Gambia 2023 – Essential information

Eligibility

- Girlguiding 18-30 offer
- Adult Leaders from any guiding section *(attending the trip as a participant)*

Trip Dates & Flights

The trip will be Sunday 2nd to Sunday 9th April 2023. We will fly from Manchester direct to Banjul with TUI. Note the return flight lands at 03.20 on Monday 10th April.

Briefing Meetings:

It's **essential** that team members attend **all** the briefing meetings. During these we will be preparing our peer education sessions to deliver in The Gambia, getting to know and building our team, making decisions about other aspects of our trip. Once you commit to the trip, these dates should go in your diary and be prioritised so you don't miss them.

- Briefing 1 Sat 25th June 11.30 – 14.00
- Briefing 2 Sat 15th – Sun 16th October 2022 *(overnight), 10.00am Sat-3.00pm Sun*
- Briefing 3 Sun 29th January 11.00 – 13.00
- Briefing 4 Sun 12th March 11.00 – 13.00
- Debrief Sat 10th June 12.00 – 14.00

About The Gambia

The Gambia is West Africa's most accessible and peaceful country. Visitors are drawn to this fascinating country because of its stunning beaches, relaxed atmosphere, charming fishing villages and its huge array of birdlife. At 11,300 square kilometres (about the size of Yorkshire), The Gambia is one of Africa's smallest and most densely populated countries, with a population of more than 1.5 million.

Despite being a popular tourist destination, The Gambia remains one of the poorest countries in the world, with 69% of people living off less than 50p a day. Poverty in the region means a life expectancy of 56 years and between 100 and 200 children in every 1000 die before the age of five. Unemployment rates are very high and literacy rates are low, especially among women.

Climate

The weather in The Gambia is subtropical and has distinct rainy and dry seasons. Inland day temperatures are high between March and June, the average 30 degrees centigrade, although it can be hotter at midday.

Accommodation & Facilities - The Gunjur Project Lodge

Located near the village of Gunjur, this peaceful lodge offers a real African experience away from the tourist trail. Each room is en-suite and has its own private terrace. Depending on the size of our group, 2-4 people will share a room. The lodge runs on solar power and the water is from a bore hole. During the day the sun heats the water. The rooms are surrounded by trees, bushes and flowers and the Lodge is within walking distance of a beautiful beach and fascinating fishing village.

The lodge is situated in the tiny village of Kajabang where you will meet the local people who will greet you with a smile.

Evenings are spent in different ways – some evenings there will be a local band coming to entertain us – everyone will be dancing! Other evenings – perhaps a walk along a deserted beach watching the sun go down, sitting round a campfire reflecting on the day, meeting the local people or having a djembe drumming lesson.

Find out more:
Like our trip page on Facebook: www.facebook.com/TeamGambia
Follow our trip page on Instagram: www.instagram.com/girlstakeactiongambia/
Follow our trip page on Twitter: www.twitter.com/GGCFGambia

Passports, Visas and Vaccinations

Visas are not currently required to visit The Gambia. Each participant must have a full passport with minimum of 6 months validity from date of arrival. It is likely that you will require some vaccinations for travel. Please contact your local GP services ASAP to enquire about recommended vaccinations which may be needed at least 12 weeks prior to travelling. Anti-Malarial medication is mandatory for The Gambia (there will be a cost for this).

Money

The local currency is Dalasi. As a rough guide, £50 should be plenty to buy souvenirs and any extra drinks or snacks.

Travel Insurance

We have a group travel insurance policy. This will be purchased even if your family already has their own policy, as it makes it much easier for the leaders to administer, should anything happen abroad. It's essential that you disclose anything which may affect this policy. We cannot be held responsible for travel insurance not paying out on something not disclosed at the start.

Pre-existing medical conditions:

The policy excludes any expenses incurred where a trip is booked or undertaken against the advice of a Medical Practitioner. In addition, if anyone travelling has any of the following conditions they will need to submit a medical questionnaire (completed by a qualified Medical Practitioner / Consultant).

