



Welcome to the Gambia

Welcome to the Kairaba Hotel

Guest Services Directory





Welcome Valued Guest

All of us here at the Kairaba Hotel are very pleased that you have chosen to call the Kairaba Hotel home during your stay in the Gambia.

This directory is filled with information intended to help you feel comfortable in our hotel and the beautiful environment that surrounds it. However, please feel free to ask any employee for assistance – each and every member of our staff are willing to answer any questions you may have, to help you find direction or provide a service which will make your stay special.

I expect you to help keep us all busy by asking lots of questions and demanding impeccable service. If you don't feel we are exceeding your expectations, please let me know

Once again, from the entire staff of the Kairaba Hotel, a warm welcome.

Enjoy your stay and have fun!

The General Manager

Thank you for leaving this directory for our next Guest.

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GUEST SERVICES DIRECTORY

Adapter

Adapters are available, please phone Reception by dialing 9 and one will be brought to your room. A deposit will be charged to your room, when it is returned this will be removed from your account. The hotel electrical supply is 220/240 volts, A/C 50 cycles with French, German and Italian style sockets.

Airport

It will take approximately 20 minutes drive to Banjul international airport. Kindly contact Reception by dialing 1500 to organize transportation.

Air conditioning

Each room is equipped with an individual air cooling unit, with an individual remote control. The air conditioning should remain switched off while you are out.

Animals

There are no dangerous animals on the grounds of the Kairaba Hotel however, please note that you should not feed any animals such as cats, dogs and especially the monkeys. Feeding animals is entirely at your own risk and remember the hotel does not allow you to bring in any animals from outside.

Babysitting

Please contact Reception by dialing 1500 to organize our fully qualified babysitting service. An hourly charge is incurred and is payable directly to the babysitter. The charge is €5 per hour.

Bars

The hotel has numerous bars to chose from, details are listed below.

Havana Club

Located at the main entrance
Open daily from 08.00 – 02.00
Monsoon Bar

Situated by the Kingfisher main breakfast room
Open daily from 08.00 – 12 midnight

Bolong Bar

Situated poolside
Open daily from 09.00 – midnight

Beach House
Open daily from 09.00 – 19.00

Look out for the daily Happy Hours in all our bars!

Bathroom

Hair dryer: Located in the bathroom, hold button down for hot air to come out, remove pressure when you have finished.

Beds (Extra)

Depending on your room type, extra beds are available in your room as either single or double sofa beds, except in standard rooms.

Bellboys

The bellboys are situated at reception and will help you with your luggage. If you should need help bringing your luggage, please do not hesitate to contact the Bell Desk by dialing 1503. The bellboys also control the luggage room, this is the place where we can store for you your luggage temporarily after checkout.

Bird Watching

Every Wednesday and Saturday (subject to availability and season) it is possible to join an organized tour of the grounds and view the wonderful array of birds, with our expert ornithologist Aladdin. Meeting point is at the croquet lawn. For more information contact Reception by dialing 1500.

Breakfast

Breakfast is available at our Kingfisher restaurant
Monday - Sunday from 07.00 to 10.30

To order breakfast in your room please, dial Room Service, extension 1600 to place your order. There is an additional charge for room service breakfast see menu for details. A take away breakfast can also be organized, please contact room service on 1600 for further details.

Business Services

Photocopy, Printout, Typing, Secretary services, Fax services, internet connection and for assistant you can to contact Reception on 1500.

Computer services: for using the internet service it will cost \$5 per hour.

Meeting space: we have an extensive selection of meeting rooms, please contact the sales office on 1701-5 who will advise you of the details.

Car Rental

Avis is our preferred choice of car rental company. For details please see the brochure enclosed within this directory or alternatively please contact reception.

Cash

It is not possible to charge cash to your room, but you can exchange money at the reception.

Cash Machines

We do not have an ATM machine in the hotel but there is one close by at the Standard Chartered Bank. Go out of the main entrance, turn right, walk 100m and it is on the left hand side.

Cashier

Open 24 hours a day at reception.

Check Out Time

Check out time is 12 noon. Should you wish to extend your check out time please contact reception. Extended check out time is subject to availability and there will be a charge per hour.

Chemist shop

We have several chemist shops close to the Hotel, please speak with the Reception by dialing 9 who will be able to guide you.

Children

There is a nice playground for children located near the observatory. Special children's programmes can be arranged. Kindly talk to our Pool Supervisor.

Clinic

The clinic is located at the lower floor of reception building next to the Vitala beauty studio. A qualified nurse is on duty on week days from 09.00 to 17.00 hours, Saturday from 09.00 – 13.00. Doctor is on call 24 hours a day.

Conference, Banqueting and Meetings

We do have 8 function rooms, from 12 to 700 people.

Function Rooms	Banquet Capacities									
	Size			M_	Height	U shape	Classr oom	Theatre	Menu	Buffet
Grand Jaama Hall	30	x	20	600	3,6 m	400	450	700	450	400
Jaama Hall A	20	x	20	400		350	350	500	300	250
Jaama Hall B	10	x	20	200		100	100	150	100	80
Peacock Room I	15	x	10	150		60	60	100	80	60
Egret Room II	10	x	6	60		40	40	80	60	40
Plover Room III	10	x	5	50		25	25	40	30	20
Hornbill Room IV	6	x	5	30		12	12	20	12	10
Honeyguide Room V	6	x	5	30		12	12	20	12	10
Sunbird Room VI	6	x	5	30		12	12	20	12	10
Jaama Hall Foyer	17	x	9							

Credit Cards

The hotel accepts American Express in US\$. All other credit cards such as Master and Visa are charged in British Pounds Sterling. Diners card is not accepted.

Credit Limit

There is a credit limit on your room. You will be kindly requested to settle your bill when it reaches the specified amount.

Crib/Cot

We have baby cots available for use, please contact Reception by dialing 1500 who will organize housekeeping to bring one to your room.

Currency Exchange

All major foreign currencies can be exchanged at the cashier at the reception.

