



EcoTur – Safaris – Angola

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Descubra Angola conosco
Discover Angola with us

Massangano & Muxima "the past relived"

(2 Day tour) – For tour dates and pricing please contact us.

Includes – transport in fully equipped air conditioned 4x4 vehicles (satellite phone, twin spares, 1st aid kits etc.) or Minivans with English / Portuguese speaking driver guides, drinks and snacks in car, activities as shown, park fees and tolls where indicated. Meals included - Day 1. Picnic Lunch and Dinner. Day 2. Breakfast, lunch. Accommodation on a sharing basis (2 people per room) in basic hotel in Muxima.

Day One - We start the first day by travelling east from Luanda through Catete to Massangano which is some 175km from Luanda and about 25kms before Dondo (the highest navigable point of the Kwanza River). En route we will stop for a coffee break at a favourite village of ours (feel free to bring unwanted clothing or toys for the kids there) Massangano is located, close to the confluence of the Lucala and Kwanza Rivers. We will visit the impressive ruins of what was previously the temporary capital of Angola, have a picnic lunch there (or alternatively visit Dondo and have lunch in a restaurant there) and in the afternoon make our way back west along and across the Kwanza River at the impressive new bridge in Cabala to the south bank at Muxima. That night we will dine and sleep at a basic but clean and equipped hotel in Muxima.

Massangano's history goes back to the days of the caravels, when the first Portuguese sailed to Angola. The navigator and founder of Luanda city (1575), Paulo Dias de Novais, upon arriving at Massangano for the first time, met a local man pounding corn. Paulo Dias asked the man the name of the place and the local answered him "massa n'gana" ("corn sir!"). Paulo Dias naturally thought that the place was called Massangano, the name remains until today.



The Fortress



Main entry inside fort



Crest

The name of the place then was in fact N'Guimbi ya Songo (Songo City), where two great Angolan rivers, the Kwanza and Lucala meet each other. The Lucala River is famous for giving us the 3rd largest waterfalls in Africa (Kalandula). The Kwanza is renowned as being the longest Angolan river at 960kms also giving its name to the currency of Angola.



Kwanza River at Massangano



Church "Our Lady Victoria" (pre-restoration)



Administration building

Massangano was founded by Paulo Dias de Novais in 1582. The fortress at Massangano was built in 1583 and is one of the oldest in Angola. The city was used as a base for the Portuguese during their expeditions to the interior of the country to capture slaves. In the 17th century it became the temporary capital of Angola when the Dutch occupied Luanda from 1641 to 1648, forcing the Portuguese up the Kwanza River. Paulo Dias de Novais died in 1589, was laid to rest in Massangano and his tomb is still here, although his ashes were reputedly later moved (perhaps to the "Jesus Church" in the Cidade Alta in Luanda?).

The fortress at the site was rebuilt in the 17th century and partially restored in the 1940s. The adjacent church of Our Lady of Victoria (Nossa Senhora da Victoria) was built at the same time as the fort and was the first church to be built outside Luanda. It served as the cathedral during the Dutch occupation of Luanda, and there are still pilgrimages there to this very day. Previously, slaves were baptized here before being sent out off to Luanda and thence to the Americas. It has very recently been restored.



Tomb of Paulo Dias de Novais Tomb



Cross at slave market square



Some of today's Massangano residents

Day Two – In Muxima, after breakfast, we are free to spend a few hours exploring this fascinating, spiritually and religiously significant area often compared to Lourdes. For those of interest in birds it is nearby Muxima that one can find several unusual species including the endemic “Grey Striped Francolin”. Somewhat similarly to Massangano, Muxima is also located on the banks of the river Kwanza (although this time on the south bank). It also boasts an impressive fort affording beautiful views of the river and famous “Nossa Senhora da Muxima” church below founded in 1599 (?) and reputedly set on fire by the Dutch invaders in 1641 (and rebuilt between 1641 and 1648).



The Church at Muxima on the Kwanza River



Our overnight stop



In the evening we will dine here !



Our Lady of Muxima Church

Muxima is in fact technically located inside Kissama National Park and it is either through the park that we will leave Muxima, travelling west on the new road towards the coast. Or, alternatively depending on time, we will return to Luanda via Catete and Viana (much shorter). We will take lunch before returning to Luanda.

IMPORTANT NOTE – IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL TOUR MEMBERS TO ENSURE THAT THEY BRING WITH THEM THEIR UP TO DATE AND VALID I.D DOCUMENTATION SHOWING THEY HAVE LEGAL RIGHT OF ABODE IN ANGOLA. PREFERABLY ORIGINAL DOCS SHOULD BE BROUGHT, ANY PHOTO COPIES MUST BE NOTARISED. ANY RESULTANT FINES (TO THE INDIVIDUAL CONCERNED, ECO-TUR OR IT'S STAFF) REGARDING TRANSGRESSIONS WILL BE TO THE INDIVIDUAL'S ACCOUNT.