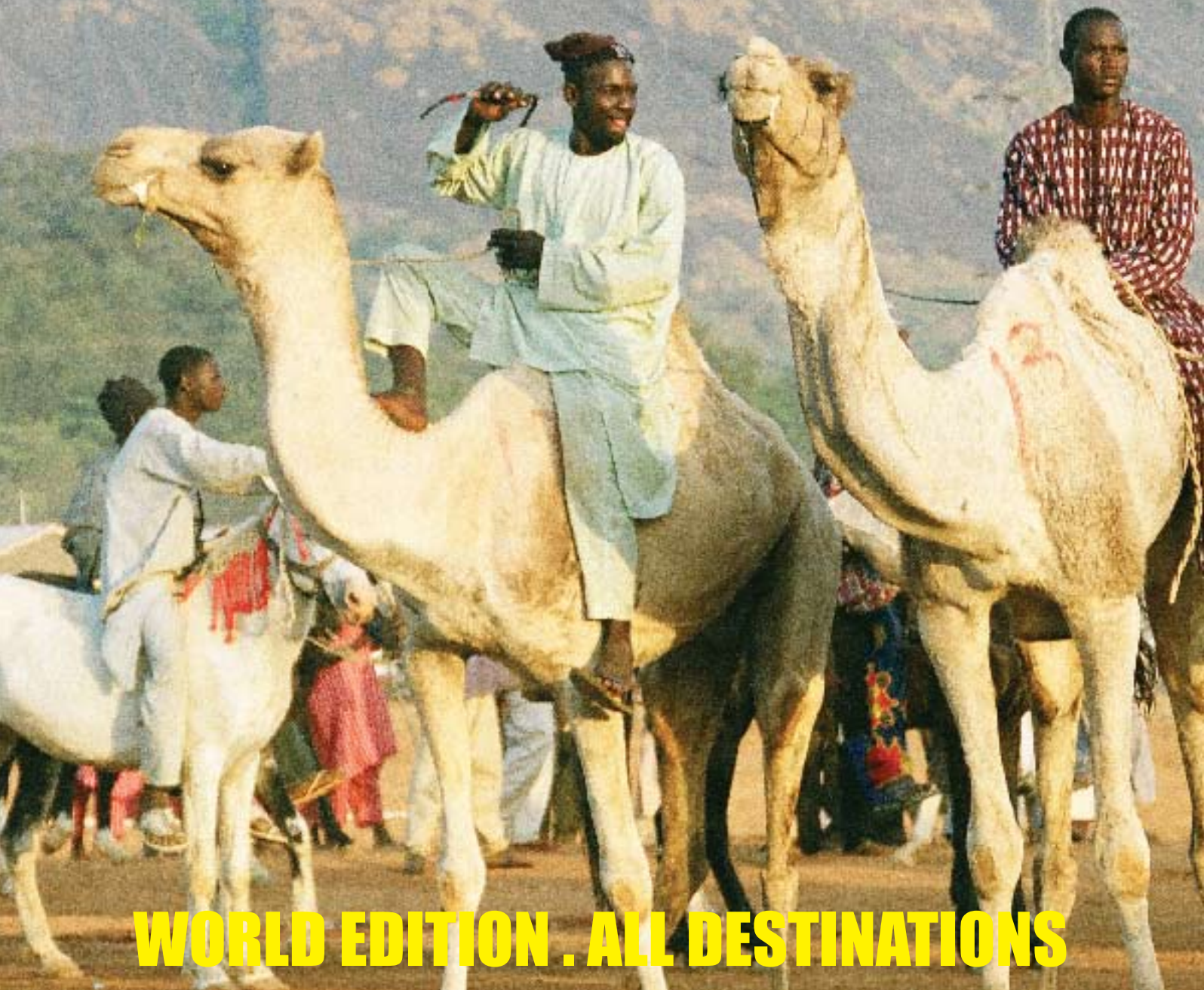
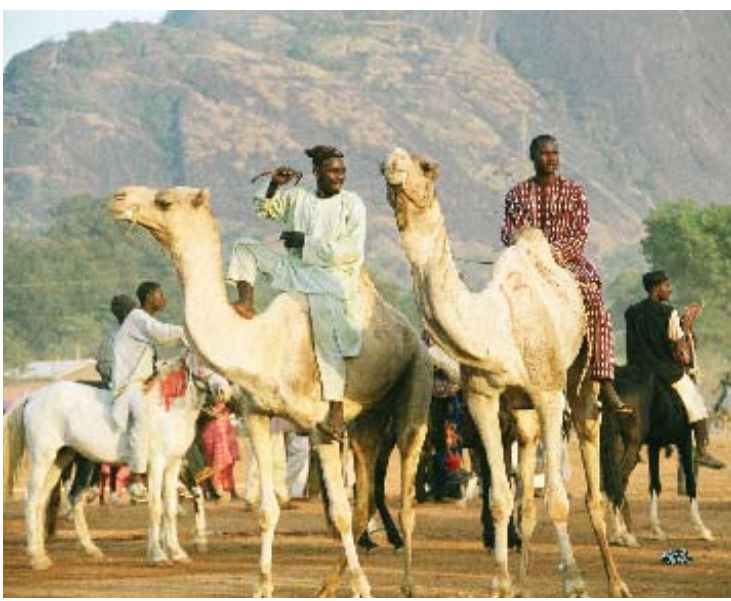


# AFRICA

*Travel Magazine*



**WORLD EDITION . ALL DESTINATIONS**



# ABUJA CARNIVAL: NIGERIA'S CAPITAL SWINGS AROUND

By Jerry W. Bird

I am Abuja, capital of Nigeria, Africa's most populous country. I am confident about my future as a world center and as a magnet for cultural, adventure, educational and leisure tourism in all of Nigeria. My broad, well maintained paved streets, attractively landscaped boulevards and modern overpasses keep the traffic flowing smoothly, morning, noon and night. With my wide, cinematic vistas in every direction, you won't feel hemmed in by gridlock. Being in Nigeria's heartland, I am adjacent to Kogi, Niger, Kaduna and Nassarawa states. Carnival week in late November showcases the culture of all 36 states, with rhythmic, pulsating music, exotic tribal dances, durbars on horseback and camels from the far Sahara. It's an unending kaleidoscope of colorful regalia, fun activities, parade floats, tribal masks and costumes unique to various states. Born in 1976, I am considered a model city for all of Africa, and one of the world's handful of totally planned cities. I am proud of my position as a magnet for world class meetings and events. For example I just finished receiving visitors from over 60 countries, including heads of state, at the Africa- Latin America Summit.

## Visitors Comments

Here are some current comments about my lifestyle and attractions from a variety of U.S. visitors and residents from other countries:

"Originally from France, I have lived and taught school in Abuja for five years, and appreciate the easy going lifestyle and friendliness of the people. Here, we enjoy a comfortable year round climate and really appreciate the absence of mosquitoes and similar insect pests. It's good to know that this city is virtually malaria free."

"I was very impressed by the recent renovations that were being made at Nnamdi Azikwe International Airport and was pleased to learn that the Nigerian government was really serious about improving the infrastructure of its airports for incoming tourists and business people."

"Your exciting Abuja Carnival rivals those in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and Mardi Gras in New Orleans." Many say, Latin America's carnivals and music originated here in Nigeria."

"My impression of Abuja was that it is truly a 'City of the Future' set in a scenic environment." "Located approximately one hour by air from Lagos, Abuja has excellent conference and accommodation facilities."

"Throughout Abuja there is much construction going on and the



# THE CLOCK IN A ROLICKING WEEK OF FESTIVITIES

*people truly exhibit an excitement about living in what is perhaps the most modern city in Africa."*

*"We were quite surprised at the relative ease in our processing through immigration and customs. Much to our pleasure, we were told that both the Ministry of Aviation and the Ministry of Tourism have done an excellent job in alleviating the extreme bottlenecks that travelers were accustomed to experience upon arriving in Nigeria."*

Excerpts from The Guardian (Nigeria) by Andrew Iro Okungbowa and Stella Agbala *"Here in this country where we have well over 350 ethnic and linguistic groups, diversity of culture, diversity of language, diversity of foods, and unity in diversity. We owe it a duty to ourselves, the rest of Africans and to African in Diaspora to showcase what is authentically Africa and what is authentically ours."*

Former President Obasanjo said, *"In the next four days, you will see the different forms of art, dances, different aspects of our way of life, boat regatta, masquerades, that would be breathtaking in one spot."*

Referring to the unique nature of the carnival, he added, *"We have*

*come together, all as Nigerians, in one spot; we have brought together what will take anybody who has to go over Nigeria days and even months in a space of few days."*

## **Dream Becomes Reality**

The Carnival debuted in 2005 as part of the Government's dream to promote Nigeria as a tourist destination and to expose Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) to the world as a promoter of tourism as well as showcase to the world the cultural beauty and business opportunities that abound in the country. Last year's celebration was almost marred by outcries and criticisms by some Nigerians, especially religious organizations, which saw the event as fetish and profane. But the President addressed these charges when he informed the nation that among others, it was meant to promote Nigeria and her people to the global community. With nothing short of joy and excitement, the President said the carnival is to be entrenched as a yearly celebration that would give people room to explore Nigeria. Visit [www.africa-ata.org/nigeria.htm](http://www.africa-ata.org/nigeria.htm)



## The Devil's Elbow at Obudu Ranch, Nigeria



In travel and tourism as in life, there are more than one ways to get to the top! In Cross River State, Nigeria there's the long and winding way up the Devils's Elbow. Then there's the high speed gondola - and for the high

and mighty there's a helicopter pad near the conference center. You can also land at a nearby airfield. My first visit to Nigeria was in the fall of 2006, and as luck would have it, the city that won the opportunity to host our ATA Eco Cultural Symposium was Calabar in Cross River State. What is so unique about Calabar? For one thing it is an example of good management, zero tolerance in some key areas and a spirit of optimism far ahead of most destinations we have visited. Credit must go to our host for the event, Governor Donald Duke, who introduced and championed a number of creative ideas. One of them is pictured on this page - a state-of-the-art gondola lift that whisks visitors up to the high

plateau where the Obudu Cattle Ranch, established decades ago, has been transformed into a spectacular tourism and world class attraction for important meetings and summits. The lodge operated by South Africa's Protea Hotels group has been resorted and, as expected, the hospitality is outstanding. More information? Please visit <http://crossriverstate.com/obudu.htm> - or [www.africa-ata.org/nigeria.htm](http://www.africa-ata.org/nigeria.htm)

### Tinapa - Birth of a Super Oasis

In fall of 2006, our magazine's editorial team was part of an ATA group that was privileged to visit and inspect Calabar's exciting Tinapa project that was in its final stages at the time. Our current mandate is to make sure Africa Travel Magazine's readers and internet viewers in North America and around the world know the true facts about Nigeria's newest treasure of cooperative enterprise. Tinapa is a resort that means business - the business of combining business, pleasure and leisure! Tinapa is the resort that means business - the business of combining business, pleasure and leisure! This will be the first time that anything

like this has been experienced in West Africa. No longer will you need to go to Europe, the Far East or America to enjoy the best entertainment, shopping and leisure facilities the world has to offer!