Dress Code

Please be informed that it is not permitted to wear swimwear except at the pool, beach or at the Malimbe or Bolong Bar. In all other areas of the hotel, appropriate attire must be worn. We would also like to inform you that topless swimming and sunbathing is only permitted on the beach and not at the pool area. We would appreciate your co-operation in this matter.

Dry Cleaning

This service is available 6 days per week.

Pick up upon request. Please fill in the slip of paper located in your room and put the clothes that need dry cleaned into the provided laundry bag, telephone Reception by dialing 1500 who will organize housekeeping to pick it up.

Express Laundry: 50 % EXTRA CHARGE

Electrical Supply & Voltage

The hotel electrical supply is 220/240 volts, A/C 50 cycles with French, German and Italian style sockets.

Embassies in Gambia

British High Commission
48 Atlantic Road
Fajara
Tel: +220 4495133
Fax: +220 4496134

Embassy of the Republic of France
Cape Point
Tel: +220 4497231
Fax: +220 4497233

Other embassies include Libya, Sierra Leone, Taiwan, United States of America, Netherlands etc for further information and contact numbers please contact the reception on 1500 who will be happy to assist you.

Emergency numbers

For emergencies please contact the reception by dialing 1500 who will be able to direct your calls to the relevant service.

Fax Machine

You can ask the help of the Telephone Operator by dialing 9 for receiving and sending a fax

Fire Precautions/Emergency Evacuation

An evacuation plan is located in your room. Please follow the instructions of the security force. In case of fire leave your room immediately and inform reception.

Fitness

The gym is operated by an independent company called Vitala, there is free access for all hotel guests.

Opening Hours: Monday –Sunday from 8:00 Am till 19.30 PM

Flowers

Gambia is rich on colourful bushy flowers but has not many cultivated ones, therefore, flower bouquets are not available at bargain prices. Please contact Guest Relations on extension 2000 who can direct you to a supplier in the Gambia.

Foreign Exchange

It is possible to exchange currency and travellers cheques at reception. Rates are shown please contact Reception by dialing 1500.

Gas station

We do have gas stations not very far from the hotel, please contact Reception on 1500 for further advice.

Guest Relations

Guest Relations is situated by the Reception and are available for your service 7 days a week between the hours of 08.00 – 20.00. Guest relation staff can help you with any information you need regarding The Gambia, tours, the hotel etc. Please contact them on extension 2000.

Guest Rooms

There are seven categories of rooms:

Standard	Located in close proximity to the main building, twin bedded, mini bar, safe, hair dryer, air conditioning, television, balcony/terrace, land view.
Deluxe	Located in the gardens, both available on the ground and first floor. Spacious, twin bedded, shower/bath, mini bar, safe, hair dryer, air conditioning, television, balcony/terrace, garden/pool/sea view, single sofa bed.
Superior Deluxe	Spacious twin bedded, shower & bath, mini bar, safe, hair dryer, air conditioning, television, trouser press, tea/coffee making facilities, balcony, top floor, garden/pool/sea view, interconnecting door, single sofa bed.
Premium Suites	Separate bedroom and sitting room, with televisions and air conditioning, ground floor, double sofa bed, tea/coffee facilities, all ground floor, trouser press, hair dryer, spacious business area.
Executive Suites	Top floor, separate bedroom and sitting room with televisions and air conditioning, trouser press, tea/coffee facilities, double sofa bed, safe, hair dryer and spacious business area.
Garden Suites	Separate bedroom and sitting room with televisions and air conditioning, trouser press, tea/coffee facilities with a private garden, garden/pool view, all ground floor, tea/coffee making facilities, double sofa bed, safe, hair dryer, shower, spacious lounge.
Kairaba Suite	Living and dining room, lounge, office space with fax machine, private and main balcony, two toilet facilities, bath and shower, separate entrance to living room and lounge, king bedded, televisions, mini bar, tea/coffee making facilities, trouser press.

Health Studio

There is a Health Studio situated on property. It is run independently from the hotel and thus, payment must be made direct, and cannot be charged to your hotel account, it is called Vitala. The Health Studio offers the possibility to have massages, pedicures, manicures etc. There are also Wellness packages available, please contact the sales department on 1702 or reception on 1500 for further details.

Ice cubes

There is no machine available for the guests in the hotel, please call or contact Room Service on 1600 for delivery of ice cubes, a charge will be made to your room account.

Internet

We have internet access at the reception and it is possible to have it in your room also, please speak to Reception by dialing 1500 for further details.

Jeu de Boule

There is a jeu de boule area close to block 14. The boules are available at the pool area.

Keys

Please leave your room key at the reception desk when you leave the hotel. Please return your door lock card upon check-out at the reception.

Late Check out

Check out time is noon. On the day of your departure please pass by reception who will be happy to inform you if late check out is available. There is an additional charge for this.

Laundry bags

If you need extra laundry bags, please Reception by dialing 1500 who will have one delivered to you.

Library

There is a library at the pool centre. We have books in English, Dutch, German and Danish. Please feel free to borrow or swap books.

Lifeguard/Pool Attendant

Poolside the lifeguard operates from 08.00 – 19.00. Ocean side the lifeguard operates from 08.00 – 17.00. Please be aware of the flag system in place.

Light system

When you enter your room, there is a device on the wall usually near to the door, slot your room card in it so the light will automatically activate the light control. When you leave don't forget to take the room card with you.

Location

Situated on the golden beach of Kololi, it is 20 minutes from Banjul International Airport and 20 minutes from Banjul, the capital city. Set in 40 acres of mature gardens with fish ponds and over 100 types of plants and trees.

Lost & Found

Please note that the hotel will not assume responsibility for lost or disappeared items. When something is found in the rooms, the housekeeping keep a record and store everything in the housekeeping department. If something is found in the lobby or any outlets, the security keep a record and store everything in the security office. You must ensure that all valuables are properly locked in your room safe.

If a guest is looking for an item, please Reception by dialing 1500.

If we have found the lost item, we will need to ask for a copy of your I.D and full address

Luggage Service & Storing

Please contact the reception on 1500 for luggage collection. It is possible to store a limited amount of luggage at the hotel. However, please ensure that items are properly locked and labeled. Don't leave valuables in your luggage for storage as the hotel does not accept liability in the case of theft. The hotel will not accept luggage for long period storage. We can provide you with addresses for dry good storage companies.

