

## **8 night cruise, The Ascent of the Congo & Alima River: 1 night at the hotel, 7 nights on the boat. (tentative itinerary)**

### **Day 1 June 26 - Arrival in Brazzaville.**

Arrival in Brazzaville. Our guide will meet you at the airport. Boarding begins at 5 p.m. on the Princesse Ngalessa. Passengers arriving late in the morning on an Ethiopian Airlines flight can be dropped off in the lobby of the Radisson Hotel to relax while waiting for boarding.

- Night on board.

### **Day 2 June 27 - Beginning of the cruise**

After breakfast, we start our ascent of the Congo River. We sail through a landscape of green hills as we familiarise ourselves with the boat and the program and get to know our guides. In the afternoon, we go on a short boat excursion on the beautiful green waters of the Maipili River.

- Night on board.

### **Day 3 June 28 - The Téké Kingdom and Kebe Kebe ritual**

In the morning, we visit Ngabe, one of the ancient capitals of the Téké kingdom. We ascend through the village to visit the current queen. As the guardian of "Nkwembali," the spiritual deity of the Batéké, she is the person authorised to transfer power to the new king, the Makoko. She holds significant influence in the Téké kingdom, one of the powerful kingdoms in the country.

After our lunch on board we return to the village to witness a kebe kebe ritual. It refers to a dance and an initiatory society of the Congo. The ordinary form of the kebe-kebe resembles whirling dervishes, wrapped in raffia robes set with feathers of various birds, and manipulating a puppet which generally represents a painted Koyo head exhibiting the particular scarifications of the ethnic group.

In the afternoon, we reach the estuary of the Lefini River, a popular spot for birds and hippos depending on the season. We leave the ship on launch boats to observe the majestic mammals. We return to the ship for lunch and continue our ascent.

- Night on board.

### **Day 4 June 29 - The thousands of islands of the Congo River and the "whaling ships"**

The Congo River widens considerably (more than 10 km) and a labyrinth of islands is formed. Fishing villages are established there during the dry season. In the estuary of N'keni, we will go for birding in the morning (bee eaters, weavers, egrets, kites).

From the observation deck, we watch the fascinating boats, whaleboats and long flat-bottomed transport barges that are pushed along the Congo River. Travelling for weeks at a time and measuring up to two hundred metres in length, these floating villages transport goods, people and livestock from town to town. They play a crucial role in the economy and life of the Congo River communities. If the weather permits, we will take the opportunity to bivouac on a sandbank in the middle of the myriad of islands.

- Night on board.

### **Day 5 June 30 - The city of Mossaka and its famous salted fish and the village of Likendze**

In the morning, we set out to explore the city of Mossaka. Led by our local guide Jean de Dieu, we discover the remnants of the colonial era, we visit the bustling local market where we'll immerse ourselves in the daily life of the local people. Our visit takes us through the alleys where salted fish dryers are installed. This traditional technique of preserving fish has made Mossaka famous throughout the region. We also discover the production of palm wine and meet a potter. We return to the ship for lunch and continue our navigation to Likendze.

At the village of Likendze on the Sangha River, we learn different fishing techniques such as cast net fishing, trap fishing, and net fishing. Those interested can even try their hand at line fishing.

- Night on board.

### **Day 6 July 1- The Alima river and the Moyo people**

In the morning, we leave on launch boats to observe the hippos who live a few kilometres north of the village and we'll go for a birding in search of the emblematic birds of the region such as ospreys, palm-nut vultures, African fish eagles, hamerkops, cormorants, kingfishers, weavers, ibis, grey herons, storks, egrets, hornbills, pied crows, Brazza's Martin and the elusive turaco. Back on the ship, we navigate towards the Alima River. This beautiful narrow winding river is surrounded by swamp forests. We finish the day in the village of Bonda where we meet the Moyo People. They are our guides to discover the flooded forest. Following the season, we discover the forest by canoe or on foot. In the evening, the Moyo people perform a traditional dance on the bank of the river. At night, we will navigate in a 900 m loop to listen to the forest and perhaps, spot the shining eyes of the crocodiles.