The total Tinapa complex is massive - 80 000 m2 of retail and wholesale emporiums alone. The emporiums feature a borderless, seamless shopping environment - a unique concept that unfolds a new dimension in retailing for the first time in Africa's history! These massive 21st century shopping emporiums will be supported by a vast array of retailers offering everything from exclusive bookshops, specialty CD and DVD outlets, pharmacies to beauty salons, banks and jewellery stores! Plus an incredible entertainment centre including cinemas, food court, internet cafe and games arcade! There will be a dazzling range of six hotels to choose from - accommodation to suit a variety of lifestyles and budgets. The magnificent waterfront development incor-

**CREATIVE CONCEPTS DESIGNED TO ENHANCE**

porating a Fisherman's Wharf, will showcase even more restaurants, bars and tourist kiosks. Imagine, after an endless night of fun, enjoying a champagne breakfast whilst watching a beautiful sunrise over the azure waters of the Calabar River! And as if that's not enough entertainment there'll be added attractions to indulge in, including a golfer's paradise with driving range and putting green, a jungle carting track, quad biking route, plus a clay pigeon and archery course! Water activities, including water-skiing, parasailing, rowing and canoeing will take place in a luxurious oasis environment! Agri and eco tourism attractions will include a sizeable exotic bird sanctuary, a crocodile farm, a tropical fish farm, a primate rehabilitation centre and much,

much more in the sun-drenched waterways of Tinapa! It is the ultimate shop and party till-you-drop leisure centre - a world that is alive twenty-fours a day with a never-ending choice of activities to choose from. Tinapa will provide visitors with a unique tourism experience and the development will fast track growth of the tourism sector in Calabar, Cross River State and Nigeria.

*"Tinapa will Regenerate Lost Trading History of Old Calabar,"* President Olusegun Obasanjo.

#### **Governor Donald Duke**

We thank our host from the ATA Eco an decultural Tourism Symposium, Government Donald Duke for a week of surprising and delightful experiences - and for welcoming us to the Governor's mansion for a wind up dinner.



Recent Events: Nigerian Minister of Tourism, Culture and National Orientation, Prince Adetokunbo Kayode (San), invited ATA delegates to participate in the launch of the country's Tourism Master Plan October, 2007 in Abuja, the capital city. The plan aims to position Nigeria as the continent's leading cultural, historical and business tourist destination. Minister Kayode said the plan "was borne out of the Government's firm conviction on the opportunities offered by the sector for sustainable development, especially at the grass roots level, its high potential for enhanced foreign exchange earnings and the environment friendly nature of tourism programmes". He emphasized that tourism provides a variety of new opportunities for improving socio-economic conditions, diversifying the economy, and achieving stability. For more information fax 604 681 6595 or visit our web site: <http://www.africa-ata.org/nigeria.htm>

# ANCE AFRICA'S TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE

# DJIBOUTI: A WAY OF LIFE THAT



## Have you Googled Djibouti lately?

By Jerry W. Bird. Photos by Mjuguette Gofrani

In our efforts to sing the praises of travel and tourism to Africa, our magazine's staff and I rely on Google as a fool-proof guide and fast, accurate measuring stick. Like magic, it confirms whether our message is getting through to readers worldwide. The good news? We lead the pack in a variety of Africa topics, beating out media rivals and giants of the travel tourism scene. So when it came to Djibouti - we asked Google to search its vast domain for "Marketing Djibouti Tourism?" Voila - our web site was #1 and #2 from 270,000 entries. Having traveled on Djibouti's doorstep during the past seven years with tours and ATA World Congresses in Ethiopia, we are excited about the region's potential for positive, unbridled growth. So we asked Google about Djibouti becoming another Dubai thanks to its climate and strategic location. Again - our site was sitting in the #1 position. With our pioneer visit to Djibouti comes the opportunity to produce this souvenir edition as a showcase of positive views and scenes of this rapidly emerging country. So, by way introduction, we're letting Djibouti tell its own story.

### I am Djibouti ...

This magazine's editors call me "Africa's Red Sea Miracle." Why? For starters think of the familiar line - location, location and, location. I am a former French colony situated on the Red Sea in Africa's farthest corner, bordered by Ethiopia, Eritrea and Somalia,



with Yemen across the way in the Arabian Peninsula. My coastline extends from the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden, the same route taken by traders and explorers since early times. Lonely Planet describes me as an ideal place to recharge one's batteries before or after an overland trip to Ethiopia or Eritrea. The Africa Travel Association (ATA) chose me as host country for its 11th Annual Eco Cultural Symposium in January, 2008, which became an opportunity to showcase my travel, trade and tourism attractions to influential contacts from North America, Africa and points beyond. Some say I have the location and potential of becoming another Dubai, which time will

tell. Among my most popular visitor attractions is year round diving and snorkeling in the Gulf of Aden with denizens of the deep including Whale Shark. I compare in size to Massachusetts and my three main regions, include the coastal plain and volcanic plateaus in my central and southern regions and mountain ranges to the north.

Djibouti City, my strategic seaport, has a half million population. Do you enjoy warm weather? You will find me a great

# STANDS THE TESTS OF TIME



vacation spot, with November to mid April the best time to visit. Being at the mouth of the Red Sea, with my status as a free trade zone in northeast Africa I serve as an important transshipment location for trade goods entering and leaving the highlands of East Africa. My two official languages are French and Arabic, however Somali and Afar are spoken throughout the country. I have two main population groups, the Issa (Somali) and the Afar, with Europeans, Arabs and Ethiopians in lesser numbers.

## **Djibouti Palace Kempinski**

What can I say about the miracle that took place when Dubai World financed and built this remarkable 5 star hotel? What's more

they did it in record time. Away from the busy districts, yet only few minutes from my international airport, Djibouti Palace Kempinski is ideally located at a prime beach front between the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. At the moment now, there are further signs of activity as construction cranes and tradesmen are erecting a multi story extension, casino and private beach. It is a secluded and peaceful setting of palms and bougainvillea. As the brochure says, "The vanilla colored Hotel's silhouette etch against the turquoise blue of the African sky and the deep Ocean. Djibouti Palace Kempinski features a plethora of entertainment amenities, including a fully equipped fitness center, mountain bikes, outdoor swimming pool,

mini club, restaurants and bars. Djibouti Palace Kempinski redefines luxury service in the Land of Gods."

## **The Djibouti Scene**

I am Djibouti, strategically located on the Red Sea in East Africa's farthest corner. I am bordered by Ethiopia to the north and northwest, Eritrea to the north and Somalia to the southeast. Lonely Planet describes me as an ideal spot to recharge one's batteries before or after an overland trip to Ethiopia or Eritrea. Some say I have the location and potential of becoming another Dubai, which time will tell. Among my most popular visitor attractions are year round diving and snorkeling in the Gulf of Aden with denizens of the deep including the Whale Shark, whose enormous mouth appears to be as wide as the keyboard of a grand piano.

*For more about Djibouti visit [www.africa-ata.org/djibouti.htm](http://www.africa-ata.org/djibouti.htm)*



# DISCOVER DYNAMIC DJIBOUTI,

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African country. So, by way introduction, we're letting Djibouti tells it's ow story.

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# AFRICA'S RED SEA MIRACLE

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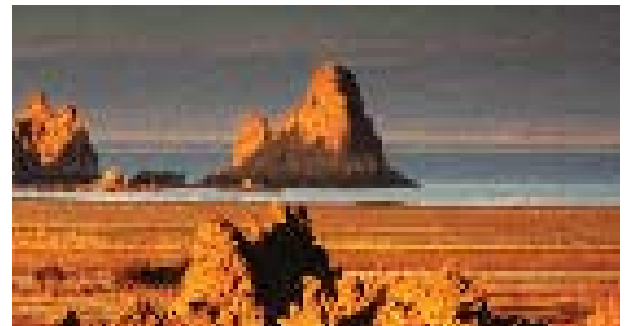
## Will the Lion of Judah's Railway Engines Roar Again?

As Muguette Goufrani says, "Sometimes I feel as if "Railways of the World" a travel magazine series we launched in 1989, started a renaissance in rail travel. Perhaps it was ESP, because since then, many famous routes have been upgraded or restored, and new lines installed, as countless visitors rediscover the romance of the rails. Like us, these people savor the fact that getting there is more than half the fun. Given Aladdin's 3 wishes, we would restore Emperor Haile Sellasie's 'Lion of Judah'

railway engine, hook it up to the prized set of French and British coaches, and operate luxury tours on the Franco-Ethiopian Railway.

Built in the 1930s, this 482 mile line stretches from Addis Ababa, via Nazaret, the Rift Valley and Dire Dawa, to Djibouti, a French protectorate on the Gulf of Aden. Think of the income such a tour would generate. After a visit to Addis Ababa's ornate railway station and a recent visit to Djibouti we're even more upbeat about promoting such an historic journey. Yes, the lordly Lion of Judah's engine lacks wheels, and the dust covered coaches show neglect from being shunted aside for decades - however, with some good old fashioned TLC (tender loving care) each museum piece would soon be in shining order."

Info: [www.africa-ata.org/Addis](http://www.africa-ata.org/Addis), [www.airhighways.com/adventure\\_rails.htm](http://www.airhighways.com/adventure_rails.htm),  
E-mail: [africa@dowco.com](mailto:africa@dowco.com)





# A BERBER WEDDING FAIR PLUS OTHER

By Muguette Goufrani

My father, who owned and operated a tour company in Casablanca, Morocco and France for many years, took me along with a group of German tourists to visit a traditional “Wedding Fair” at Hadiddou Imilchil, a Berber village in southern Morocco. While I knew that many Berber Fairs combine a local Saint’s Day with a regional market event, only at September’s ‘moussem’ (pilgrimage) of Imilchil, have I seen such a colorful pageant, with instant engagement, and a mass exchange of marriage vows. Berbers have inhabited North Africa for centuries, some being of Caucasian ancestry, with fair complexions and blue eyes. Visitors may think of Berbers as exotic outsiders, yet they preceded the Arabs in settling Morocco, and they remain the country’s main culture. This is expressed by the phrase, “Morocco is Berber - the roots and the leaves of freedom.”

## A unique experience

While the Wedding Fair is key part of Berber marital custom, families usually arrange marriages in their home village. Women are free to divorce and remarry. At the moussem, divorced and widowed women form the majority, and are identified by their pointed headdress. The courtship is a family affair as I learned after accepting an invitation



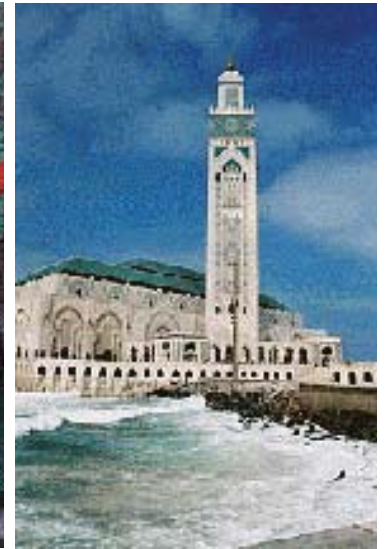
to drink mint tea in the goat hair tent of a Berber elder. His oldest daughter Malika, prettied up her divorced 18 year old sister Yasmina with traditional beauty aids - rubbing saffron colored powder into her sister’s eyebrows, applying kohl to outline her eyes and carmine rouged to her cheeks. A wool cape, striped in tribal colors, covered her white dress; then a cone shaped headdress was assembled, held on by loops of spangled wool.

I gave Yasmina a silver chain as a wedding gift, since silver brings good luck. Many Westerners think that Moroccans purchase their wives at the fair, but in truth, marriage depends on mutual consent and family approval.

## Friends get involved

The language of gesture is as clearly understood by these people as the spoken word. By having a friend help him choose a bride (with often no more than a silhouette and two dark eyes as a clue) the groom gets overcomes his shyness. All day long, in pairs, these men weave in and out amongst a cluster of anxious brides. Then, welcomed by a shy glance or a quick nod, the suitor will stop to speak to the lady, encouraged by a signal from his friend’s reassuring hand.

Once this happens, the newly acquainted boy and girl unite, holding hands as a sign of intent. Male relatives who accompany the



# MOROCCAN CULTURAL TREASURES

bride-to-be lend advice, often making snap judgment calls at first sight. If rejection is signaled by a broken handclasp, it's time to look elsewhere.