Maintenance

It is our sincere objective to keep the hotel facilities in a perfect technical condition, however, it may happen that our staff have overseen a problem and we would like to apologise if this is the case. The hotel provides 24 hour maintenance support. Kindly call Reception by dialing 1500 in case you require assistance in your room.

Management Cocktail

Every Monday between 18.00 and 19.00 (subject to the season) there is a chance to come along and 'meet the management', enjoy a drink and a canapé, located in the garden – follow the signposts. Please check with reception for confirm timings by dialing 1500.

Map of the Gambia

Excellent maps of the Gambia are on sale at the reception desk.

Messages

All messages addressed to you will be personally delivered to your room by a hotel porter. However, in case you are not available then a message card will be hung on your door knob which will inform you that you have a message waiting at reception. Kindly call reception should you wish to have the message delivered.

Mini bar

On check in you will be given your own minibar key. In the minibar there are the following items:

4 Julbrew
2 Imported beers
2 Coca Cola
2 Fanta
2 Soda
2 Tonic
2 Mineral Water 1.5L

The minibar is refilled on a daily basis. Please ensure that, when you take something from the minibar that you fill in the minibar slip and sign, so that the correct amount can be charged to your room account. At the end of your stay please ensure that you return your minibar key to reception, so that no charge for the loss of the key will be incurred. Drinks purchased outside the hotel are not allowed to be stored in the minibar, as this prevents the minibar personnel satisfactorily restocking the minibar.

Newspapers

There are no international newspapers in The Gambia. Shops at the Kairaba Beach Hotel and others located outside are selling imported international magazines and newspapers. The local newspapers are The Observer, The Point and The Foroyaa. The Observer is available for all to read in the lobby.

Observatory

The Kairaba has the only observatory in West Africa. It is open twice a week every Thursday and Saturday (weather permitting), please contact reception for payment and ticketing.

Parking

We have a large parking area in front of the hotel, between the shops and the Havana Club.

Pillows

In each room, there is a set of 3 pillows on the bed, one of which is a feather pillow and a spare one in the wardrobe, if you require more, please call Reception by dialing 1500.

Pool Opening Hours

The pool is open every day from 08.00 – 19.00.

Post office

The post office is on Kairaba Avenue. For postal deliveries please hand your letters to the Reception.

Post

If someone is sending you something from abroad, the full postal address of the hotel is:

The Kairaba Hotel
P M B 390
Serrekunda
The Gambia
West Africa

Postcards

Tropical Souvenirs (at the main entrance) sell postcards and stamps.

Razor

Razors are available for purchase at the Right Choice Supermarket located by the main entrance of the hotel, opening hours are from 09.00 – 21.00, 7 days a week.

Religious Services

Information about the various religious services are available at Guest Services by dialing 2000 or by contacting Reception by dialing 1500.

Restaurants

Shikra

Asian inspired food, our newly styled a la carte restaurant. Located opposite reception. Monday to Saturday 19.00 – midnight, smart casual dress.

Casa Fernando

Our Cuban inspired restaurant, outside dining with live entertainment nightly. Open every day from 08.00 – midnight.

Malimbe Restaurant

Pool side dining, open for lunch and buffet style dinner. Live entertainment every evening. Barbeque every Sunday at a cost of 400 dalasi.

Kingfisher Restaurant

Come along and enjoy a breakfast in the Kingfisher restaurant, continental or full American available.

Ice Cream Shop

Situated by the main entrance, and offering a wide selection of ice creams, coffees, cakes and sandwiches

Room Account

For a draft print out of your room account please contact Reception by dialing 1500.

Room Service

There is an extensive 24 hour room service menu, it is located in your room. Please dial 1600 to order. Between the hours of 24.00 and 07.00 it is possible to order via the night room service menu (this is represented on the menu with a special symbol) please dial Reception on 1500 to order between these hours.

Safety Deposit Box

In every room there is an electronic safety deposit box. The Hotel management takes no responsibility for items lost or stolen from a room if it has not been placed in the safety deposit box. Please ensure that the safe door is properly locked before you leave your room. On check out please leave the safe open.

Secretarial services

Please contact Reception by dialing 1500 who can help you with all your demands such as faxing, typing and photocopying.

Security

Gambia is perhaps one of the safest countries in the world and the Gambians are very friendly and helpful people. The staff at the Kairaba Hotel are well trained and educated, however, there can be dishonest people and we strongly advise that you lock doors and windows when leaving the room or when you are sleeping.

Shops

By the main entrance there are a variety of shops, such as a supermarket, jewellery, internet shop etc. By the Casa Fernando restaurant and around the pool there are small market stalls. All are operated independently from the hotel.

Smoking / non smoking

We have various rooms which are non smoking or smoking rooms, please speak with Reception by dialing 1500.

Sofa beds

Depending on your room type you may have a single or a double sofa bed.

Stamps

Stamps can be purchased from the post office on Kairaba Avenue, bought with postcards at Tropical Tours or the requisite amount of money left with reception along with your postcard, so that when the postcards/letters are taken to the post office the stamps can be bought. For further help please contact Reception by dialing 9.

Sunbeds

Sunbeds are available around the pool, in the gardens and on the beach. Please ask a beach or pool attendant for help.

Swimming Pool

Open daily from 07.00 – 19.00 hours. Pool towels and sunbeds are free of charge but guests must properly identify themselves in order to get these services, by handing over their pool pass card. There are rules and regulations associated with the use of the pool and pool area, these rules are clearly visible by the pool.

Taxi's

There is a tourist taxi station just outside of the hotel, but if you need taxi any time just call the Reception by dialing 1500 and they will provide a taxi within 10 minutes.

Tea Time

Daily (subject to the season) between 16.00 and 17.00 we have tea time served on the Kingfisher terrace exclusively for all our hotel guests.

Telephone calls

Every room has an internal and external line. We can close the external line upon the request of the guest or we can close only the international line and keep the local one.