- Night on board.

### **Day 7 July 2 - The traditional Medicine**

We navigate on the Alima River. Passing the many bends of the river, along the banks we can see many charming raffia villages. Later on, we reach the village of Mondongo. This village, also made primarily using raffia, is home to Moyo People. We met a local guide who explains the traditional pharmacopoeia and the preparation of remedies. The swamp forest is teeming with plants the villagers use for traditional medicine to treat diseases and injuries.

In the afternoon, we reach a small tributary with black water where the locals call crocodiles to hunt them.

- Night on board.

### **Day 8 July 3 - Transfer to Brazzaville and visit of Lesio Louna réserve**

We disembark for our return trip to Lesio Louna reserve by car.

Founded in 1999 the Aspinall Foundation, and part of the Congolese gorilla protection program (PPG) Lesio Louna aims to rescue gorillas from wildlife trafficking or zoos which cannot tend to them and reintroduce them into their natural environment. On board a motorboat with the keepers, we set off on the Louna River, which winds through the forest, to reach the islands where the gorillas live during the period of adaptation to their new life. As soon as they can feed themselves, they will then be released into the Park. After a memorable time close to these fascinating primates, we return to Brazzaville by car.

- Dinner
- Night at the hotel 5 stars in Brazzaville

### Day 9 July 4 - Visit of Brazzaville and departure (or extension)

In the morning, we set out to explore the city, The Congo Basin Museum, the Poto Poto School, the Cathedral and we end with a meeting with “La Sape” - Society of Ambiance-Makers and Elegant People. We have lunch before transferring to the airport to depart Congo or take advantage of a trip extension (more info later!)

- The coastal city of Pointe-Noire and visit the chimpanzee sanctuary of Tchimpounga in Kouilou river (2-3 nights) and relax at Bamboo beach on the seaside.
- 3 nights extension to the Bai d’Imbalanga in the Odzala-Kokoua National Park (From Oyo)
- 2 nights extension in DRC for Bonobos tracking (endemic species from DRC)
- 4 nights in Dzanga sangha extension in Doli Lodge. Possible departure to Bangui.
- Tentative GlobalOkie Travel Ghana trip extension to explore the culture, history, and politics of this ancient kingdom

### Included:

- Full excursions and guidance from GlobalOkie Travel and expedition staff
- Full Board on board and in hotels (no lunch Day 1). Beer, wine, and soft drinks are served in a limited quantity for lunch and dinner (2 included per meal)
- Plastic boots and raincoats on board
- Wifi where available
- Republic of Congo Visa Letter of Intent (needed to get Visa On Arrival in Brazzaville)

### Not Included:

- International flights (we recommend buying flexible tickets)
- Additional hotel nights, prior to or after standard tour dates, private transfers
- Travel Protection Plan (evacuation, medical, and repatriation insurance is required from each traveler – minimum coverage of USD100,000)
- Visa, and immigration fees (multi-entry Republic of Congo visa appx \$100 due upon arrival)
- Personal services: massage, crew gratuities (appx \$150 per person), phone, laundry on board
- Extra hotel night in Brazzaville and customized half-day tour, special July 4<sup>th</sup> dinner \$590 (tentative/approximate)

### Tentative Pricing:

\$5,950 – Deluxe Suite - double or twin occupancy; single room \$7,750 (2 available) – 18sqm  
\$6,450 – Master Suite - double or twin occupancy; single room \$8,350 (1 available) 23 or 27sqm  
\$6,600 – Superior Suite – double/twin occupancy; single room \$8,570 (0 available) – 30sqm  
\$7,050 – Superior Suite Forward – double/twin occupancy; single room \$9,160 (2 available) -30sqm  
\$7,520 – Owner’s Suite – double/twin occupancy; single room \$9,780 (1 available) – 35sqm

**Deposit (non-refundable) \$1,200 – due upon enrolment; 2<sup>nd</sup> Payment: \$2,800 – due on or before 12/15/26; Final Payment: balance – due on or before 3/15/27**

The total cancellation by the Customer entails the payment of the following costs:

Between confirmation and 181 days prior to departure, 20% of the total cost will be charged

Between 180 & 121 days, 50% of the total cost will be charged.