When a bride does give consent, she may speak the magic phrase, "You have captured my liver." Since a healthy liver aids digestion and promotes well-being, in Berber culture it's the liver, not the heart that's considered the location of true love. Might one say, "Darling, my liver pines for you?" Often snowbound behind village walls for up to six months a year, the new couples must learn to live in harmony. Despite those old Foreign Legion movies from the 50s, which showed Berbers as being fierce, hot tempered and warlike, they believe in "paix chez eux" (peace at home).

## Moroccan food


Who wouldn't enjoy steamed semolina, topped with a meat and vegetable sauce called couscous? Or tajines, a vegetable stew that contains rabbit, lamb, goat or chicken meat, combined with prunes, apricots or raisins. Pastilla (baked

pigeon pie) is made of layered filo pastry, with nuts and spices, and coated with sugar. With your morning coffee, try a light deep fried Spanish doughnut, we call sfinj, or cornes de gazelle pastries.

## Berber history and culture

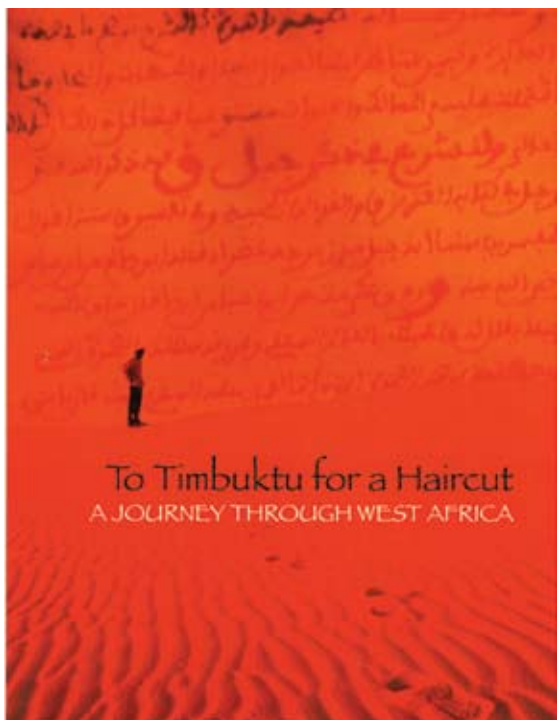
Most of the 27 million Moroccans are Berbers, Arabs or Moors (people of mixed Berber and Arab descent), whose ancestors built the mighty Moorish empire that once ruled Spain, Portugal and most of Northern Africa. Most Berbers dwell in the mountains, while the Arabs and Moors live on the plain and desert. Most cities have a European section a Jewish enclave, and a Medina (Arab-Moorish section). Over the past 3,000 years, its geographic location has given Morocco a strategic importance far beyond its small size. The country has taken the best from the Phoenicians, Romans, Arabs, Berbers, Portuguese, Spanish and French.

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# TO TIMBUKTU FOR A HAIRCUT AND



Author and tourism executive, Rick Antonson (left) sets out on an unforgettable journey to Africa, and chronicles his adventures in *TO TIMBUKTU FOR A HAIRCUT: A Journey Through West Africa*, published by Dundurn Press on June 7, 2008.

“To Timbuktu for a Haircut is a great read - a little bit of Bill Bryson, a little bit of Michael Palin, and quite a lot of Bob Hope on the road to Timbuktu.” - Professor Geoffrey Lipman, Assistant Secretary-General, United Nations World Tourism Organization.

Historically rich, remote, and once unimaginably dangerous for travellers, Timbuktu still teases with “Find me if you can.” Rick Antonson’s encounters with entertaining train companions Ebou and Ussegnou, a mysterious cook called Nema, and intrepid guide Zak will make you want to pack up and leave for Timbuktu tomorrow. As Antonson travels in Senegal and Mali by train, four-wheel drive, river pinasse, camel, and foot, he tells of fourteenth-century legends, eighteenth-century explorers, and today’s endangered existence of Timbuktu’s 700,000 ancient manuscripts in what scholars have described as the most important archaeological discovery since the Dead Sea Scrolls.

*TO TIMBUKTU FOR A HAIRCUT* combines wry humour with shrewd observation to deliver an armchair experience that will linger in the mind long after the last page is read. “I left Africa personally changed by the gentle harshness I found and a disquieting splendour that found me. Mali was the journey I needed, if not the one I envisioned. And I learned that there’s a little of Timbuktu in every traveller: the over-anticipated experience, the clash of dreams with reality.” – Rick Antonson

Rick Antonson is the president and CEO of Tourism Vancouver and a director of the Pacific Asia Travel Association. He has had adventures

in Tibet and Nepal, and in Libya and North Korea, among others. The co-author of *SLUMACH’S GOLD: In Search of a Legend*, he lives in Vancouver.

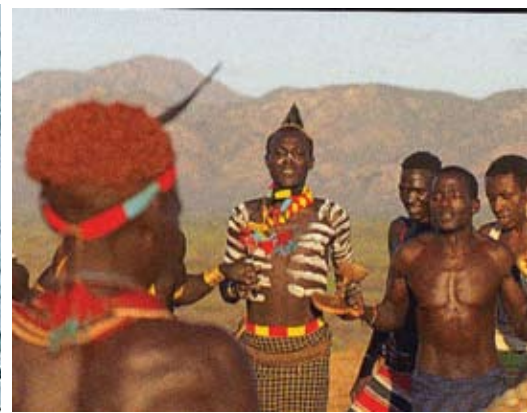
## From the Vancouver Sun

It may seem counterintuitive, but the appeal of travel literature often has less to do with the destination in question than with the character of the traveller. Thus, while there may be significant geographical overlap, there is a vast difference, for example, between Frances Mayes’s *Tuscany* (in the best-selling *Under the Tuscan Sun*) and Ferenc Máté’s *Tuscany* (in the equally impressive but less commercially successful *The Hills of Tuscany*). In each book, the milieu serves as a backdrop for the revelation and development of the author’s persona. The reader responds not to the locale but to the locale as experienced by the narrator.

This may seem a minor distinction, but it’s crucial, especially when you consider both the number of new travel accounts published each year and the fact that the world is a finite place with, sadly, few remaining mysteries. The age of strict geographic exploration is long gone, but the potential for personal explorations through geography is practically limitless.

Two new books from B.C. writers nicely underscore this point, to varying degrees of effect. In exploring two of the





# OTHER HAIR-RAISING ADVENTURES

world's less-travelled places, Rick Antonson and Martin Mitchinson also explore themselves.

## About Rick Antonson

Tourism Vancouver president and CEO Rick Antonson travels for a living, "flying a hundred thousand kilometres each year for two decades," moving from conference to air-conditioned hotel room with seasoned thoughtlessness.

When it came time for him to take a month-long solo expedition, however, he decided almost on a whim to journey to one of the most fabled -- and forbidding -- destinations in the world: Timbuktu.

Few places are quite as evocative and mysterious. A centre of Islamic scholarship and culture during the 15th and 16th centuries, Timbuktu has long been a beacon for travellers. Once thought of as a source of unimaginable riches, the city today is impoverished, threatened by the encroaching Sahara Desert.

For this trip, Antonson decided against his usual air travel and instead made the journey on the ground: by train, boat, car, camel and foot. The result, as recounted in his impressive new book, *To Timbuktu for a Haircut*, is a quixotic quest, alternately funny and thought-provoking.

Readers follow his journey chronologically as he moves toward the city and then as it recedes behind him. His account is threaded through with historical and cultural information. Curiously, his encounter with the city itself is almost anticlimactic. He clearly relishes the journey, and his fellow travellers, more than the destination.

From a ride up the River Niger to an open-air music festival in the desert, from the sudden close friendships that bloom during such travel to the machinations of an unscrupulous tour coordinator who seems intent on foiling his travel goals at every juncture, Antonson handles the joys and occasional frustrations of his trip in vivid, straightforward prose and with a wry sense of humour.

## Pearl of the Desert

Timbuktu was formerly a great commercial trading city and an international center of Islamic learning. The city was probably founded in the late 11th century AD by Tuareg nomads. Timbuktu was a leading terminus of trans-Saharan caravans and a distribution point for trade along the upper Niger. Merchants from northern African cities traded salt and cloth for gold and for black African slaves in the markets of Timbuktu. The visitors will discover the ancient mosques including the famous Sankore whose reputation spanned all across north Africa and Europe as a leading Islamic academy for centuries. Most of the ancient books (some dating from the 14th century AD) are still preserved at the Ahmed Baba Center. Tuareg formed one of the most ancient tribal people of the Sahara. They speak a Berber language, Tamacheq, and have their own alphabet. In ancient times, the Tuareg controlled the trans-Saharan routes and substantially contributed in the expansion of Islam in sub-Saharan Africa even though they retained however some of their older rites. Today, the Tuareg symbolize the mysteries of the Sahara and Masters of the Desert. The city of Mopti is known as the "Venice of Mali". Mopti is situated at the confluence of the Bani and Niger rivers, and is built on several interconnected islands. It is from the river that one can best observe the commercial and social activities of the town. Mopti is literally teeming with traditional traders offering a variety of locally-produced commodities and beautiful artifacts.

## Desert Festival in Mali

**Jan. 8-10, 2009.** To be held in the desert oasis Essakane, 65 kilometers from Timbuktu. For details visit [www.africa-ata.org/mali.htm](http://www.africa-ata.org/mali.htm) or [www.sagatours.com/essakane.html](http://www.sagatours.com/essakane.html)



# ZAMBIA, THE REAL AFRICA IS SPECTACULAR BY NATURE

By Jerry W. Bird

What an amazing country! So many lasting friendships were made during our month-long visit to Zambia, we've become lifetime ambassadors, eager to spread the good news at every opportunity. When we say Zambia adds zest to your Real Africa Safari we have proof. Who wouldn't be awed by their first sight of Mosi-O-Tunya, the smoke that thunders, or by the denizens we encountered eye to eye on our Lower Zambezi Canoe Safari. Zambia is a fabulous place to get around, thanks to its regional airlines and superb highway system. The country's high elevation allows for a more temperate climate than one would expect in a tropical country. All the more reason to plan an encore. While Zambia Tourism hosted successful ATA events in 1981 and 1993 - the Africa Travel Association's 28th International Congress in May, 2003 was

the first "double-header." Lusaka, the Capital and Livingstone, home of Victoria Falls shared the honors.

## Discover Livingstone!

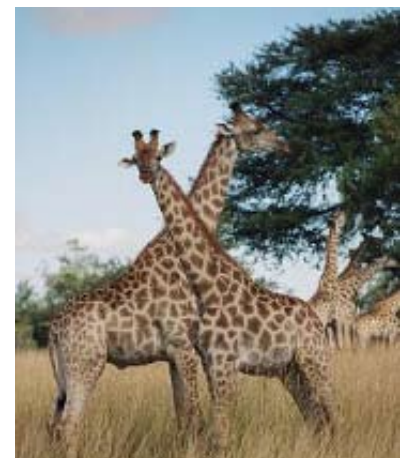
Livingstone Tourism Association has provided the following historical sketch, written by Mr. Gill Staden, a well known journalist from the area. We know that you will enjoy his story.

The City of Livingstone was born on 25 February, 1905, much to the annoyance of the white pioneers who had come to the area. These hardy men and women had settled themselves by the river, 5 km upstream from the Victoria Falls and they felt that a move

up to the new Livingstone would be disastrous for trade. The British South African Company (BSAC), who administered this area of Central Africa had, in 1905, completed the Victoria Falls bridge and felt that it was about time to move the pioneers from the mosquito-infested swamplands by the river where the people had lived for the past 10 years. The BSAC had to enforce the edict by giving fines of one shilling per day for anyone who failed to move. Eventually the old settlement was abandoned.