To call a room from the outside: Just give the room # to your friend and the operator will transfer you.

To call an outside line: 0 for the outside line

To call another room: 20 before 3 digit numbers and 2 before four digit numbers

To call national: 0 for the outside line, and then dial the number

To call international: 0 for the outside line, country code, city code (minus leading 0), for example to dial:

United Kingdom 0161 794 7699 would be 00 44 161 794 7699

Netherlands 020 770 7468 would be 00 31 20 770 7468

Telephone charge details

It depends on the country that you want to call. For more information call the Telephone Operator by dialing 9.

Television

There are local and international channels. If you have any problem receiving any of the channels please call Reception by dialing 9.

Tennis

It is possible to play tennis at the Senegambia Hotel. Balls and racquets can be rented there. Please call Reception by dialing 1500 who will reserve a court for you.

Towels

On check in you will be issued with a pool/beach towel card per person. When you wish to borrow a towel please hand your card into the pool or beach attendant who will exchange it for a towel. Sign the book and don't forget when you bring your towel back to resign and get your towel card back. On check-out please remember to return the towel card back to reception, if not a lost charge will be incurred.

Transportation

If you wish to rent a car and a driver this is possible, please contact Reception by dialing 1500 to discuss your requirements.

Wake up Calls

Please book your wake up call through the operator or by contacting Reception by dialing 1500

Weddings

It is possible to get married at the Kairaba Hotel. For more information please contact our Sales Department by dialing 1702 or Reception by dialing 1500 for further information and brochures.

Wildlife

Every Saturday (subject to the season) we have a professional presentation about wildlife in the Gambia. The presentation will take place in Committee Room 3 from 18.30 (please confirm times with the reception by dialing 1500) and is free to all our in-house guests.

The Kairaba Team wish you a pleasant and enjoyable stay.

Welcome to the Gambia

Welcome to the Kairaba Hotel

We hope with the attached information, you will be able to make an informed choice of the attractions and sights to see during your stay in The Gambia.

The Gambia

A brief History

The Gambia boasts an interesting history that belies its size. American author Alex Haley highlighted the slave trade from this area in his best selling book "Roots" when he traced his roots back to The Gambia.

The banks of the River Gambia have been inhabited for many centuries but the archaeological evidence is as yet insufficient to throw much light on the early history of the country. The first known record of The Gambia is a brief reference in the account by Hanno the Carthaginian of his voyage along West Africa around 470BC.

During the 5th and 8th centuries AD most of the Sen-Gambian area was part of the Empire of Ghana whose rulers were of the Serahuli tribe, which is still strongly represented in The Gambia. In the centuries to follow tribes of Mandingoes and Susus from the Fouta Djalon Plateau of Guinea established themselves in what is now known as Mali.

Charles II, King of England, founded the Royal Adventurers Trading to Africa whose main objective was to purchase slaves for the West Indian and American plantations. In 1661 the company captured St Andrew's Island in the River Gambia, renaming it James Island, built a fort on it and founded the first English settlement on the West African coast.

During the 18th and 19th centuries there was bitter and protracted religious dissension, cutting across tribal loyalties. One consequence of the strife was that various chiefs sought treaty protection from the British established at Banjul, so British administration gradually spread over the whole country. The last such treaty was concluded in 1901 with Musa Molloh, Chief of Falladu.

On the 18th February 1965 The Gambia became independent under a coalition government led by Dawda Jawara and Pierre N'Jie, founders of the United Party.

In July 1994 there was a passive coup resulting in the formation of a provisional ruling council led by the then Lt Yahya A J J Jammeh. A return to civilian rule commenced with a nationwide referendum on a new constitution followed in September 1996 by presidential elections. The now Dr. Alhagie Yahya A J J Jammeh was returned with an overwhelming majority and in October 2001 he won a second election and in October 2006 he was overwhelmingly elected for a third term, to return for another five year term.

Geography

The Republic of The Gambia lies on the west coast of Africa surrounded on three sides by The Republic of Senegal.

The Gambia is one of the smallest countries in Africa, with a total land area of just 11,000 km square. It lies within the valley of the River Gambia, and stretches 470km from east to west and varies in width from 80km near the mouth of the river to about 24km further inland. The parts of the country that do not border the river are arid and sandy.

The country is mainly flat, particularly near the sea, but nowhere does it rise more than 90m above sea level. Dense mangrove swamps line the river banks for the first 240km upstream, although in some places the mangrove has been cleared for rice cultivation.

The River Gambia rises on the Fouta Djalon Plateau in Guinea and is west Africa's finest waterway and the dominant feature of The Gambia.

Climate

During the dry season (November to May) rain is virtually unheard of and the average maximum temperature in Banjul is 32C (90F), although it can drop to 17C (63F) at night. Between June and October there will be some rain that tends to fall in heavy downpours, often at night. The remainder of the day is usually dry and bright, although humidity is higher and inland temperatures can soar to 43C (110F)

	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Sunshine hours (Average)	8	9	9	10	10	10	10	9	6	6	6	8
Temperature (Average Maximum) Celsius	32	31	31	32	34	33	32	32	30	29	31	32

Economy

Agriculture and tourism make up the majority of The Gambian economy. Groundnuts (in the form of nuts, oil and cattle cake) account for well over 90% of total exports. Agriculture and livestock provide a living for 75% of Gambians.

The Gambia's economy is on a very small scale and development usually has to be financed from external sources.

In the past few years the tourist industry has remained constant. Banjul International Airport (Yundum) opened in 1980 (although a runway was there from British Colonial days) and in 1997 a new airport terminal opened with more up to date facilities. The airport handles local flights from neighbouring African countries, scheduled flights and many charter flights during the main tourist season. These flights are mainly from the UK and central Europe.

Currency

The unit of currency in the Gambia is the Dalasi, which is divided into 100 bututs.

Bank times vary but it is more convenient to change money in the hotel at reception or foreign exchange desk. The rate will be slightly less than that offered by banks but for convenience is much easier. Usually passports have to be produced when exchanging money. It is illegal to exchange money in the street.

