

DISCOVERING ANGOLA - AFRICA'S WELL-KEPT SECRET



Angola may have a blurry reputation of a country not well equipped for tourists, however, it is a wonderful destination which for those who do not require luxury and enjoy challenging travels will be a treasure found.

Angola is one of those destinations that not many travel agencies would even put on their list. The troubled past is still too painful and the civil war seems to have only ended yesterday, even though it has been 7 years since piece was reestablished. It would be a lie to say it is a perfectly safe destination which is ready to welcome travelers; however, it is unfair to dismiss the idea entirely. Angola is a charming country with a lot of passion and color and for anyone willing to overcome a bit of a challenge it is a great place to visit.

Angola was the domain of the Portuguese and while this language is widely spoken here, finding anyone who speaks English is rather problematic. **Having a local guide or anyone knowledgeable of local customs and culture is also highly advised.** However, Angolans are very friendly, passionate and like many of their African neighbours, they love music. The nightlife is marvelous and the capital of **Luanda** turns to a pulsating and energetic metropolis upon nightfall. Delicious food with no traces of modern-day fast food chains comes as a precious and very welcome change from traveling anywhere else. The western investors have not yet decided to take Angola over and the honest yet unspoilt culture is bewitching. So is, however, the diverse topography. The natural riches are plentiful and even though the **infrastructure is in grave need of repair and recreation**, traveling to any of local national parks is a must. **Cameia, Cangandala or Iona National Parks** are swarming with wildlife and are well worth exploring.

Also, in 2010, Angola will be hosting a major football tournament - the **African Cup of Nations**. The country is preparing for an overload of football fans and thus by next year, more accommodation opportunities will arise.

Safety issues are not to be taken lightly, though. Any visitor should be careful and come well informed about the local peculiarities. Wondering the streets alone at night is clearly not the best idea; taking pictures of the police or any other military related objects is very risky as well. On the other hand, the nation is happy to be at peace and the warm atmosphere will come as a reward for anyone who dares to visit.

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