There is not much to see at the original site, known as the Old Drift, only some non-indigenous trees and the graves of some of the many who died there. It is now within the Game Park.





## AND OUTSTANDING FOR CULTURE AND ECOTOURISM

### Historically Speaking

The first buildings to be erected at the new Livingstone were made of poles and mud, with tin roofs. The site was high up on a sand ridge in the middle of a forest of teak trees. The railway line had only reached the station, about one km away - quite a distance to walk on the sandy roads. The people were not happy in the new Livingstone and wondered what was to become of them. Then the BSAC decided to move their administrative center from Kalomo to Livingstone. From 1907 to 1935, Livingstone was the capital of North Western Rhodesia, and this was a time of prosperity. It was during these years that many buildings were erected.

### Early Days

We often consider these times as being romantic, and to us it must seem that way, but life was not easy. Water was a continual

problem - it had to be pumped up from the Maramba River and bucketed to the houses. The toilets of all the houses were sited at the back of the yards where the bucket brigade using ox-carts came every morning to empty the sanitary buckets. All the roads were deep sand, making a walk of any distance tiresome. A tram-line was laid from town to the railway station and then on to the boat club. Small cabooses were made for people to sit on and they were pushed up and down the hill by servants. Many of the old houses which were built at this time have fallen into a state of disrepair. But some are being lovingly restored and are well worth looking for. In the future if the economy continues to pick up more will be restored and this will enhance the beauty of Livingstone.

North Western and North Eastern Rhodesia were amalgamated in 1935 to form North-

ern Rhodesia and it was then that the capital was moved to Lusaka - a more central location. Livingstone continued to thrive for some time because it became a manufacturing center.

Factories made blankets, textiles, clothes, cars. But slowly, as the economy started to decline, so did the wealth of Livingstone. After Independence in 1964, Northern Rhodesia became Zambia and shortly after that Zambia adopted the politics of humanism, which is akin to socialism, and a one-party government. More and more Zambia cut itself off from the outside world. The price of copper, their main export, decreased. The economy did not diversify. Zambia became poorer and poorer. Livingstone suffered badly as tourism was not encouraged and the manufacturing base declined.

Continued



# ALL ABOARD! BY LUXURY RAIL, FROM CAPE TOWN -

by Jerry W. Bird

*“The design of the train has given us suites considerably larger than the world’s famous trains such as the Orient Express, the Blue Train, Royal Scotsman in England and El Andalus in Spain.”* Rohan Vos

One of the first lessons one learns on entering the wonderful world of Rovos Rail is that this “tour of a lifetime” is not just a South African experience -- its routes extend to five countries on a network of steel rails. On this cool January morning, our destination is Pretoria, South Africa’s capital city. Our two and half day trip north through the country’s heartland, allows time to relax, lay back, sip the wine, smell the roses, think lofty thoughts and get to know some interesting people. At Cape Town station, owner Rohan Vos and Sales Manager David Patrick greeted us, and our baggage was whisked away in a flash



## **Celebrating the New Year in style!**

As we joined the other passengers assembled on the red-carpeted platform, a traditional toast of champagne and orange juice set the mood, while a trio of violinists provided soothing classical music for a memorable send off. Mr. Vos gave a hearty “bon voyage,” announcing each guest’s name in turn as we boarded the train. Many nations were represented that morning - the UK, Norway, Italy, Australia, USA, Switzerland, Spain, Germany, France, South Africa and Canada. These vintage coaches have

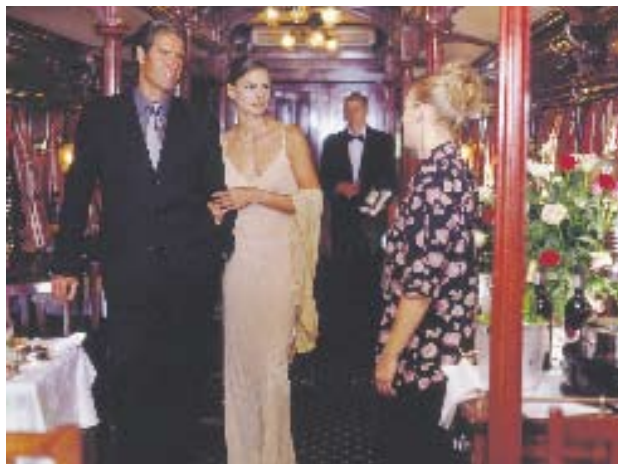
carried royalty on past tours, and we soon discovered there was a European countess among us, which reflects the company’s claim “the most luxurious train in the world. A mild thunderstorm was brewing above Table Mountain, and as rain began to beat on the windows, the train pulled away from Cape Town station. Have no fear, I had a feeling that the trip would be even more enjoyable, looking out from our cozy cocoon on wheels. My intuition proved to be quite true.

## **Five Star Hotel on Wheels**

Talk about individualized service from Rovos’ team of young, attractive hostesses. Our baggage was waiting in the cabins, plus champagne, a fruit bowl, chocolates and terry cloth robes. Private suites on Rovos Rail are spacious, elegant, fully equipped and finished in highly polished wood panels, with amazing attention to detail. Some of these vintage coaches date back to 1911, and all are beautifully restored. Full sized beds face three large picture windows that open easily, bathing the room with fresh air and daylight as you view the changing landscape, or allow perfect privacy as needed. The writing desk was ideal for my lap top computer, and the in-suite telephone came in handy. Outside Muguette Goufrani’s suite, a brass plaque bore the title “The Cullinan,” after the world’s largest gem diamond, discovered in 1905, and named for mine owner Sir Thomas Cullinan. My private suite was titled “The Etosha,” in honor of Namibia’s national park.

## **Order of Good Cheer**

As Mr. Vos says, “It is an atmosphere of good food, good wine and good conversation that we are striving to create. “ Like Pavlov’s dog, and personal memories of cruises on the Alaska coast, a soft gong in the passageway signaled that dinner was being served. Naturally, on Rovos Rail, semi formal dress was the order of the day, and as we took our seats, a red roses was pinned on each lapel. After all, this was a glorious land cruise - and the superb menu featured such local game dishes as Springbok with lemon honey sauce, plus others



# VIA KIMBERLEY TO PRETORIA, SOUTH AFRICA

like South African Botobie and Kingclip in Pernod cream. It goes without saying that the wine list was extensive, and drinks were complimentary for the entire trip, throughout the train.

**The Road Ahead:** The vistas were spellbinding. Having read *Covenant* by James Michener, several Wilbur Smith sagas and various other books on South Africa, I was aware that the 900-mile rail journey follows the old pioneer trail from Cape Town north, via Paarl, Worcester and South Africa's bountiful Winelands, wending its way through the Hex River Valley to the interior's higher, drier Karoo country. What I did not expect was the fact that there were some exceptionally long tunnels en route. Just imagine the engineering challenges and effort that was involved in early railroad-building in this area.

**History comes Alive:** A pleasant surprise was our brief stop at the historic village of Matjiesfontein, which resembles a romantic movie set, with its street of carefully restored buildings, such as the Victorian Lord Milner Hotel, with lush gardens and a friendly pub nearby. I couldn't help imagining that Miss Kitty of *Gunsmoke* would come through the red velvet curtains and descend the ornate staircase. Several of us could have spent all day at the nearby museum, checking out relics of pioneer days, before, during and following the Anglo Boer War and the frantic gold and diamond rushes. It was hard to imagine that the rich and famous of the world came here 100 years ago, when it was a thriving health resort. Well, we've been told a renaissance is underway.

**Kimberley's Diamond Legacy:** Speaking of journeys into history, our next major stop was at Modder River station, a lonely spot where the Boers and British once clashed in a major battle. Disembarking from the train, we boarded a bus for Kimberley, and received a history lesson, which set the stage for our visit to this provincial capital and luncheon at the exclusive Kimberley Club, once male only and frequented by Cecil Rhodes, De Beers and colleagues. Well-fed and ready for action, we were off to the famous

Kimberley diamond mine. A restored village surrounded what they call the "greatest hole in the world," a huge excavation that was once a gentle hill. Our final lesson included mining practices and replicas of world famous diamonds from South Africa.

## **Pretoria Capital Park Station**

The following morning our train passed slowly through the suburbs of Johannesburg, city of gold and South Africa's thriving metropolis. Beyond was Pretoria, our final destination. I will elaborate on these two great cities later, but it's important to mention the Capital Park Station complex, heart of Rovos Empire. While there, we explored the rail yards, workshops, museum and training area, which is like looking backstage at a major Broadway production. Mr. Vos sums it up in the following statement, "All our rolling stock, consisting of 60 carriages and 5 operating locomotives, our administrative operation and workshops are now based at Capital Park. We could indeed not have wished for a better location, especially as Capital Park has played such an important part in South African Railways History, and thus provides the perfect home for our trains. The site covers 25 acres and boasts 15 lines, totally a distance of 12 km of which 100 m section is under roof. It is our aim, not only to rebuild the site to world-beating standards, but also to transform it into a working railway museum. Our new Headquarters will cater to steam enthusiasts, tourists and local visitors alike."

It goes without saying that the Rovos team won our hearts and earned our respect as true professionals. A well earned credit to South Africa's travel tourism industry. Many thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Vos for such a wonderful lifetime experience; one we're proud to tell the world all about. Our Rovos Rail story continues online at [http://www.africa-ata.org/sa\\_rovos.htm](http://www.africa-ata.org/sa_rovos.htm), e-mail: [africa@dowco](mailto:africa@dowco).

# PLAN AN AFRICA TOUR DURING CAMEROON'S



## Cameroon Ministry of Tourism

Tel.: +237 222-4411

Fax.: +237 222-1295.

E-mail:

B.P. 266 Yaoundé 237 Cameroon

For more information, visit [www.africa-ata.org/cameroon.htm](http://www.africa-ata.org/cameroon.htm)



## Africa in One Country: Cultural Mosaic and Ecotourism Paradise

Cameroon's theme, "Africa in One Country," says it all - cultural variety, pageantry, panoramic scenery, and wildlife in its natural habitat. Serendipity brings a pleasant surprise around every corner, from Mount Cameroon and the balmy beaches of Kribi and Limbe, to Waza National Park and Lake Chad in the far north, on the doorstep of Africa's Great Sahara desert. Cameroon is the home of colorful festivals year round. The Ngondo Festival in Douala, Cameroon's largest city, is held annually for ten days, ending on the first Sunday in December. In the photo (left) two tribal experts collect and read a message from the water spirits. The scene opposite features a 65 man dugout race canoe, 30m in length. The canoe portrayed is the winning entrant from 2005. The smaller dugout carries divers, about to descend into the Wouri river waters to retrieve a message from the spirits. The spirit message, after being interpreted by the experts, is then delivered to a group of chieftains from Douala and area, sitting under a special canopy.



The Ngoun Festival is held every second year in December. The Sultan-King of Bamoun is sitting on his ornate throne, framed by huge elephant tusks. On the page opposite (lower row) the guard's shield features a double headed serpent, which depicts the kingdom's continuing vigilance in keeping its enemies at bay in a two front war. The next photo is of local officials in their colorful regalia. The final photo shows the guards and guests in line with the Bamoun palace in the background.