Credit cards (Mastercard and Visa) are sometimes accepted within the tourist areas, however a surcharge is usually applicable. Mastercard is not as widely used as Visa cards. ATM/Visa only machines are available at branches of Standard Chartered Bank in Banjul, Serrekunda, Kololi and at the Shell filling station on Kairaba Avenue, however these machines are somewhat erratic and not always in working order.

Poverty

The Gambia is one of the world's poorest countries and you will undoubtedly witness this during your holiday. People have little money to buy goods and food, so for many the cereal crops they grow form their staple diet, resulting in poor nutrition and consequently a higher risk of disease.

International Debt

Making the economic situation even worse in The Gambia is the international debt crisis that faces most third world countries. The crises started in the 1970's when developing countries were lent large sums of money at low, but floating interest rates.

Interest rates soared in the 1980's whilst the value of raw materials fell, meaning there was even less money to repay the debts. Left in great debt, and with nowhere else to turn, the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) was called in to assist. However, the IMF imposed strict economic restrictions, meaning countries in debt had to cut spending, social spending was slashed and for ordinary people things got worse.

Human rights and welfare organizations around the world are campaigning for the debts to be written off and it was one of the key topics in the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg. The Gambia is included in the Heavily Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) debt relief category whereby eligible countries are given some debt relief on reaching "Decision Point" after at least three years of structural changes to their economic policies. The Gambia's situation is currently under review.

Language

English is the official language of The Gambia, this is mainly due to the fact that it was a British Colony until 1965. There are various tribal languages, the most widely spoken being Wolof and Mandinka, and many Gambians can speak English as well as one or more of the local languages. Arabic is also taught in Koranic schools.

People of the Gambia

Current estimates put The Gambia's population at approximately 1.4 million with a density of around 100 people per square kilometer. It is one of the most densely populated countries in Africa. The population growth rate is about 4% per annum.

People of The Gambia belong to an ethnic group or tribe, each has its own language, customs and culture. The main ethnic group is the Mandinka but others include Fulas, Wolofs, Jolas, Serrahulis, Majagoes, Serrere and Akus. There are also a large number of Lebanese, Chinese and Europeans in the country.

Around 90% of the population are Muslim with the remaining 10% comprising of Christians of different denominations and Animists. Although Gambians do take their religion seriously and you will see them praying in Mosques and public places, there is no fanaticism in The Gambia and different religions and ethnic groups live alongside each other and even intermarry.

The Gambian dress is varied and although the ubiquitous jeans and t-shirts are very popular with the youth, the more traditional styles are still produced and worn in a wonderful variety of fabrics, colours and styles, with each ethnic group having its own distinguishing features.

Culture and Tradition

The Gambian people are generally a friendly tolerant race, the best way to learn about their culture is to talk to them and watch their behaviour towards each other. Much of African life revolves around social events such as weddings, funerals and village festivals.

Weddings

A wedding is usually the culmination of a week's activities involving visits to relatives and the exchanging of gifts, followed by a traditional ceremony. Legal and religious ceremonies are performed early so the rest of the day can be spent celebrating! In a very traditional wedding the grandmother and great aunts take the bride aside and lecture her about her duties as a wife and then she is summoned to consummate her marriage with her husband. In accordance with Islamic religion a man is allowed up to four wives at the same time.

Naming Ceremony

This ceremony takes place 7 days after a baby is born. During this time the parents discuss and agree what name to give the child. All relatives, friends and neighbours are informed and invited. On the day of the ceremony the parents slaughter wither a bull, lamb, sheep or goat and announce the name. It is a very colourful event with the ladies dancing and collecting money – this goes on throughout so it is good, if invited to a naming ceremony, that you take plenty of coins or small notes with you. Snacks and soft drinks are normally offered to all.

Respect Culture

In traditional societies older people and professionals such as teachers and doctors are treated with more respect. Children and women are expected to show respect to these people. In more traditional areas women are expected to dress and behave modestly especially in front of chiefs or other esteemed persons.

Eating

There are a few customs to observe when visiting someone's compound or going for dinner. It is usual to wash your hands, take off your shoes and sit on the floor. Dinner is normally served in two bowls, which are passed around and everybody helps themselves with their hands. It would not be offensive to ask for a spoon or fork if you are not accustomed to eating in this way.

Festivals

Ramadan

This is one of the most important festivals of the Muslim calendar which takes place once a year depending upon the lunar calendar. It is compulsory for all Muslims, excluding the very ill, pregnant and young children. Ramadan lasts for a month and its origins lie in the five pillars of Islam that encourages individuals to believe in the wholeness of God and repent any sins. During the 30 day period each Muslim will fast from sunrise to sunset and will not eat or drink during this time. The fast is usually broken at dusk by prayers, followed by hot sweet tea and local bread.

The bag of sugar is a traditional Ramadan present to any family as it is used in large quantities for tea and porridge.

Koriteh

A celebration of the end of Ramadan which is held on the 30th day to mark the end of fasting. This is a public holiday when celebrations take place at home, with lots of home cooked food and traditional African dress is worn. Many entertainment programmes will take place in the local villages and neighbours will be visited. The mosque/praying grounds will also be visited for prayers.

Tobaski

Tobaski takes place two months and ten days after Ramadan. Traditionally each family will buy a ram for the day's feast. This stems from the day God asked Prophet Ibrahim to sacrifice his young son in order to prove his faithfulness to God. Ibrahim proved willing but just before the sacrifice took place, Angel Gabriel was sent by God and told him to sacrifice a ram instead.

On the morning of Tobaski all Muslims will visit the local praying ground, where the Iman of the village will lead the prayers, and make the first sacrifice of the day. The skin of the ram will be kept and dried and is used for prayers. This is a great community day in which everyone takes part in the entertainment programme of the village. Any family who do not have enough money to buy a ram (more than two months salary) will be provided for by the community.

Homes

Most Gambians live in extended family compounds that consist of two or more line houses divided into separate sections to allow each family a certain amount of privacy. Families are very close and any member of the compound who is out of work is normally supported by those in employment.

