

## Motor Dakar - Senegal's Coast

**First night:** Transfer to Hotel Warung, a new, French owned hotel on the N'Gor beach, only 10 minutes from Dakar airport. The hotel has simple, beautifully decorated rooms with en suite bathrooms, a swimming pool, restaurant and bar on a terrace overlooking the ocean. Several watersports are on offer.

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**Day 1:** Leaving the hotel early in the morning, we kit up at the Motor Dakar base in Yoff Layenne and set off towards the south-east on off road tracks. We travel along fast mud tracks, past little villages, stopping at midday for a picnic lunch. One of the day's highlights is the ride through the huge baobab 'fields'. This tree is one of the symbols of Senegal and during the rainy season its branches are covered in large clusters of white flowers. An impressive sight, as we ride past thousands of trees on any one of hundreds of little tracks. Our destination for the first night is the little fishing village of Toubab Dialao, on the 'Petite Cote' to the south of Dakar.

**Accommodation:** Sobo-Bade: A lovely little hotel built just above a long, clean beach in beautiful gardens. The hotel was constructed using all local materials and the the gardens contain sculptures done by the owner (and designer) of the hotel. Each of the rooms is individually decorated and some have direct access to the beach. The food in the restaurant is excellent and it is a wonderful place to relax after a hard day's ride.

**Distance covered:** Between 200kms and 300kms, depending on the group.

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**Day 2:** Our destination today is arguably one of the most beautiful parts of Senegal; the Pointe Sangomar National Park, in the Siné- Saloum delta. The Sangomar peninsula protects the delta from the Atlantic ocean although it has been known to be washed away by the huge Atlantic rollers. The area is a maze of mangrove creeks and forested islands and is excellent for wildlife viewing. We wind our way here along inland tracks and down the coast.

**Accommodation:** Palmarin: A simple campment on a sandy beach under the palm trees. Guests sleep in local-style thatched bungalows. The camp is run by a local manager on behalf of the villagers and all profits go to local projects such as schools or health centres.

**Distance:** Approximately 200 kms off-road.

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**Day 3:** We set off early this morning for the famous Lac Rose, to the north of Dakar. Famous, that is, for followers of the Paris-Dakar as the final stage of the race traditionally takes place here. We have lunch at the rustic and friendly Bonoba Café on the shore of this wonderful pink lake and then spend the afternoon riding the bikes in the dunes. For many riders, this will be the first time they have ridden on sand in these conditions and our experienced guide offers tuition and guidance. Those who don't wish to ride in the dunes can visit Niaga-Peul, where the locals collect the salt from the lake. Horse riding is also available.

**Accommodation:** Bonoba Café: In this beautiful and relaxed setting, the guests eat dinner by the light of oil lamps and candles and spend the night in cane huts. There are also open-air showers.

Distance covered:

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**Day 4:** Today, we take advantage of the low tide to head north up the beach to St. Louis. This is an easy but spectacular ride up the coast along this 'road' which disappears at high tide. We pass fishing villages and locals with their horse and carts and stop for a picnic lunch on the beach, watching the Atlantic Ocean. After a final exhilarating and beautiful stretch on sand tracks through the pine trees, we return briefly to the road to reach St. Louis. Our destination for tonight is the Langue de Barbarie on the far side of the city.

**Accommodation:** Hotel Mermoz: A comfortable hotel set in attractive sandy grounds next to the beach. With a swimming pool, restaurant and bar, the hotel is the ideal place to relax.

**Distance covered:** Approximately 160 kms on hard sand, an hour on soft sand in the pine forest and 20 kms by road.

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**Day 5:** There are various alternatives for the morning. We can visit the national park by pirogue, laze by the pool, go for a walk along the beach or even go horse riding. After lunch we visit the city of St. Louis. The historical centre is separated from the mainland and the Langue de Barbarie by two bridges. The entrance to the city from the mainland is made over the impressive iron bridge originally designed by Eiffel to go over the river Danube. With its colonial architecture, fabulous setting and relaxed atmosphere St. Louis is one of the most attractive towns in Senegal for many visitors. The city was the old French capital and is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. After wandering around the town, we can stop for coffee at the old Hotel de la Poste, where the first pilots flying the postal service to Africa from France used to stay.

**Accommodation:** As above

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**Day 6:** We head back towards Dakar off road. At midday, we meet the support vehicle for a picnic lunch and then ride through a fantastic range of dunes before reaching the city in the early evening. After leaving the bikes and equipment at the Motordakar base, you'll spend the last night at the Hotel Warung.

**Accommodation:** Hotel Warung

**Distance:** Approximately 250 kms off road.

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**Day 7:** The last day can be spent at the beach, or surfing/ windsurfing. Alternatively, you can visit one of Dakar's markets in the morning to do some shopping and then eat at one of the restaurants at the Pointe des Almadies (the westernmost point of Africa). Some people may wish to visit Gorée Island. The island used to be one of the main embarcation points for the slave trade and visitors can see the original slave house, as well as various museums and galleries. The island has a mediterranean feel, with colonial style houses covered with bougainvillea, wrought iron balconies and narrow streets.

**Transfer to airport**