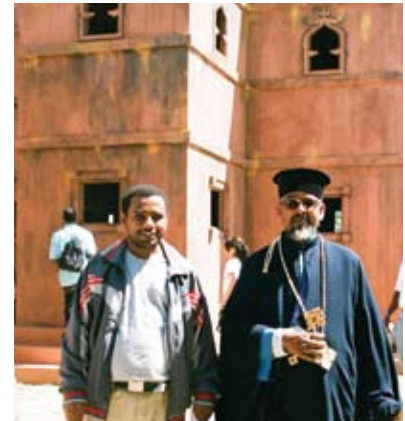
## Venez découvrir le Cameroun: Toute l'Afrique dans un pays - une mosaïque culturelle et un paradis écotouristique

Yaoundé et Douala, deux principales villes du Cameroun, ont déjà abrité les rencontres de l'Africa Travel Association; et le slogan du Cameroun "Toute l'Afrique dans un pays," en dit long. Ce slogan décrit la diversité culturelle, l'apparat, les paysages panoramiques et la faune dans son habitat naturel. Le don de faire des trouvailles vous gratifie d'un plaisir agréable d'un coin du pays à un autre; du Mont Cameroon et des plages douces de Kribi et de Limbé au Parc National de Waza, ainsi qu'au Lac Tchad dans l'Extrême-Nord, aux portes du grand désert africain du Sahara. Notre équipe de rédaction prépare actuellement un tiré-à-part de Africa Travel Magazine, qui présentera la culture camerounaise ainsi qu'un ensemble de photographies sur le festival du Ngoun et sur d'autres manifestations pittoresques qui se déroulent annuellement - c'est une raison suffisante pour laquelle cette édition aura un aspect conservateur.

# MOST SPECTACULAR CULTURAL FESTIVALS

Ngondo Festival Douala  
The Ilimbe Ilimbe Canoe Race  
Pirogue de Course Ilimbe Ilimbe  
Photo- Koffi Joseph





# HOW WE SHOWCASE AFRICA TRAVEL, TRADE AND TOURISM

By Muguette Goufrani

We welcome every opportunity to circulate Africa Travel Magazine, having great success at ASTA's Las Vegas Show, Adventure Travel Summit, near Vancouver, ATA Congresses in Ethiopia and Tanzania, plus its Eco Cultural Tourism event in Djibouti. Our biggest audience ever was "Out of Africa" at Houston's International Festival, as massive outdoor extravaganza that covers 16 acres of parks near City Hall. High-ranking government dignitaries and corporate leaders were on hand, plus over 300,000 of the public from Texas and neighboring states.

## Out of Africa Theme

Texans know how to host a giant event, and this was a marvelous, celebration of Africa and Africans from the Diaspora. as we savored the rich culture and heritage that has been such a huge contributor to the American mosaic. Most prominent among the African countries represented was Ethiopia, honor its Millennium. Mr. Bird and I flew from Seattle via Denver, arriving in Houston in time for the opening luncheon, where the keynote speaker was Ambassador Andrew Young. We met this popular humanitarian leader two months later at the Leon H. Sullivan Summit in Arusha, Tanzania.

## Ethiopian Contingent

To launch this prestigious event, Ethiopia sent a large contingent led by H.E. Mrs. Tadelech Dalacho, Ethiopia's State Minister of Culture and Tourism (above right) plus our colleagues from Ethiopian Airlines, City of Addis Ababa and the Ethiopian Tour Operators Association, led by its President Mrs. Kidan Ghiorgis.

## Ethiopia On the Cultural Stage

Showcasing Ethiopia was a dazzling array featuring traditional arts and crafts, textiles, food, music and fashions. Ethiopia is recognized worldwide as the birthplace of coffee, which was available for visitors to sample and purchase. Ethiopia's National Theater Company thrilled the packed audiences at each performance. Likewise the impressive Ethiopian Designer Fashion Show. Houston's International Festival was designed to create an opportunity for Ethiopians to introduce their products to people at all levels and learn how to be competitive in the North American market.

## America's 4th Largest City

In mid week, we joined the Ethiopian delegation for a visit to the Museum of Natural Science, where Ethiopia's Lucy has been the star attraction. Others from our party were guests at the National Air and Space Administration complex. The week's highlight, was



# “TEXAS STYLE” AT HOUSTON’S INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL

the Mayor’s Gala Dinner, a grand affair, where, among others, we were introduced to the President’s brother, Neil Bush. Houston is America’s fourth largest city and a hub of international commerce.

For years its leaders have focused their attention on making their city not only a great place to live, but an outstanding place to visit. Houston is a vibrant international city that heartily enjoys its tradition of being a place of firsts. General Sam Houston, the city’s heroic namesake, was the first president of the Republic of Texas.

## **Ethio- American Activities**

For many years we have worked in close touch with Ethiopia’s High Commissioner in the USA, Mr. Gezahgen Kebede, founder of the The Ethio-American Trade and Investment Council (EATIC). Based in Houston, it is a non-profit, non-partisan, tax-exempt organization dedicated to strengthening and facilitating trade and investment between Ethiopia and United States of America. For over 15 years EATIC has played an active role in getting many American business communities to view the Ethiopian investment and tourism opportunity first hand.



Mr. Kebede invited Ethiopian private and public business sectors to participate, and extended an invitation for Africa Travel Magazine’s Publishers to cover the exciting activities on behalf of the travel and tourism industries. It was a sincere pleasure and a great honor. This event was timely, since Ethiopia is the first country to featured in our Best of Africa Library of books and magazines.

Ethio -American Trade and Investment Council  
 9301 Southwest, Freeway, 250  
 Houston, Texas 77071, Tel. 713-271-7567.  
 Web: [www.eatic.org](http://www.eatic.org)

Houston International Festival  
 4203 Montrose Blvd., Suite 200, Houston, Texas 77006  
 713.654.8808 , [contactus@ifest.org](mailto:contactus@ifest.org)

# AFRICA'S RED SEA MIRACLE BLOSSOMS WITH



By Muguette Goufrani

I am Djibouti. Being located in an area that offers summer weather all year round, my ladies and gentlemen of all ages and races make a special effort to look their finest for all occasions, or no occasion at all. My location at the

crossroads of the world beyond Suez to the Indian Subcontinent and Cathay, lends itself to variety of influences in costumes, hair styles, jewelry and wearable art. The examples on this page were taken at the new five star Djibouti Palace Kempinski Hotel and during host day activities for the delegates, speakers and guests at the Africa Travel Association's 11th Eco Cultural Symposium. Day trip sites included Lake Assal, where the camel caravans transport bags of salt to the markets in Ethiopia, then venturing beyond my harbor to the Island of Moucha a short and pleasant boat ride, where they could taste the salt spray. Here's where those who love the thrill of snorkeling and scuba

diving come from near and far - these adventurous souls are much more aware of me than the average visitor who has yet to learn of my charms and hidden treasures of the deep -- and ashore as well.

At Moucha, one of my most popular retreats, after a refreshing swim and a relaxing stroll around the island, the ATA members enjoyed a spread of seafood fresh from the Gulf of Aden, and were entertained by dancers dressed in colorful costumes of Arabic design. Visitors will love shopping at my Central Market (Marché Central) and other places in Djibouti city for a wide array of textiles and jewelry, decorative weaving and needlework, shawls and turbans, unique Djibouti hats and hair ornaments, plus bracelets and necklaces made of local materials.

Here's what one researcher had to say about my lifestyle and fashion. "Unlike women in many other Muslim countries, women in Djibouti do not wear veils, although married Afar women wear a black headscarf. City dwellers wear Western-style clothing, while those in rural areas wear the loose clothing of desert dwellers. The traditional outfit of the Afar is a garment called a sanafil, consisting of a

cloth tied around the waist and reaching to the calves, with a knot at the right hip for men and at the left for women. The wealthier Afars wear another piece of cloth, the harayto, slung over the shoulder. Afar men are known for the long, sharp, double-edged dagger, called a jile, that they wear at the waist. Among the nomadic Somali in rural areas, the men wear a garment similar to the sanafil of the Afars, while the women wear a long, brightly colored cloth called a guntina, wound around the torso and knotted at the right shoulder."

## **Africa Travel Fashion is sweeping the world!**

Guess who's sweeping the web? Who would have thought when we launched Africa Travel Magazine 12 years ago, it would become such a popular resource for fashion. Try "Googling" for Africa Travel Fashions or other Africa topics sometime, and you'll find our website at or near the top. Ditto for Yahoo and MSN. According to Webtrends statistics month after month, we get more hits for fashion than any other topic - which tells us what features attract a growing majority of our readers. The Editor and I wear African attire almost daily at



# A BURST OF COLORS FOR ALL SEASONS

home or away, and we pay close heed to the simple effective ways Africans make a distinct fashion statement. To create a lasting impression and stand out from the humdrum, everyday world, consider kanga and kikoi fabrics in dazzling, eye catching colors.

## **Kanga Who?**

A kanga is a pure cotton, with a border wide enough to cover you comfortably. It often features a strong, central design or theme, such as fertility signs, mountains, landmarks, soccer stars or popular singers. Many African ladies wear a kanga over their skirts while working in the fields in order to control the dust. A kanga is a perfect family gift that is extremely popular throughout Africa thanks to its other option - multiple use as a matching or contrasting head wrap. You may see a Swahili proverb on some kanga that is derived from the words "guinea fowl." Why? Because the original kanga were brightly colored Portuguese handkerchiefs intended for gentlemen traders and officials. These items were then sewn together by Africans to create a piece large enough to be worn head to toe - and



called kangas because their brightness reminded Africans of guinea fowl. As village folks say, "kanga nenda na urembo, shani urembo na shani"- "the kanga struts in style. The kanga cloth is a lightweight loose weave fabric, it's versatile and easy to care for.

## **What's a Kikoi?**

The kikoi, woven from the finest cotton grown in the region, is a rectangle of pure cotton with a work of art inspired by the vibrant colors of East African Coast. The traditional way of wearing kikoi is simply wrapping it around the lower part of your body and tucking it in at the waist. Inspired by a multitude of colors and

shapes, the kikoi are woven in thousands of different

## **Getting to Djibouti**

I am Djibouti - connected by road and rail, major sea lanes and airport gateways of the world. Most passengers arriving at my modest, but soon to be expanded airport for the ATA Symposium, flew here on Daallo Airlines, now operated by Dubai World in joint venture with the Djibouti Government, founders of the airline, which has a fleet of 10 aircraft including Boeing 757 and 737 aircraft. Interline agreements are in place with leading world carriers such as Emirates, Qatar Airways, Saudia, Delta Airlines, Srilankan, Alitalia and Ethiopian Airlines.

The airline has 16 years of experience operating scheduled passenger flights, cargo and charter flights to major destinations in Africa, Middle East, Asia and Europe. It has been flying to the UAE since 1992, to Paris since 2001 and London since 2002.

Mr. Sultan Ahmed Bin Sulayem, Chairman Dubai World said 'Africa's aviation industry can play a major role in the socio-economic development of the countries. In an environment where most air





# OUR BEST OF AFRICA SERIES SALUTES THE 14TH

*The Best of Africa Magazine Series now available for downloads from the internet in advance of publication, owes its success to a program that began years ago.*

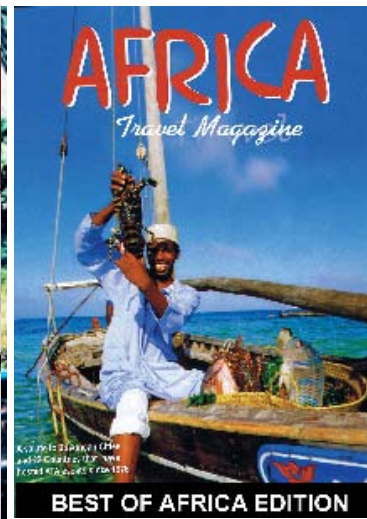
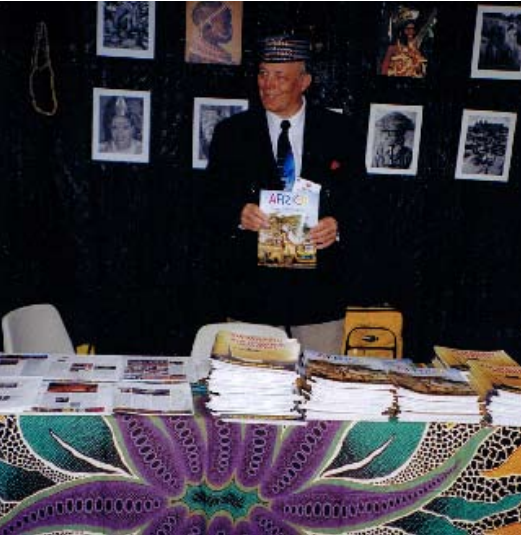
Did you know that our Best of Africa premiere occurred in 1995? It was the first event of its kind ever held in Canada, and launched a long and successful partnership with the Africa Travel Association. ATA is based in New York, and is represented by chapters in North America and Africa. Staged in Vancouver, BC, our show was honor of ATA's Our first Best of Africa Road Show by a visiting delegation from Ghana; our second included a group of safari and tour operators from Kenya, led by Peter Muiruri. We have returned the compliment several times since, when the Ministry of Tourism from both of those member countries hosted the ATA's International Congress. In the first venue, on short notice we prepared an outstanding agenda, and were thrilled with



the turnout of travel agents, media, local dignitaries and members of Western Canada's African Diaspora. Entertainment included a Ghanaian band and Egyptian belly dancers.