Education

Only 60% of children attend primary school. Education is usually free but not compulsory and it is the parents' responsibility to provide materials such as pens and books. Children attend primary school for six years and then they sit the leaving certificate to enter junior secondary school. They spend three years here and then sit another exam to enter senior secondary school where they will take the West African Senior School Leaving Certificate (WASSLC) for higher education. The Government has links with Universities in Bristol and Newcastle in the UK as well as Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Canada and other countries.

Places of Interest

Banjul

Banjul has a population of approximately 40,000 inhabitants. It is situated on St Mary's Island, a sandbank at the south of the River Gambia and has a deep sheltered harbor. Although Banjul has little specifically aimed at tourists, it is an interesting place and a hive of activity with plenty of hustle and bustle. Albert Market at the top of Russell Street is where most local residents do their daily shopping, whilst the small tourist and craft market behind offers a good selection of local crafts and some more unusual pieces from neighboring countries such as Mali and Guinea Bissau. Don't forget Banjul Museum, situated in the centre of Banjul, has many items of interest relating to tribal traditions, music, agriculture, the British Colonial years, right up to the present day.

James Island

Constructed in 1651 by the Germans and then captured by the British in 1661, Fort James is steeped in history from the days of the slave trade.

Jufureh

The American author Alex Haley, traced his "Roots" back to this timeless village.

Albreda

Albreda's famous flagpole was said to guarantee freedom to any slave who managed to swim from James Island to reach it. This former French trading post holds many memories from the days of the slave trade.

Oyster Creek

One of the central points of the creeks and tributaries of the River Gambia where oysters grow in abundance on the roots of the mangroves.

Abuko Nature Reserve

The principal nature reserve in The Gambia, situated approximately 15 kilometres from the resort areas. It is not a zoo or game reserve but an area of 180 acres which places equal emphasis on the protection and conservation of nature as a whole.

Bijilo Forest

Forest park walk in the Kololi area. Home to monkeys and birds in natural surroundings. Please do not feed the monkeys and we recommend to take a guide with you to walk through the forest.

Wildlife

The Gambia has an amazing array of birdlife –with over 540 species and attracts keen ornithologists from around the world. The region is at an ecological cross road between the bulk of continental Africa and the Atlantic coast, the rich fauna of equatorial Africa, and the arid vastness of the Sahara. This zone is especially vital for migrating birds, however it does not have any of the larger animals such as lions and elephants that are commonly associated with Africa.

There are different types of monkeys and baboons – Abuko Nature Reserve, Bijilo Forest and Makasutu are great areas to see these. Dolphins are often spotted in the river and in the forest areas you may see duiker – small members of the antelope family. In drier grassland areas other antelope species include cob, roan, waterbuck and eland. Far up river, hippos and freshwater crocodiles may be found. Reptiles include both venomous and harmless snakes, - pythons, cobras and mambas but these are very rare.

Birdwatching

The best time to spot birds is early morning as the birds are generally more active during the cooler hours of the day and bird life is best during the winter. Many species are approachable for photography, remember to approach slowly and avoid sudden movements and loud noises. Waterbirds and waders respond to tidal movements, a low tide means more food will be available, but as the tide comes in the birds move closer to observation points. Be careful with binoculars and cameras near sensitive areas such as the airport and government buildings.

Fishing

The waters of The Gambia are rich in aquatic life teeming with many different fish including tarpon, shark, snapper, tiger fish, vundu catfish, sharptooth catfish, zambizi pike, characins and threadfin salmon.

Makasutu Culture Forest

Is West Africa's premier eco tourist destination. This pristine tropical 1000-acre reserve borders five miles of the Mandina Bolong (river) and encompasses five different eco systems – gallery forest, savannah, mangroves, palm forest and wetland/salt flats. These diverse eco systems sustain a great assortment of wildlife that includes a vast array of bird life, monitor lizards and troops of migrating baboons.

Visitors to Makasutu are taken on walks with expert guides through the bush after an orientation on the history and myths of the area. These guided walks bring visitors face to face with the indigenous people of the area who still make Makasutu their home. Visitors have the chance to sample palm wine directly from the source, observe the local oyster women on their daily collections and visit Makasutu's very own Marabou (holy man).

Locally crafted dug out canoes carry visitors along the calm waters of Mandina Bolong, whose riverbanks overflow with lush mangroves and bird life. Giant herons and king fishers are just two of the beautiful birds that can be observed at work. Depending on the tide, visitors to the area will see local fishermen plying the bolong in their ancient dug out canoes, or wading the waters with their throwing nets– scenes unchanged for hundreds of years.

Lunch after the river excursion is a traditional Gambian fare served under the vaulted thatched roofs of the Baobab Cultural Area. The produce is organically grown in and around Makasutu, and the fish on the menu comes direct from the local fishermen, fresh every day. Lunch is followed by a rhythmic cultural dance by local Jola tribes people, under the giant branches of the majestic baobab tree– be warned, the Jola women like to get as many guests up on stage to join in the energetic show!

Makasutu boasts an impressive craft area, consisting of potters, wood carvers, weavers, furniture makers and silversmiths, where guests can get their hands dirty trying out the different skills, and if enough time is left before your departure home, the pots can be fired and delivered to your hotel for you to remember your trip to Makasutu and the Gambia. This area has been donated to the local artists, no rent is charged for the space, and all profits go to the artists themselves.

Makasutu is a serene wonderland where visitors to the Gambia can experience African wild life, bush culture and eco tourism at it's finest. It is an un-missable part of anyone's visit to the Gambia.

4WD Drive

Probably the most popular tour in The Gambia!

An off the beaten track adventure in either an army style tuck or Landrover which follows the coast of this exciting country and also uncovers the Gambian village way of life. This can be a dusty and bumpy day but is well worth it.

During the day there will be the opportunity to visit some villages and experience the hospitality of the friendly locals. A visit to a village school (except on public holidays) always provides to be one of the highlights of the day (any contributions of pens, pencils, books etc are always gratefully received by the headteacher). A barbeque lunch is served on one of the unspoilt beaches in the south of the country, followed by the chance to swim and sunbathe. In the afternoon a further stop at the Tanji Nature Trail gives you the chance to learn more about traditional Gambian culture. Finally we drive past a typical fishing village before heading back.

