

Glorious Ghana

7 –20 January 2012.

Lead by Magie Relph and Bob Irwin.

Ghana, once home to the mighty Ashanti Kingdom and fought over by Colonial Powers for its many riches is now a shining light in Africa; a stable nation moving forward in the modern world.

One of Ghana's many riches is its textile and bead making traditions that still prosper to this very day. We will be joining long time visitors to West Africa Magie Relph and Bob Irwin on a journey of exploration; observing traditional methods in textiles and bead making as well as participating in workshops to make treasures to take home.

Weaving, Batik, Indigo, Beads...there are many small artisan based business ventures to visit [in the West we would name these Fairtrade type ventures– dealing directly with the makers at reasonable prices]

Enlarge your stash for back home projects and take time to learn how it is done [bring an apron you will be getting your hands dirty!]

In Accra we will meet up with long time resident Trish Graham who is a beaded jewellery artist/designer and textile enthusiast. She's been living and working in Accra for over 10 years and will share her love of this city with us for an insiders view.

Creative Arts Safaris tours are – art and culture based with a hands-on, get out and about type attitude.

- we utilise good quality mid-range accommodation and search out good places to eat – “*Ghana is not really known for flash accommodation often 70's revival springs to mind...*” as one guide book points out; the places we use are always the best available-very clean, always good western-style bathrooms, friendly service and comfortable rooms.

- most meals included– see itinerary.
- Drinks separate.
- groups of 8-14 participants

These trips are not traditional package tours, rather it is hoped we can travel as a group of friends;

Creative Arts Safaris have done the research, our tutor handles the artistic side and a host makes sure it runs smoothly; we all share our observations and knowledge along the way. [any info you pick up in preparation is easy to share with the group via the internet and helps you 'meet' the others too]

Day 1-Saturday, 7January, 2012 Accra, Ghana

Arrivals to Kotaka International Airport in Accra, where you'll be met and transferred to your hotel.

Day 2-Sunday, 8 January, 2012 Accra

Bring your apron, we are straight into a batik

Cost – US\$ 4890-twin share

Single supplement US\$750

Deposit \$1000 to book today

Deposit Deadline 7 October, 2011

Full payment due 24 November, 2011

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workshop with Esther. Batik; rich, multi-layered batik is a highly desired dress material in Ghana and our teacher's business produces some of the best around– but the end of the day you'll have worked up 2 metres to take home with you.

[includes breakfast, lunch, dinner]

Day 3-Monday, 9 January, 2012

Accra

Get your work gear on! Today we join Bob Dennis for the day to participate in a Ewe Kente weaving workshop. In the afternoon we will catch up with a local woman Trish Graham, a long term resident of Ghana, for an introduction to the bead scene and a little inspiration so we can collect beads along the way to make out own unique jewellery with her when we return to Accra.

[includes breakfast, lunch,]

Day 4-Tuesday, 10 January, 2012

Accra/Sirigu

After a short flight we are heading to the far north of Ghana and the evocative painted village of Sirigu. This area is renown for its arts, crafts and traditional architecture.

[includes breakfast, lunch, dinner]

Day 5-Wednesday, 11 January, 2012 Bolgatanga

This is the hub of the grass basket industry so we should have many interesting finds in our wander through the local market place and village..

[includes breakfast, lunch, dinner]

Day 6– Thursday, 12 January, 2012 Bolgatanga/ Tamale

Today is a real adventure: we'll visit the isolated village of Daboya, west of Tamale, after we cross the White Volta River by dug-out canoe. Magie and Bob first visited Daboya in January 2008 to research the village's indigenous crafts – strip weaving and Indigo dyeing. “Daboya strips” are used throughout northern Ghana to make the distinctive smock worn by the men of the region. “We're definitely off the tourist trail in Daboya”, says Magie. “It's hot, dusty and fascinating to witness these age-old textile techniques close-up.”

[includes breakfast, dinner]

Day 7-Friday, 13 January, 2012

Tamale/Kumasi

Starting south today we go to Kumasi, fitting in a visit to a Monkey sanctuary along the way.

[includes breakfast, lunch, dinner]

Day 8– Saturday, 14 January, 2012

Kumasi

Kumasi, home to the legendary Ashanti kingdom and heart of traditional crafts and culture of Ghana. This is a base for a few days to explore the region.

Adinkra Printing with Gabriel [Gabriel says Adinkra means talking and each symbol associated with this style has a clear meaning so your choice of symbols imparts a lot of information]. Gabriel and his family still source bark from up towards the Sahara to make the traditional inks, the family weaves Kente strips, all will be combined by us in our workshop. Later we will tour some of the local villages.

[includes breakfast, lunch]

Day 9– Sunday, 15 January, 2012

Kumasi

Today we will start the day at the Kofofrom brass village and a brass bead workshop with Paul, before heading off to the will show us how to mould our beads, then finish off and fire

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Manhyia Palace to develop an understanding of local history. Paul them and deliver them to us in Accra to take home with us.