### **Land, Sea and Air**

Later we hosted our first Air and Marine Tourism Conference, plus Air Highway Days, with a full roster of top speakers and exhibitors, travel trade seminars, films and awards. One of our main speakers at the time, Rick Antonson, Tourism Vancouver CEO, has just completed an exciting travel book called, "To Timbuktu for a Haircut - Journey Through West Africa." Copies of Rick's book will be among many prizes at our Best of Africa Awards Night. Chapter Building



# ANNIVERSARY OF AFRICA TRAVEL MAGAZINE

## In Print, Online and On Air

One of our duties as publishers of Africa Travel Magazine is to develop regional chapters of the Africa Travel Association, which we represent for Canada, and have recruited members in Vancouver, Toronto and Montréal. Another key responsibility is the ATA Website, which has been developed into a full scale magazine of the internet, with 4,000 pages and photo galleries representing many of Africa's 54 countries. We update this huge website daily thanks to hundreds of press releases we receive by e-mail and a wealth of stories from our regular trips to Africa in which we tour the host country and often its neighbors. This page presents a brief capsule of our experience learning about and enjoying the Best of Africa. Thanks to Corporate Press Display, we will make copies of the Best of Africa Series and the Africa Travel Business Library available to an even more mass audience. Their powerful site is the World's Largest Magazine and Newspaper kiosk, representing USA Today, among others. Regular users of Press Display are many Fortune 500 companies and libraries across the USA.

Photos from top left: (1) Editor Jerry W. Bird visiting the tall ships, an inspiration for the Air and Marine Tourism event. (2) Main auditorium at the UN World Forum in Vancouver, where we met

many African mayors and initiated our "Great Cities of Africa" magazine series, now part of the Best of Africa Awards. (3) Scale model of famous rock-hewn church at Lalibela in Northern Ethiopia. We were special guests at the Houston International Festival and worked closely with the Ethiopian Tour Operators Association, Ethiopian Ministry of Tourism, Ethiopian Airlines and other delegation members during this exciting event.

(4) Editor (left) with Karen Hoffman and former ATA Executive Director Mira Berman at a gala event in Africa. (5) Mr. Bird and Ms. Muguette Goufrani, Editors of Africa Travel Magazine receive ATA Founders Award in Cape Town, SA. (6) Park Rangers near Arusha, Tanzania receive copies of our 1998 edition saluting their country. The next will be Best of Africa Tanzania Edition. (7) Africa Travel Magazine exhibit at travel show in Orlando, Florida. We have since participated in many travel trade and consumer events across the USA, Canada and Africa. There's much more to come with the new Best of Africa series. (8) Participation at Karibu Fair 2008 in Arusha, with Amant Macha of TTB. (9) Muguette Goufrani at Out of Africa Show, Houston, Texas. (10) Cover of coming issue in Best of Africa series.

# DUBAI WORLD AFRICA: CATALYST FOR LONG -



One of the most important benefits of our editorial team's journey from Paris, France to dynamic Djibouti via Daallo Airlines was the opportunity to see the first hand results of Dubai World Africa in action, and to meet several of the key individuals who are making Africa's Red Sea Miracle happen. What we experienced during two weeks at the Djibouti Palace Kempinski hotel was sound evidence of this new direction and wise use of investment capital for the long range.. The following excerpts from an ATA news release sets the stage:

The Africa Travel Association, the world's leading global travel trade organization for Africa, today announced the formation of a Premier Partner Program with Dubai World Africa (DWA) signing on as the first partner. This partnership allows ATA and DWA to work together for three years to bring the world to Africa and to promote business opportunities and investment in the industry. "By creating a Premier Partner Program, ATA is establishing itself as a leader in building private-public partnerships devoted to increasing travel to Africa. The program has clear benefits for our partners," said ATA Executive Director Edward Bergman. "We are proud to partner with corporations like Dubai World Africa who are committed to supporting the development of a thriving

and strong tourism industry and accelerating the growth of the industry."

The premier partner program will bring visibility to DWA and provide multiple recognition opportunities among ATA's broad and global membership, from small and mid-market travel agencies and tour operators to national tourism boards and tourism ministries. It also allows branding and sponsorship opportunities at ATA's annual events which bring together travel, tourism, and transport experts from around the world to shape the future of Africa's travel industry at a premier destination on the Africa continent.

## **1.5 Billion Dollar Investment**

Dubai World Chairman Sultan Ahmed bin Sulayem has indicated that the company will invest about \$1,5 billion in Africa over the next five years, with investments and projects in South Africa, Djibouti, Rwanda, Zanzibar, Tanzania, Mozambique and the Comoros already underway. The Dubai state-owned company has interests ranging from real estate to ports.

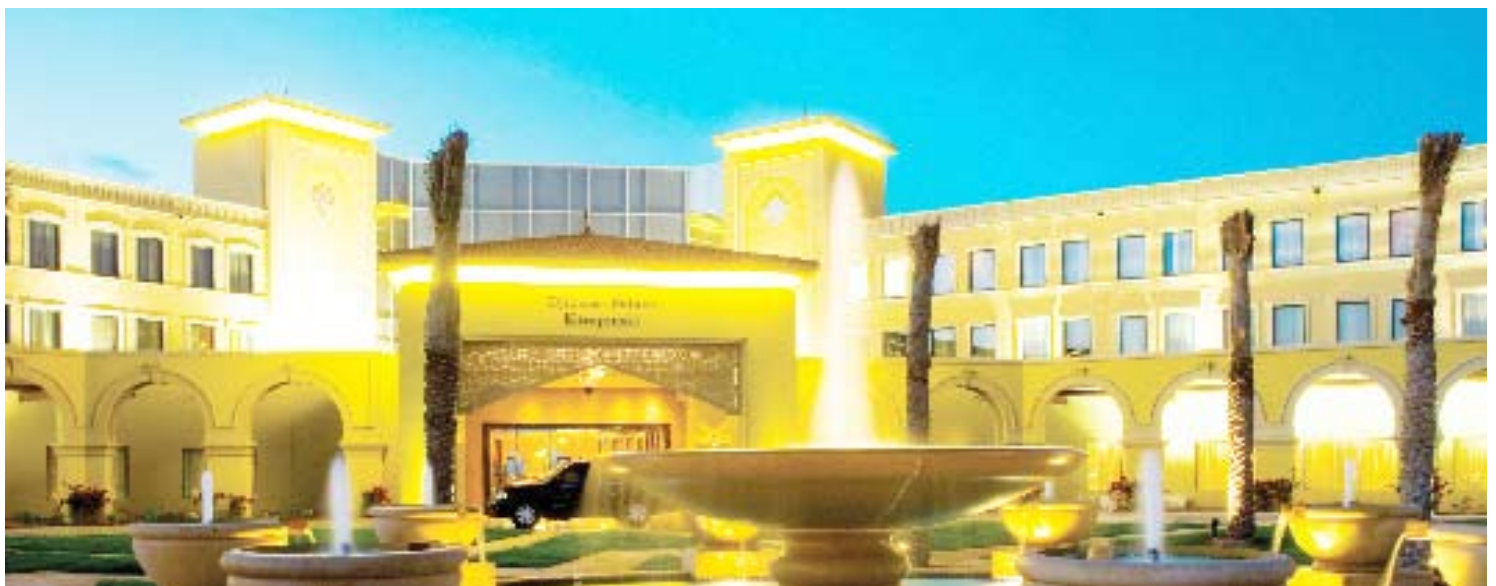
Based in Cape Town, DWA has established itself as a contender in South Africa's elite property stakes, beginning with the acquisition of the iconic Victoria and Alfred Waterfront in Cape Town. In the Cape Winelands, DWA also owns Pearl Valley Golf Estate, a 170-hectare championship golf course development, through its Leisurecorp divi-

sion, and is currently developing a 5-star hotel.

Expanding through the continent, DWA recently announced that it will invest \$200 million in the Bilene Hotel, a luxury beach resort, golf estate and eco development along the beachfront in Mozambique.

Situated in a popular holiday village to the south of the country, just north of Maputo, the resort spans 1,000 ha and encompasses 18km Sao Martinho Lagoon, nature reserve and turtle breeding area. The development includes the creation of an international competition standard

golf course, a magnificent 5- star hotel as well as 500 golf course and beach villas and condos, extensive watersport facilities and a diving centre. The resort will be served by its own airport, Bilene Praia. In the Comoros, the company has purchased the former Sun International-managed Galawa Beach Hotel from the country's government as the site for a brand new, 5-star, 150-bed international hotel. The current structure has been demolished making way for the new Kempinski Comoros Luxury Resort and Residences. Kempinski Hotels has been appointed to manage the luxury beach resort on Grande Comores. Dubai World Africa will invest in the development of the luxury hotel and, in addition, 22,5ha of adjacent prime beachfront will be developed, with 100 new upscale residential villas and



# RANGE PROGRESS THROUGHOUT AFRICA

townhouses.

Djibouti is the site of the company's new \$250 million Kempinski Hotel, which includes the expansion of the beach front and the development of 50 villas. A further 78 rooms and 43 apartments are currently being added to the Djibouti Palace Kempinski. A beautiful roof top-bar at the top of the six-storey building offers breathtaking sea views, a children's club, full health spa and vitamin bar/ gym are all due for completion by December 2008. A first of its kind for the country, Djibouti Luxury Villas are being developed by Dubai World Africa. 50 luxury villas, which lie in the upmarket suburb of Haramous 10kms from the company's Djibouti Palace Kempinski, feature only the finest in design and finishes.

Zanzibar is the site of DWA's \$150 million Muyuni Beach Resort for which One&Only has been appointed to build a luxury hotel and which includes 3km of prime beach-front property. Furthermore, DWA has planned investments of some \$250 million in Rwanda where it is developing a tourism master plan, together with the government, for the country. With the government as a shareholder, investments are planned for a hotel along a rehabilitated golf course in Kigali, the capital city, and an eco-tourism lodge in the eastern rain forest. The Gorillas Nest Lodge will also realize a significant upgrade. Conservation is also an important focus area of the business, which has established Dubai World Africa

Conservation as a holding company for a number of prime game reserves in Africa. The recent acquisition of 3 world-class leading games reserves in Shamwari Game Reserve, Sanbona Wildlife Reserve and Jock Safari Lodge in the Kruger National Park is a significant move towards building on the already strong foundations laid by our partners in eco tourism and wildlife conservation.