Roots

The most well know trip upriver to the land of Alex Haley's saga "Roots". The trip starts with a long lazy cruise from Banjul, taking us on our historic journey 200 years back in time to the ancient trading station of Albreda, known for its Freedom Flagpole which was once believe to guarantee freedom to any slave who managed to escape from nearby James Island and swim across and touch the pole.

After 15 minutes walk you reach the village of Jufureh and the Museum of Slavery before continuing to the original home of Alex Haley's great great grandfather 'Kunte Kinteh' which is still occupied by the family. Taking photographs of people may involved being asked for money so always check first!

Back on board there is a delicious hot and cold buffet, followed by a selection of fresh fruit and then the journey to James Island. Steeped in slave trade history, the fortress ruins tell the tale of colonial rivalries and it is still possible to imagine the hundreds of slaves shackled together awaiting transport to an unknown and uncertain future.

On the return journey to Banjul dolphins often join the boat in the estuary of the river. A refreshing cup of tea or coffee completes a memorable day.

Wake up with the Birds

After an early start drive to Makasutu Cultural Forest and arrive at first light at the idyllic base camp site. The site is situated on a bend of the meandering Mandina Bolong river a tributary of the River Gambia, where you will have a welcome tea or coffee before setting out to explore the forest on foot, and the creeks by traditional 'dug out' canoe.

The forest and creeks alike are a haven for birds of all types and the early start really is the best way to experience the dawn chorus in all its splendour.

During your trip, it is possible to spot many different birds, including some rare species, such as the White Backed Night Heron, Giant Kingfisher and the African Fin Foot to name just a few. There are many different habitats where it is possible to spot birds including gallery forest, palm forest, savannah, salt flats and mangrove.

As well as the birds you may get a glimpse of the local baboons, mongoose, civets, genets, crocodiles and the rare clawless otter.

Lazy Day Crew

This is a relaxing and lazy day spent on a 60ft modern Gambian style river pirogue. The boat departs from Denton Bridge, cruising along the oyster creeks and meandering through the tributaries of the River Gambia.

Cruising through the lush green mangroves you may see local fishermen casting their 'callo' (huge circular nets) or the oyster ladies in their dug out canoes collecting oysters. But for most people, the real pleasure will be a chance to get a close up view of the aquatic bird life, from osprey to pelican.

The boat is anchored in a secluded spot for the chance to have a dip and cool off before a buffet lunch is served. In the afternoon there is a chance to fish and relax before afternoon tea and biscuits is served whilst cruising back to Denton Bridge.

Banjul Highlights

A half day introduction to The Gambia's capital city and surrounding area, starting with a photo stop at Arch 22 which was built to commemorate independence. The next stop is at the National Museum where the collection traces African Culture and European Colonialism.

A drive through the streets of Banjul leads to Albert Market to experience the hustle and bustle, where you can buy anything from live chicken to fresh vegetables and false hair! From Banjul, stopping briefly at the largest mosque in the city, we visit a local primary school with the option of visiting a school for the blind.

After a refreshing tour of Banjul Brewery and a chance to sample the locally produced Julbrew, the morning is completed with a trip to the Kachically Crocodile Pool to see Charlie who has appeared in several TV programmes.

Senegambia Treasure Island

A full day excursion to the 'treasure island' Jinnack, taking you through the countryside of The Gambia, and neighbouring Senegal.

The day starts early with a short journey to Banjul to experience the hustle and bustle of the port before boarding the ferry for the 45 minute ferry crossing to Barra on the northern bank of the River Gambia. Ferry times can be erratic and are often very crowded!

After meeting on the other side with the 4WD truck and a quick breakfast stop, the journey continues to the border with Senegal where you will have your passport checked and stamped before continuing through the Senegalese countryside to the village of Baidikout. A 30-45 minute boat trip brings us to the island of Jinnack and then after 30 minute walk across the island, we reach a deserted beach where a picnic lunch is waiting.

After lunch there is time to relax and swim before setting back across the island by foot to catch the boat for the return journey.

Do not forget your passport, non EU passport holders will require a visa which must be applied for three days before the trip.

Abuko Nature Reserve

This is the principal nature reserve in The Gambia, situated approximately 15 kilometres from the hotel area.

Abuko is neither a zoo or a game reserve but an area of 180 acres which places equal emphasis on the protection and conservation of nature as a whole.

It is a little bit jungle in the middle of a savannah. A walk through the area takes approximately two and a half hours giving a chance to see up to 250 species of bird plus crocodiles, monkeys and monitor lizards.

An animal orphanage is to be found within the reserve with enclosures for hyenas, antelopes and monkeys. There is also a café to grab a drink and relax.

Creek Fishing

Fishing in the tributaries of the River Gambia. The pirogues have spacious open decks which are ideal for fishing and also has a 30 foot sunshade. Tackle and bait is supplied, using light 6 foot spinning rods and fixed spool reels you can expect to catch fish up to 30lbs.

There is plenty of help for everyone and is therefore ideal for beginners as well as experienced anglers, even spectators are welcome to enjoy the day.

Senegal Adventure

A 2 day adventure to Senegal with the option to visit the Sine Saloum National Park.

Day 1 – take a ferry trip across the River Gambia to reach Senegal. A 4 wheel drive journey will take you through the Senegalese bush seeing the various types of monkeys and the fantastic bird life that lives in this area, visiting a couple of Senegalese villages along the way. We stop at an estimated 800 year old Baobab tree which is believed to have magical and healing powers, and finish the ride at Domaine Les Paletuviers Hotel Camp on the edge of the National Park.

Day 2 Chose from either

- A relaxing day by the pool or
- One of the interesting options offered by the hotel payable locally or
- Visit the Reserve de Fathala where giraffes, rhinos, antelopes, bush pig, savanna buffalo reside along with many colourful tropical birds, monkeys and baboons.

Lunch is taken at the Domaine Les Paletuviers Hotel Camp and then the return journey begins.

Remember to bring your passports and to check beforehand regarding visas, if you are a non EU passport holder.