Between 120 & 91 days, 70% of the total cost will be charged.

Between 90 days and a ‘no show’, 100% of the total cost will be charged.

## **Formalities**

A **mutli-entry** visa into the Republic of Congo is mandatory

The visa must be obtained before departure from the consular services of the Republic of Congo

On Arrival Visa may be possible

## **Health**

A yellow fever certificate is required for entry into the Republic of the Congo

For malaria medication, please consult with your doctor for advice

Bring insect repellent (repellent containing DEET is recommended in the Congo Basin)

First aid on board. Emergency repatriation available to a hospital in Brazzaville during the trip

Sun screen

## **Insurance**

A proper travel insurance that coverage for medical evacuation/repatriation costs by helicopter, plane or ship is obligatory.

After the booking process you will be asked to provide us with details of the insurance policy.

## **Ship Specifications**

Year Built: 2017

Vessel's Registry: Congo

Type of Vessel: River Expedition Vessel

Length: 170 feet / 52 meters

Beam: 36 feet / 11 meters

Draft: 3 feet / 0,90 meters

Gross Tonnage: 500 tons

Cruising Speed: 6 knots

Electricity: 220 volts

Engines: 2 Caterpillar 375 HP Marine Engines

Generators: 150 KVA and 220 KVA

Water: 10,000-liter water treatment plant

## **On Board Living and Social Areas**

Dining room

Indoor bar and lounge

Outdoor lounge

Outdoor jacuzzi

Observation Deck

Massage services

### **Launch Boats for Shore Excursions**

Three auxiliary aluminum launch boats equipped with four-stroke low emission engines. Each boat has a capacity of 14 passengers.

Kayaks for two people

### **Crew**

21, including a cruise director and 3 French-speaking and English-speaking guides.

### **Safety On Board**

Radio communication with separate battery pack; satellite phone; life jackets, fire extinguishers

On-board pharmacy for first aid, para medical

### **Accommodations and Cabins**

Passengers are accommodated in 15 Design cabins across three decks.

2 Owner's Suites measuring 35 square meters with balcony

2 Forward Superior Suites measuring 30 square meters with public balcony

2 Superior Suites measuring 30 square meters with public balcony

2 Forward Master Suites measuring 23 square meters with public balcony

2 Master Suites measuring 27 square meters with public balcony

5 Deluxe Suites measuring 18 square meters with public balcony

### **World Class dining program**

Taste the true palate of the African and European dishes with local product and wine.

### **Security**

The country does not present any particular security risk. Most of the trip takes place in very sparsely populated areas.

### **Equipment and clothes**

Light and breathable clothing

Fast-drying shirts with long sleeves and fast-drying long pants (ideally in the colors of nature)

Closed walking shoes, light-weight and fast-drying or old running shoes

A light fleece or jumper for cooler weather in the evening

Lightweight raincoat

Sun hat, bathing suit, casual clothes and comfortable shoes for relaxing on board

Pair of binoculars (night vision a bonus), Torch or flashlight (head-lamp recommended)

Camera with minimum 200mm lens

Luggage should not exceed 20 kg due to weight limitation on domestic flight

Raincoats available on board

**Climate**

Average temperature of 26°C

Regular tropical rains

Time GMT+1

**Laundry on board**

Laundry service for personal clothes available on board at an additional cost

**Tips (shared between the on-board crew)**

12 euros(appx US\$15)/pers/day advised according to satisfaction. (GlobalOkie passengers will pool tips to give at the end of the voyage; to be collected 3-4 weeks prior to departure)