## About Dubai World

Dubai World is a holding company that manages and works towards making Dubai the leading hub for the commerce and trading industry. Dubai World contributes to the rapid economic growth of Dubai across a wide range of strategic industry segments ranging from Nakheel's unique real estate concepts; the iconic development of The Palm, DP World the third largest port operator in the world to segments as diverse as Investments, Leisure and Financial Services. In the past decade, creation of wealth has undergone a paradigm shift, with greater importance placed on acquisition and application of knowledge as the primary engine for economic growth all over the world. DWA is firmly committed to make every country and community in which it operates a better place to live and work, knowing that the ongoing vitality of our host nation and local communities has a direct impact on the long term health of our

business.

**Dubai World Africa investments**  
Dubai World Africa Services (Pty) Ltd is a subsidiary of the holding company, Dubai World and shares a common vision, mission and value system. DWA is responsible for the acquisition and development of assets in Africa and the Indian Ocean region. DWA established the brand, Dubai World Conservation Africa, an eco friendly entity responsible for the investment in, preservation and responsible development of game reserves, wildlife conservation and eco tourism in Africa.


## Diversified and Africa Wide

DWA has assets in South Africa - Victoria and Alfred Waterfront as well as Pearl Valley Golf Estate. In Rwanda - Nyungwe Forest, Akagera National Park, Gorilla's Nest Lodge ; in Djibouti - Djibouti Palace Kempinski; in Mozambique - Bilene Beach Resort and Golf Course, in the Comoros - Comoros Kempinski Beach Resort and Residences, In Zanzibar - One and Only Zanzibar and One and Only Mazagan Resort in Morocco.

Photos: Djibouti Palace Kempinski Hotel - front entrance and conference ballroom.

Visit: [www.dubaiworldafrica.com](http://www.dubaiworldafrica.com) or [www.africa-ata.org/dubai.htm](http://www.africa-ata.org/dubai.htm)

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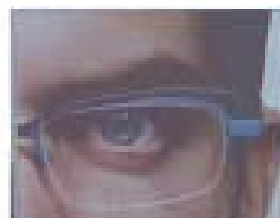


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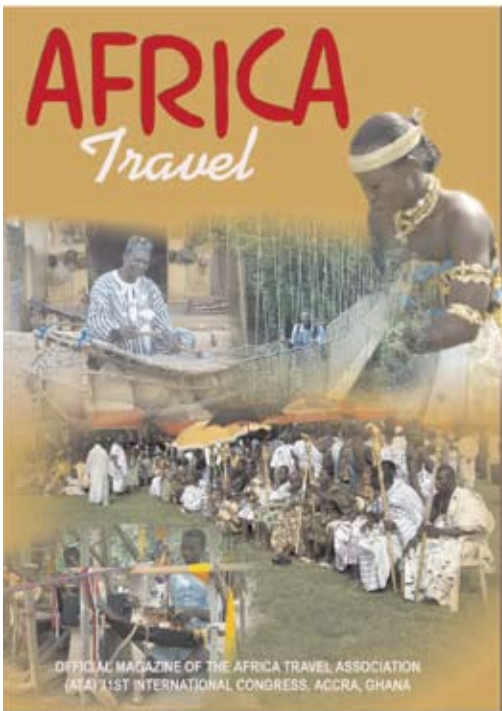


*There's so much to smile about in Ghana!*

**GHANA TOURIST BOARD**

<http://www.ghana.gov.gh/tourists/>

[gtb@africaonline.com](mailto:gtb@africaonline.com).



*The above cover is from Africa Travel Magazine's edition for the Africa Travel Association 31st World Congress, which was held in Accra. Following that exciting event our editors made a circle tour of Ghana's most popular attractions, including historic Kumasi, the furniture capital of West Africa. We are very anxious to return.*

**Historical Ghana**

Formerly the Gold Coast, Ghana is a young republic which became independent from Britain on March 6, 1957, the first black African colony to achieve its independence. Ghana occupies the pinnacle spot in Pan-African history having hit the torch for African Emancipation and became home for famous Pan-Africanist such as W.E.

B Du Bois and George Pad more. Dr. Kwame Nkrumah whose mausoleum adds to Accra's landscape was Ghana's first President. European power struggle between the 15th and 19th centuries started with the Portuguese who built Elmina Castle in 1482. They were followed by the Dutch, Swedes, Danes, Prussians and the British looking for fortunes in gold and ivory. This intense commercial rivalry ended with the growth of the tragic trade in silvery - all 42 European castles and fortifications were used as dungeons for the millions most of whom lost their lives or whose descendants compose the African diaspora today. 42 forts and castles including Elmina and Cape Coast Castles are recognized by UNESCO as the World No. 1 Heritage Monuments.

Sites of wars between the British and indigenous population especially the Ashanti peoples.

Ancient artistry in fabrics with the colorful and popular Ashanti Bonwire Kente Cloth now adopted as a focus of identity by many people of African descent the world over. An antique collector's haven for ancient terra-cotta work. Traditional gold jewelry, Krobo beads, northern

leather and straw product, woodcarving of Ahwiaa-Ashanti.

The practice of ancient herbal and alternative medicine side by side with orthodox medical practice throughout the country; herbariums preserve the ancient medical heritage., colorful traditional festivals full of pomp and pageantry with Chiefs and Queen Mothers riding on lushly gilded palanquins. Colorful traditional open markets and lorry parks provide the sounds and sights of the African bazaar.

**GHANA TOURIST BOARD**

The Ghana Tourist Board was set up by Legislative Instrument (NRC Degree) 224 in 1973. It is the sole government agency set up to implement government's tourism policies. It is purely a Research, Marketing and regulatory body under the Ministry of Tourism and Diaspora Relations. Contact [gtb@africaonline.com](mailto:gtb@africaonline.com).

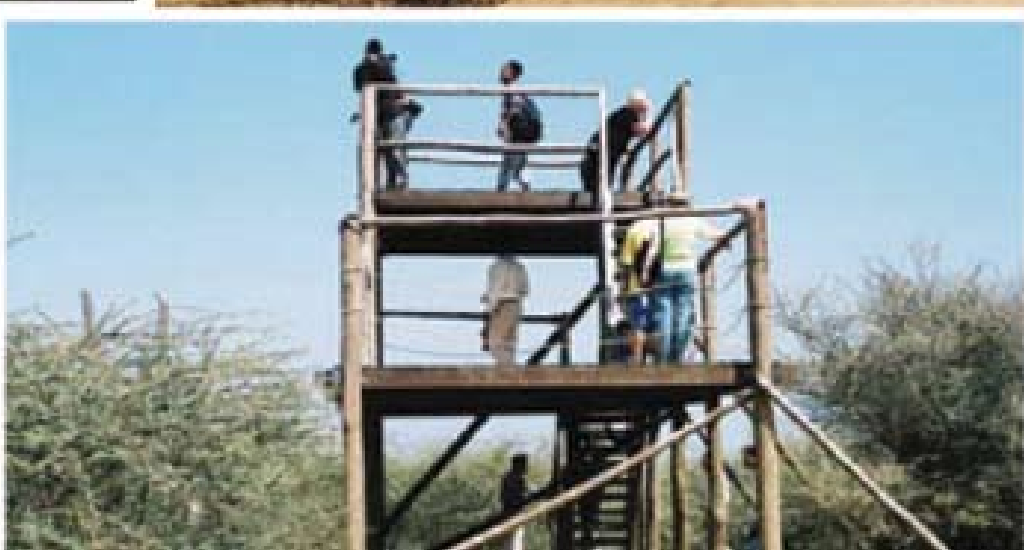


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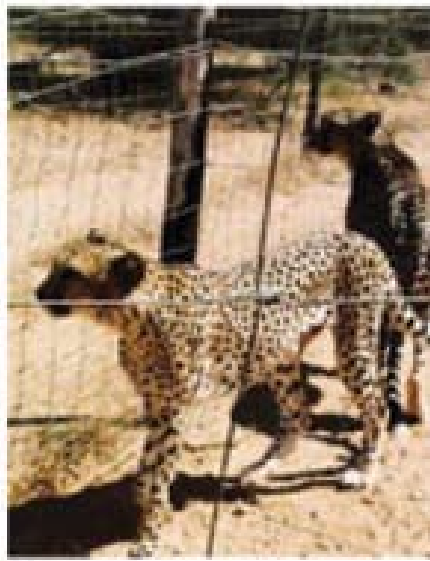
## **DECAN TO THE RESCUE: SAVING ONE OF EAST AFRICA'S PRECIOUS NATURAL RESOURCES**

by Jerry W. Bird

I am Djibouti, a country where concerned citizens are taking the initiative to preserve, protect and provide a new life for our precious wildlife. A shining example of this dedication is the Decan Animal Refuge, a short drive beyond city limits, not far from my border with Somalia. Just beyond the park gates is a lookout building which gives the visitors an overview of this exciting and worthwhile project that provides a temporary home in natural setting for animals that were the unfortunate victims of poachers and smugglers. It is a protected zone of 30 hectares, of which over half of the total area has been fenced to allow the growth of vegetation. According to founder and operator Bertrand Lafrance of the

many activities carried on by his worthy nonprofit operation is a reproduction program for the East African Cheetah. The family of six cheetah currently living at the DECAN Refuge have all been seized from the illegal smuggling trade thanks to cooperation with the Djiboutian police. This program is followed by the UICN. In the beginning The DECAN Association, which stands for "discover and help nature," was created in May 2001 and is approved by the Ministry of Environment. Its goal is to protect wildlife and develop the knowledge of nature throughout Djibouti. The program started with an important campaign on the protection of sea turtles. As Bertrand Lafrance stated, "We first drew up a list of the restaurants that offer turtle meat on their menu - then we printed posters and posted the in key public places. This year we will apply the same method to denounce the illegal commerce of antelopes. We estimate there are 100 to 200 gazelles in captivity in the capital." The following topics have been covered in

DECAN literature: sharks, gazelles, birds, sea turtles, ostriches and natural reserves. Deeply concerned by lack of attention to environmental concerns by locals, Lafrance wrote an article on the collection of garbage, which he considers an important matter in Djibouti. The DECAN Animal Refuge is open to the public two day a week. Each visitor is informed of the association's concept and method, which is very different from a zoo's approach in the sense that most animal species present at the center are provided at no charge, such as birds, squirrels, mongoose, genets and hares. DECAN works closely with the local schools. Prior to opening the refuge, Lafrance and his colleagues presented as many as 40 conferences in classrooms using posters and movies of the region's fauna and flora. Their objective was to increase the youngsters' awareness of the environment and ecological issues. When students come to the refuge in order to experience nature, they find themselves immersed in an ecological rehabilitated



area. The operators noticed that few teachers were capable of giving a lecture on ecology, and as a result, the Association has scheduled training for teachers. To begin the construction of the refuge, DECAN received financial help from the French Cooperation amounting to two payments of 10 000 euro each. Opening the refuge to visitors allows them to ensure the salaries of employees from the nearby village. As Lafrance concludes, "At the moment, our biggest concern is lack of time, for we are all volunteers. The DECAN association tries to highlight the natural resources of Djibouti with the objective to develop public awareness of the incredible environmental diversity of the country and of the necessity to protect it."

For more information E-mail: [b.lafrance@internet.dj](mailto:b.lafrance@internet.dj) or visit [www.africa-ata.org/djibouti.htm](http://www.africa-ata.org/djibouti.htm)



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## THE GAMBIA

**Country Profile:** The Republic of The Gambia is named after one of Africa's most navigable rivers, the Gambia and is located in West Africa. The Gambia is roughly twice the size of the state of Delaware in the United States and occupies a narrow area on either side of the Gambia River, forming an enclave in Senegal surrounded on its north, east and south borders by Senegal. A former British colony, the Republic of The Gambia became independent on February 18, 1965. In 1994, The Gambia began a transformation from military to civilian rule and liberalized its economy and initiated a Vision 2020 Plan "The Gambia Incorporated" with the aim of transforming the smallest country in Africa into a middle income country by offering a stable investment environment, efficient banking sector, and competitive private sector.