[includes breakfast, lunch]

Day 10-Monday, 16 January, 2012 Kumasi/ Koforidua
Major Market Meander Day this morning ...dive into the enormous Central Market at the heart of Kumasi [it boasts to be biggest in West Africa!]. ...it seems literally anything is possible in this market even things you never dreamed could be...textiles, food, second hand goods, the odd fetish item or 100- parrot wings, dried bats, vulture heads all those things to stock the cupboard back home!

A guided tour of the market in the morning then we head off to Koforidua today

[includes breakfast, dinner]

Day 11-Tuesday, 17 January, 2012 Koforidua

Set amongst sub-tropical woodlands dotted with orchards we will spend some time exploring the local area. An early morning stroll [OK we will take a relaxed pace but it is a good walk uphill to the villages] will take us up through the hills to a glass bead village and a morning learning about painted glass beads, a local waterfall and a then relaxing afternoon.

[includes breakfast, lunch]

Day 12-Wednesday, 18 January, 2012 Koforidua

Need the work gear on today to join Oklah in his workshop to make our own re-cycled glass beads and pendent [could be the centre of a necklace we make with Trish later in the week] Today we work to a true African pace; relaxed... our workshop is down a dirt track from our hotel so we can take time to relax as the process unfolds.

[includes breakfast, dinner]

Notes

Accommodation– is not so fancy in Ghana, we go for the best we can find, clean and friendly and AC if available.

Food– In Ghana, food is plentiful and fresh, local diet is based on a starch– rice or other things such as fofou and a sauce/ soup on top that can include chicken, guinea fowl, meat or vegetables...sometimes a peanut sauce. Sometimes spicy...excellent fish along the coast. Perhaps a little repetitive but tasty.

Weather – At this time of year is warm to hot and humid closer to the coast– loose layers a good idea. It is also the end of the Harmattan season, when a dusty wind blows in off the Sahara...cold by local standards... around 34°C + in day time.

Clothing – light weight layers of clothing is good. Light, loose layers work well with the climate. Generally I find 3 or 4 outfits sufficient, there is always the opportunity to pick up things along the way.

Shoes – sensible walking shoes such as sneakers or strapped on sandals are the best options. Surfaces are often rough and you really want your footing stable so you can focus on all the wonderful things everywhere to look at!

Money – ATMs are in the big towns, need to stock up for up north, so you can use a Visa based travel card, **Visa** debit or credit advance easily. If you plan to use a card overseas DO warn your bank to expect overseas activity – some will freeze the card wondering what is happening. Forex Bureaux Money Changers to change currency, very limited possibilities to change traveller's cheques.

Power – 240 volts, UK style power points.

Tippling – not a big issue in Ghana, usually 10 % in a flash restaurant.

Step lightly on our environment, be frugal in water use, turn off power switches, take rubbish with you where possible.

Say NO to Plastic! Please bring a cloth carry bag.

Day 13-Thursday, 19 January, 2012 Koforidua

This morning we are heading to the Koforidua bead market. Held weekly it is a treasure trove for the bead addicted and the centre of the bead trade in West Africa and increasingly international clients as well. The evening will find us back in Accra

[includes breakfast, lunch]

Day 14– Friday, 20 January, 2012 Accra

Using all our treasures we will take a jewellery making workshop this morning, before an afternoon shopping in the Cultural Arts Centre and then our Farewell Dinner

[includes breakfast, lunch, dinner]

Day 15– Saturday, 21 Jan, 2012 Accra/Home

We'll organize transfers to the airport.

[inc breakfast]

If you are joining us, please consider filling that extra space in your suitcase with empty glass bottles. Especially in blue– it will make the perfect present for the re-cycled glass bead makers. Magie recommends Bombay Sapphire Gin simply because the bottle makes the most beautiful blue beads!

Creative Arts Safaris tours include:

- pickups from the airport for arrivals on Day 1
 - departures last day of tour
- [we are happy to organise pick-ups if you arrive earlier or depart later at an extra fee, we are also happy to help with accommodation etc if you wish to stay longer]*
- accommodation from check in time of Day 1 up to and including the night of our Farewell Dinner
- Our accommodation is generally mid-range. All places are clean, friendly and have western bathrooms! It is ambiance and friendliness we are looking for, accommodation tends to be on the simple side in Ghana but always friendly and spotlessly clean.*
- all transportation, road taxes and fuel costs for the tour
 - Internal flight to Tamale
 - all breakfasts and many other meals
- Food is a reflection of the culture, we tend to favour local cuisine but western style food is also available in the large towns.*
- sightseeing entrance fees
 - all tuition fees

You need to cover:

- a few meals
- all drinks
- laundry
- the one expense that we can't guestimate' for you is shopping! *[this is not a shopping expedition but you will see some amazing things and you will probably want to indulge!]*
- **airfares**
- **travel insurance**
- **visa** [where necessary]
- We support Fair Trade and Self-Help organisations where we can and so the only 'shops' listed on our itinerary come under this category. Don't worry there are also lots of other markets we can visit too!

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