- Stroke, heart condition or circulatory disorder
- Cancer of any type
- Any mental nervous, depressive or stress related condition
- A slipped disc, other spinal disorder, diabetes, hernia or rheumatic or arthritic condition
- Any other injury or illness that's required treatment or investigation in the last 2years

Covid 19

If you are not fully vaccinated against Covid19, please let the trip leaders know, as there is an additional requirement for paperwork in this instance and we need to note it on the travel insurance policy.

Our travel insurance will cover:

- You getting covid in the 2 weeks before travel and needing to cancel
- Medical and emergency repatriation expenses if you catch covid on the trip
- Supplementary travel and accommodation expenses if you catch covid on the trip and can't fly back on the originally proposed date

Our travel insurance not cover:

- Any covid related costs for persons who have not been fully vaccinated, unless it is on medical grounds – you must advise us if you are not fully vaccinated

If it is not possible for the trip to go ahead due to any Covid risks at the time, the trip will be postponed to the following year. If this means participants need to drop out, they will lose their deposit, plus any non-recoverable additional costs (this will depend on what point of the trip you drop out). However, if the reason for the cancellation of the trip is because of a change in FCO travel advice, only the deposit would be lost. If the trip leaders are able to sell your place to a new team member for the new dates, your deposit may also be refunded.

If the FCO travel advice changes whilst we are abroad on our trip and the government announces The Gambia is to move to the red list, TUI's policy is "we will endeavour to bring our customers home before the hotel quarantine becomes active".

If at the time of travel there are still requirements for pre-departure PCR testing and testing on return back to the UK, these tests will be at the participants cost.

Fundraising:

All or part of the cost may be fundraised. Please note this is an independent trip and grants will not be available from either Girlguiding Cheshire Forest or Girlguiding North West England. If you apply for any grants, it's preferred by Girlguiding that the grant cheque is made out directly to the trip bank account, rather than your personal bank account. If you fundraise more than the trip cost, the additional money should be paid into the trip account to be used towards project work / resources, as it has been given to you in good faith for the purpose of this trip.

Terms and Conditions

Participants must:

- Be in good general health
- Be physically mobile
- Be able to cope with heat and temperatures around 30 degrees daily
- Be prepared to experience a country with high poverty
- Be prepared to try new food and experiences
- Be ready to work hard on community action projects!
- **Prioritise and attend all Team Gambia briefing meetings**
- Make payments by the set deadline

Payment terms:

Total Cost £1,350

- Deposit: £300 non-refundable deposit required upon booking – **by 1st March 2022**
- Followed by 11 monthly payments of £95.46 by standing order, starting 1st April 2022

The cost covers flights, accommodation, food, transport within Gambia, team t-shirts, neckerchief, briefing meetings, project resources, travel insurance, some cultural excursions. It does not cover your personal travel vaccinations, malaria medication, any requirement for travel covid tests, personal spending money.

All deposit cheques should be made payable to 'Weaver Senior Section' and sent to:
Sue Clough, 3 Mather Drive, Comberbach, Northwich, CW9 6BG

Account Name: **Weaver Senior Section** *Acct Number:* **58944028** *Sort Code:* **01-09-17**

Cancellation:

We understand that occasionally people have to drop out of a trip for personal reasons / circumstances. In the event of cancellation (not related to Covid), the initial deposit is non-refundable. In addition to this, if any other costs have been incurred, like flight or accommodation, this cost will also have to be covered by you. This means that the later in the process you cancel, the more money you will forfeit.

If your cancellation is due to medical reasons and is covered by the travel insurance policy, then any refunds we are able to claim back can be passed on, minus the deposit.

No payment = no trip. Failure to meet payment deadlines will result in participants forfeiting their place on the trip.

Trip leaders:
Sue Clough, Chris Champion, Jemma Fraser

All queries should be directed to:
gambia@cheshireforest.org.uk