### **Pristine Beaches and Coastline**

The Gambia is known for its beautiful beaches and warm coastal waters which are a haven for tourists with a tropical climate that is relatively hot and humid throughout the year. The main ethnic groups are the Mande, including the rural Mandinka, and the Atlantic peoples including the Wolof and Fulani. English is the official language but Wolof and Fulani are spoken in the towns and Mandinka in the rural areas. The population of The Gambia is approximately 1.5 million inhabitants with about 85% of the population that are Muslim and a sizable Christian minority. The capital of The Gambia is Banjul, with about 300,000 inhabitants, is also the main port and main commercial center along the River Gambia. The people of The Gambia live harmoniously in mixed communities, freely exercising their religious and cultural traditions. Gambians are also widely recognized for

their genuine friendliness and hospitality. The main resources of foreign exchange are agriculture and tourism with agriculture accounting for 23% of the gross domestic product (GDP) and employing 75% of the workforce. Groundnuts, covering 60% of The Gambia's arable land are the main export crop. The Gambia also has had considerable success in developing and promoting its tourist industry, which contributes about 16% of GDP. In 2000, approximately 100,000 tourists visited The Gambia which earned the country an estimated \$35 million and provided an estimated 10,000 Gambians with stable employment in this sector.

### **Home of Kunta Kinte of Roots**

Perhaps most Americans know about The Gambia as a result of Alex Haley's bestseller and epic television docudrama "Roots" which focused on Kunta Kinte and his ancestral homeland of Juffureh. The Gambia also has tremendous potential in the fishing industry which has yet to be fully developed as well as a small manufacturing industry with plastic goods and confectioneries as the main products. The Gambia is also an important entry point for goods that are distributed to its neighboring countries in West Africa and has specifically targeted itself as the most logical "gateway" into West Africa for the trans-shipment (re-export market) of imports and exports. To learn more about The Gambia please check out [www.visithegambia.com](http://www.visithegambia.com).

World Heritage Committee Inscribes 24 New Sites on the World Heritage List New sites include, for the first time, sites in Gambia

The inscriptions were carried out by the World Heritage Committee at its 27th session.

*For more information visit [www.africa-ata.org/gambia.htm](http://www.africa-ata.org/gambia.htm)*

# UGANDAN ADVENTURES: FROM ITS RAGING RIVERS

## Adrift on the White Nile

B Cam McLeay,

Downstream, the river raced swiftly out of sight and another huge rapid thundered a warning to our vulnerable rafts. Wisps of spray sparkled with the colors of the rainbow where the river disappeared and a menacing crocodile charged our rafts from the far bank. Sanctuary was a small eddy on the south bank of the river where hippos jumped on top of each other wary of the strange intruders. I shivered at the idea of running a rapid we had never seen, didn't fancy the idea of facing a crocodile longer than our raft and so opted to upset the hippos. A large bull rose out of the water, opened his huge mouth in warning and then crashed into the pool and disappeared. Seconds later, I pulled hard on the oars and spun the heavily laden raft into the eddy hoping he would not surface beneath me. We hit the bank, tied off the raft and watched the croc hold his ground behind a little rock island mid-stream. No-one had ever rafted these rapids before.

More than four thousand miles in length, the mighty Nile is the longest river on earth. The great waterway has played a monumental role in history. It traverses an incredible variety of landscapes, a colorful medley of cultures and since the beginning of time has enthralled civilizations with its power and mystery. Ancient Egyptian kings sent armies in search of the source of the great river and explorers from Herodotus to Speke have sought to chart its course. Until very recently no one dared challenge the White Nile at its source – some of the most powerful and sustained rapids on earth.

Adrift made an historic first descent of the Victoria Nile (the first section of the White Nile) in July 1996. BBC news featured this incredible 10-day descent at prime time viewing. Both the Royal Geographic Society and the National Geographic Society have recognized this as one of the most challenging river descents ever. The 80 km section of river between Karuma Falls and Murchison Falls in the Murchison Falls National Park is the steepest section



of the entire Nile and provided the biggest challenges. The Adrift team were charged eight times by large crocodiles, drifted through pools holding hundreds of hippos and were watched over on one portage by a pride of lions. In over 20 years of rafting worldwide, for the

Adrift guides, this river is the ultimate challenge.

However, today Adrift have diversified into much 'softer' options to cater for the wide range of tourists the country now attracts. The company cater for rafters from ages 2-72 years and there is certainly no pre-requisite regarding swimming. On average, several dozen non-swimmers raft the river every month and the wonderful thing about the Nile in Uganda is that it can meet the a variety of needs, desires and expectations. For those who want to challenge some of the biggest rapids on the planet then towering waves rise to meet the highest expectations. For 72-year old grandfathers who want to share the experience with their grandchildren then the Nile in Uganda offers a wonderful experience. There are no hippos and very few crocodiles in this section of river so swimming in the calm pools between the rapids is safe. Young children delight in leaping from the rafts to ride on safety kayaks who accompany every trip down the river, they marvel at the fish lying in the bottom of the dugout canoes the fishermen use and watch eagerly as troops of red-tailed monkeys fly through the trees alongside the river. For the older children, the surf waves at Nile Special and Malalu provide huge excitement. Using boogie



<http://www.serene-excursions.com/>

boards and fins the expert guides from Adrift instruct the children in the use of the foam boards to ride the waves. Incredibly these boards race down the face of waves and give the ride a thrill that brings a smile to both the kids and anyone who can see how much fun they are having. The

waves behave much the same as an ocean wave and break every day of the year in much the same way. This is part of the reason the Nile is unique among rivers throughout the world. Lake Victoria and the dam at Owen Falls mean that the river level of the Nile remains relatively constant year-round so regardless of the time of the year, the Nile offers the ride of one's life.

Perhaps most importantly, the Adrift presence in Uganda has created employment in an area where there was relatively little before. Over forty families from villages in the area are supported directly from a wage from the company. The volume of tourist traffic in the area has grown substantially and looks set to expand with the attraction of Uganda as a tourist destination. The Adrift presence in the area is attracting other investors and the goal of the company now is to increase the visitor nights to the area or increase the amount of time visitors spend in Kayunga District. In no small part this is only possible with the support and cooperation of the local community. Adrift recognizes that the future of tourism in Uganda and in Kayunga in particular is dependent on the continued partnership between the company and the communities with which it comes into contact. Neither Adrift or Uganda as a whole have to market Uganda as probably the most exciting destination in Africa. Those who come here marvel at the friendliness of the people, the beaming smiles and the warmth of the reception. Despite the reputation of the country and the tyranny of the past, today a visitor can expect one the warmest receptions they could find anywhere in the world. Couple this with a diverse range of exciting activities and a wonderful climate and you have a country that should be at the top of your 'to visit' list.

## Mountains of the Moon

by Cam McLeay

I pulled my sleeping bag over my head and tightened the drawstring around my face. I have been living in Uganda for over 3 years and couldn't remember the last time I had actually climbed into my sleeping bag, let alone pulled the hood over my head - we live on the equator and we are not used to feeling that cold. The next thing I knew it was morning and light crept through the window of the Guy Yeoman hut. I ventured outside and mist swirled around in the valley below. A brisk wind dispelled any ideas I had of an early morning swim. Smoke poured from beneath the roof of the porters huts - a good sign that the fire was warm and the day had begun. Putting on the porridge seemed as good a start as any but not before that first cup of tea. On my way to the creek to fill the teapot a mostly grey streaked between the giant heather and I was able to make out clearly at the end of the streak a Ruwenzori Turaco.

# AND MOUNTAIN MAJESTY TO GORILLA COUNTRY



Even while half awake, I knew that this would cause your most enthusiastic twitcher to wet his pants with excitement. I stood still to watch this remarkable bird preen himself only meter's away and reveled in the again in the magic of the Rwenzori and mystery that still surrounds the Mountains of the Moon.

I had climbed Mt. Stanley 17 years earlier from the Congo side but this was my first time to climb the mountains from Uganda. The Mountains of the Moon have lost none of their charm. The mighty forest giants are as majestic as when the first explorers ever saw them, elephant trails still cross the foot highways in the lower forests, chimpanzees make their home near giant fig trees, one is never far from the sound of running water and the dramatic peaks are obscured from view for most of the year.

Our team from Hima Cement had been in training for months beforehand to get in shape for what is probably the toughest climb on the dark continent; third highest (Margherita 5189m) but physically the greatest challenge. Charles had grown up in the foothills of the Rwenzoris but had never ventured beyond the village trails, Christian had flown in from La Farge - Hima's parent company in France and Pal had joined us from Bamburi Cement (another La Farge company) in Kenya. The local team had underestimated the importance of footwear. Despite my detailed advice on what kind of boots to search for in the 'Owino' of Kabale, they had turned up with shoes more suited to a night on the dance floor at Club Silk. What were they thinking? They were making this too much of a challenge for themselves. It was challenge enough to wade through the Bigo bog in gortex boots let along the 'silk slippers'. But I had to remember they had never seen snow before. Bosco could not imagine beyond his wildest dreams how difficult it is to balance on wet and greasy logs knowing if you slipped you would have to extract yourself from knee deep mud renown for claiming the shoes of intrepid hikers. We had chosen to attempt the Ruwenzori in

August when the clouds should be near their thinnest and the rain should be somewhere down in Zambia. However, it seemed like someone forgot to pass the message on. Swirling clouds of mist swallowed our views of the peaks for most of our trek and the bogs of the Uganda Rwenzori were overflowing with water. A huge amount of work has been done on the trails and without the thousands of logs laid across the swamps, I shudder to think of how much greater our challenge would have been. This was a team building exercise and it certainly brought all of us closer together. Each day, we dragged tired limbs from our sleeping bags, wrestled with wet boots and climbed at a steady pace toward those elusive peaks that we glimpsed occasionally in the clouds. The trails were littered with large rocks and we spent a great deal of time clambering over these on all fours, large sections of the trail were sodden from heavy rains and the bogs ruled supreme. My gortex boots and gaiters feared well but those porters really put on quite the show.

Carrying large loads, they were a wonderful advertisement for gum boots (Wellingtons) as they leapt nimbly between rocks, hauled themselves over tree trunks fallen on the trails or skillfully balanced in the bogs. We had about 30 porters to support our team and they were enjoying the experience as much as we were. Aside from the sound of squelching boots, distinctive bird calls and thundering waterfalls,

one of my endearing memories from the climb is the constant banter of the porters. These little men of the mountains seemed really at home here dashing ahead of our team of climbers each day, pausing occasionally to suck on some battered cigarette or huddling together around the fires in the evening for warmth.

At Bujuku Hut, our hopes of reaching the summit of Margherita peak rose and fell with the brightness of the stars. Each time I dashed outside, a sky full of stars made me hopeful we could summit in clear weather. The promise of the summit had me excited for myself but especially for my new Ugandan friends who would see snow for the first time. We departed for the summit of Mt. Stanley in the dark and it wasn't long before our feet were wet and our heads were pounding from the altitude. The pace had slowed considerably and there was plenty of time to take in the magnificent views. *Continued* down the mountainside to Lake Bujuku. A fresh dusting of snow had settled into the wet moss and ice cold streams trickled beneath the giant groundsells. I had forgotten the simple pleasure of filling my mouth with fresh snow crystals and gazing down on the clouds from above. One foot up, balance, then place the next. My breathing was becoming shorter and my steps closer. I always feel that a large part of the magic of the mountains is that my mind wanders, I wonder what lies behind that large cloud or over the next ridge ...

*CONTINUED*



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