

THE MALI PROJECT

THE FESTIVAL IN THE DESERT – JANUARY 2010



Mali is the jewel in West Africa's crown, a destination that has all the right ingredients. The country occupies the heart of a territory that once supported Africa's greatest empires and is rich with historical resonance. This history bequeathed to Mali some of its most dramatic attractions – the legendary city of Timbuktu (Tombouctou), whose name has never lost its allure for travelers, the gloriously improbable mosque at Djenné and the bustling river port of Mopti are simply three among many.

Mali's history has always been a story of its deserts and rivers. The lucrative trade routes of the Sahara once made the region among the world's richest, and the Niger, one of the grand old rivers of Africa, is still the lifeblood of the country; to journey along the Niger River route (preferably on a slow boat to Timbuktu) is one of the continent's great adventures. Not far from the riverbank, the extraordinary Falaise de Bandiagara rises up from the plains, and shelters one of West Africa's most intriguing peoples – the Dogon, whose villages and complex cultural rituals still cling to the edge of rocky cliffs. If you can visit one place in Mali, go to the Dogon Country: it's utterly unforgettable.

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PROPOSED ITINERARY

- Sat 2 Jan Depart Dublin on the midday flight to Paris and onwards to Bamako arriving at 21.00hrs that night. Overnight in the Hotel Tamana.
- Sun 3 Jan Morning spent in Bamako including a visit to the National Museum which is an excellent way to gain all sorts of information on the different ethnic groups and traditional belief systems across Mali. Depart for Djenne. Overnight in Campement Hotel.
- Mon 4 Jan Explore Djenne. The Morning Market & The Grand Mosque which is the largest mud structure in the world, built in 1905 on a site that dates back to 1280. Depart for Dogon Country. Overnight in the Hotel La Falaise (Bandiagara).
- Tues 5Jan Today will be spent exploring and walking the sandstone escarpment that dominates the desert plains. The Dogon rituals, traditions and healing methods stretch back centuries and there is the opportunity to explore Dogon villages with guides. Overnight in the Hotel Guina (Sangha)
- Wed 6 Jan Early departure and a full day's drive to Timbuktu, including the ferry across the Niger. Overnight in the Hotel Colombe/Du Desert.
- Thurs 7 Jan In the morning explore Timbuktu before driving out to Essakane to the Festival in the Desert.
Tuareg Caravans from all corners of the Sahara will reunited for the 8th Annual Festival. Each evening as the stage is lit by the setting sun the performances begin. During the day there is camel racing, ad hoc musical performances and an opportunity to buy local crafts. 2 nights camping at the Festival in the Desert.
- Sat 9 Jan Transfer back to Timbuktu in the evening to Hotel Colombe/Du Desert
- Sun 10 Jan Early departure to the river port of Mopti which is a hub of activity at the confluence of the Niger and Bani rivers. Overnight in the Flandre Hotel in Severe
- Mon 11 Jan Early departure to Segou and onto Bamako for the late night flight to Paris and onwards to Dublin.
- Tues 12 Jan Arrive Dublin early morning.

Fast Facts about Mali

Time	GMT/UTC
Population	10.6 million
Borders	Algeria, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal
Telephone	Country code 223; international access code 00
ATMs	None that work
Capital	Bamako
Visas	These can be obtained at Bamako Airport on arrival but copies of the photo page will have to be forwarded in advance. Cost €50.00
Languages	French, Bambara
Area	1, 240, 140 sq km
Money	West African CFA franc; US\$1 = CFA498
Health	Vaccinations for Hepatitis A, Typhoid & Tetanus. Yellow Fever Certificate is required & it is a malaria area.

Accommodation: There are some surprisingly good hotels and some poorly run ones – be prepared for both! Camping at the Festival will require 4 -5 people to share traditional Tuareg Tents made of camel skin, open to one side. A mattress is provided. You will have to bring a sleeping bag.

Climate: January is a wonderful time to travel to Mali. Day time temperatures are 25 – 30C and it remains warm in the evenings in most areas. The desert is warmer during the day and cooler at night.

Cost: It is estimated that it will cost €2,950 per person including everything - based on 20 persons but subject to currency variations.

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APPLICATION FORM

Name: (As on passport) _____

Address: _____

Phone (day): _____ Mobile: _____

Email: _____

Occupation: _____ Date of Birth: _____

- Is there any area of expertise that you feel that you might be able to help with:

- Accommodation: Twin share: Single:

Please find enclosed €_____ (€500.00 per person), payable to the Mali Project, this being a non-refundable deposit. I understand that the Balance of € 2500 must be remitted by the 27 November and that I have read the Terms and Conditions.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

The organisers of the Mali Project reserve the right to refuse any application at its absolute discretion and in this case the deposit will be refunded in full without deduction, compensation or interest and the matter shall be deemed to be at an end.

Please complete and return to:
The Mali Project,
C/O Cosgrove & Associates,
No 3 Spafield Terrace
Ballsbridge,
Dublin 4

TERMS & CONDITIONS

Each participant must sign the application form as confirmation that they have read, and agree with, the terms and conditions of entry.

- The person must be 18 years of age before the departure date of the Challenge or be accompanied by a parent or guardian.
- Your passport must have at least 6 months to run from the date of return to Ireland. Payment for any visa, airport tax, and gratuities are not included in the cost.
- The organisers of the Mali Project have the right to alter the itinerary, should climatic or any other unforeseen circumstances deem this necessary.
- Full Standard Travel Insurance cover is organised for the trip. Four areas of cover that should be noted are as follows: Normal luggage and person effects of €2540 and a limit of any single article of €380; Cash – a limit of €635; Passports & travellers cheques - €952; Medical & additional expenses - €6 million. In the case of expensive cameras etc., it is suggested that you arrange separate or all risks cover. In the event of a claim, the participants will have to report it to the local police and will have to process the claim themselves.
- Participants must be relatively fit to take part and must complete the medical questionnaire provided. You may be required to have a medical form signed by your Doctor. By signing the entry form you are confirming that to the best of your knowledge, your general state of health is good and that you take full responsibility for yourself. The organisers of the Mali Project may at their discretion refuse a participant if in their opinion he/she is medically unfit to take part.
- Passport Control and in county authorities will reserve the right to refuse entry.
- Participants take part at their own risk and agree to indemnify the organisers of the Mali Project against claims for loss or damage to personal property, personal injury (or death), and any claim arising from the entrant's own actions.
- Participants must comply with and are responsible for attending to any inoculation and health regulations required for the destination.
- If you are unable to meet the financial requirements you will forfeit your place on the trip or you may choose to make up the balance yourself.
- Participants must carry out all/any fundraising in accordance with the guidelines set out in the fundraising pack.