN-toh KWES-tah

Know before you go

Bring plenty of euros in cash to exchange: the CFA franc is pegged to the euro, ATMs are few and often reject foreign cards, and cards work only at major hotels and airlines.

Carry your passport and several photocopies everywhere, keep your camera out of sight near officials or official buildings, and check the FCDO travel advice before booking.

Emergency response is unreliable: the FCDO lists police on 666 404040 or 666 303030, but save your hotel's and guide's numbers too. UK consular help comes from the British High Commission in Yaoundé.

Visa, health and safety rules change. Before you book or travel, check the FCDO travel advice (gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice) and TravelHealthPro (travelhealthpro.org.uk). Costs are estimates. © 2026 Pick My Trip.