Welcome to the Gambia

Welcome to the Kairaba Hotel

Room Service Menu

Soups

Potato and Leek Soup D100
With garlic croutons and parmesan cheese

Tomato and Cream Soup D100 *
With garlic croutons and melted mozzarella cheese

Sandwiches

Club Sandwich D200 *
White toast, tomato, lettuce, mayo, fried egg and your
Choice of turkey, ham or grilled chicken breast, or cooked
Ham served with French fries

Ciabatta with Shrimps D250
Ciabatta bread with shrimps in American sauce and green
Onions, served with pickled cucumbers, white onions, tomatoes
And French fries

Steak Sandwich D165 *
Minute steak sandwich with onions, mushrooms and
Melted jack cheese with French fries

Salads

Garden Salad D200 *
Garden greens, tomatoes, cucumbers, olives, shredded
Carrots and house croutons with blue cheese or thousand
Island dressing

Seafood Mixed Salad D130
Green peppers, chilli, garlic, minced onions, tomato and
Cucumbers with assorted steamed seafood in oil and sweet
Vinegar

Marinated Zucchini and Chicken D130
Marinated zucchini and grilled chicken cubes with Caesar
Dressing, greens and house croutons

All Day Dining

Cheese Platter D150 *
Four types of assorted cheeses with pickled onions, cucumbers
And marinated olives

Two Eggs D125
Spanish omelette with cheese, peppers, mushrooms and
Minced onions with grilled tomatoes and French fries

Fish and Chips D300
Battered mini fish steaks deep fried, served with tarter sauce
And potato wedges

Beef Fillet D500
Grilled with garden vegetables in peppercorn sauce with
Potato wedges

Chicken Yassa D260
Local chicken speciliaty smothered in stewed onions and
Served with saffron rice

<i>Lamb Chops</i> Grilled double bone cut lamb chops with soya garlic sauce With garden vegetables and potato wedges	D250
<i>Cayenne Chicken Wings</i> Breaded Cayenne chicken wings with pickled cucumber and Blue cheese	D200 *
<i>Fettuccine with grilled Chicken and Mushrooms</i> Sauteed fettuccine and pasta with grilled chicken and Mushrooms in pesto cream sauce	D200
<i>Spaghetti Carbonara</i> Spaghetti pasta with pancetta ham and parmesan cream sauce	D125
Desserts	
<i>Cheesecake</i> Baked with forest berry sauce	D125
<i>Exotic Fresh Fruit</i> Fresh fruit platter	D125
<i>Coffee Mousse</i> Mousse in a chocolate box	D155
<i>Baked Apple</i> Apple balls in puff pastry with marzipan and cinnamon and Vanilla sauce	D200
<i>Double Devil Ice Cream</i> Two scoops of ice cream, chocolate and vanilla with dry nuts	D275

For Room Service please call extension 1600 between the hours of 07.00 – 23.00.

Between 23.00 and 07.00 please dial the reception on 1500 to place your order.

Please note that there is a D30 cover charge for only breakfast in the room.

*Items marked with a * indicates items which are served between the hours of 24.00 and 07.00*

On all items 15% government tax will be added.

Beverages

Soft Drinks

Diet Coke	D80
Malta	D50
Vimto	D45
All other soft drinks	D45

White Wine

<i>Chardonnay</i>	D730
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KWV South African
Ripe fruit and oak flavours integrating well with complex citrus, peach, pear and wood flavours that add depth and dimension. Good with highly flavoured fish and shellfish dishes, roast chicken and veal.

<i>Blanc de Blanco</i>	D650
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Cuvee Prestige
Blanco literally means 'white of whites' made from 100% Chardonnay grapes. Excellent with white meat, pasta and seafood dishes.

<i>Liebfraumilch</i>	D650
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Rittman
A German wine, charming semi dry, good aperitif or with desserts

<i>Robert's Rock</i>	D730
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Chenin Blanc/Chardonnay
This wine has a lively greenish tint. An enticing nose with guava scents, giving way to tropical aromas and a subtle vanilla finish, which leaves a lingering complex taste. Enjoy with barbequed fish, chicken, salads and lightly flavoured vegetable dishes.

Red Wine

<i>Tinta Barocca</i>	D650
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Swartland Winery
From South Africa this traditional port-making grape is light smooth and fruity. Dry finish and easy drinking.

<i>Pinotage 2003</i>	D950
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Gordons Bay
A smooth and rich wine with velvety tannins and a blackcurrant bouquet. Excellent with meat, pasta and cheese.

<i>Cabernet/Merlot</i>	D920
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Carta Vieja
An elegant wine from Chile, packed full with the aromas of caramel, vanilla and sweet wood. Fresh and lasting aftertaste, with a mild character.

<i>Merlot</i>	D630
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Santiano
One of the most intensively cultivated districts and is therefore its' most famous wine appellation. A fruity luscious wine with a velvety quality.

<i>Cabernet Sauvignon/Merlot</i>	D750
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Roberts Rock

A medium bodied cabernet/merlot blend, very well structured with pleasant, juicy cherry fruitiness and earthiness in the background. It's a lively wine with a well-balanced tannic structure which results in a soft, easy drinking wine, ready to enjoy now. Best served with a wide range of healthy foods and Italian dishes in particular.

Rose Wine

Cote de Provence, France

A fruity, mild rose which is good with just about anything

D850

Leeuwenberg

Outstanding value, does not detract from the wonderful bouquet of our house rose. Light slightly and full of flavour, truly a wine to savour.

D600

Rose d'Anju

Luis de Bru, France

A real summer wine with a charming flavour.

D710

Champagne and Sparkling Wines

Regent Sparkling Wine

A refreshing white sparkling wine, good value, but that's not shown in the taste, which is crystal clear and straight to the point!

D770

Moet & Chandon

The largest champagne house by a mile. The majority of the champagne is produced from the Pinot Noir grape. The colour is white/yellow and the bubbles are excellent.

D4600

Hot Drinks

Thermos of Coffee

D120

Thermos of Tea

D120

Thermos of Hot Chocolate

D210

Please request our extensive Wine List should this list not satisfy your needs.

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