



Information for Visitors to Ghana

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1. Introduction

This document is intended as an informal aid to visitors from outside of Ghana.

2. Before Arrival

2.1 Vaccinations, etc.

Vaccinations

It is recommended that you visit a travel clinic at least 6 weeks before your travel date to begin immunizations and account for any shot series that may be required. You are required to bring documentation of your immunization record to the travel clinic. The travel clinic staff will discuss all of the immunizations suggested, as well as any health risks that may be present in Ghana. *Please note that you will be required to present a certificate of vaccination against yellow fever before you are granted entry to Ghana.*

<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/clinician/none/ghana> (General health info for Ghana)

<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/find-clinic/> (Travel clinics in your area)

Yellow Fever

According to the CDC, yellow fever is a mosquito-borne viral disease present in Africa and South America. The infection ranges from mild to severe, and symptoms include fever, nausea, vomiting, headache, abdominal and muscle pains. Ghana requires all travelers to be immunized against yellow fever before entering the country.

Malaria

Malaria is a real threat in Ghana. Ghanaians and long-term residents appear fairly casual about it (they seem to think of it as Westerners think of the flu), but travelers are advised to take a malaria prophylactic. Most regimens require taking pills before, during, and after your time in Ghana. There are several options for strains of malaria common in Ghana. Talk to your doctor to determine which is right for you.

Since malaria is transmitted primarily via mosquito bites, you are also encouraged to bring insect repellent. Those containing DEET are recommended. Permethrin is a product in which clothing can be soaked; after drying, it will act as an effective insect repellent, even after several washes. You will still need to cover exposed skin with DEET.

If you should contract malaria (general tiredness, nausea, dizziness, chills), you should go see a doctor right away. Malaria is easily curable in its early stages, but untreated, it can lead to death.

Diarrhea

You may come down with “traveler’s diarrhea” if you drink any contaminated water. The best way to prevent this is to come prepared with Immodium and an antibiotic. You should drink only bottled water, and avoid ice made with tap water, while in Ghana. Travelers can also experience sickness due to improperly washed foods. A good rule of thumb is to avoid unwashed fruits and vegetables without a removable peel, except in trusted restaurants.

Sunblock

Ghana is only a few degrees north of the equator, so the sun is especially strong. Sunblock is highly recommended for those with light skin. Sunblock is difficult to find in Ghana, so you are encouraged to bring a supply from home. If you are using both sunblock and insect repellent, apply insect repellent second.

Water Purifiers

The tap water in Accra is not considered potable (nor suitable for brushing your teeth) for non-residents, with contamination by biological pathogens being the primary worry. On this trip you will have access to bottled water and should use it at all times. Where bottled water is not available, you should boil water, use a water filter, or use water purifying tablets or iodine.

2.2 Visa

Ashesi staff will send a letter of invitation from the university to be used on your visa application as soon as your trip is confirmed. *Please note that your passport must be valid for at least six months from your return to the US in order to obtain a visa for travel to Ghana.*

The visa application process can take several weeks (3-5 days if you use FedEx/UPS/DHL), during which time *you will not have your passport*. A single-entry visa will be valid for one visit within 90 days of the visa issue date. Ashesi recommends going through the [Ghanaian consulate in Houston](#) for rush visa service. The visa itself comes in the form of a sticker attached to a page in your passport.

2.3 Cell Phones

During our time in Ghana, we will be staying at hotels in Accra and Elmina. Both will have reliable WIFI, and guests have had great success using Skype, WhatsApp, or Facebook Messenger to communicate with family back home during the trip. Ashesi staff will be with the group at all times while in Ghana and will have cell phones for emergency use. Ashesi will *not* be setting time aside on our itinerary for the procurement of SIM cards. Please let us know if you will require full use of a cell phone during the trip and do not have an international data plan.

2.4 What to Pack

Sample packing list:

- Malaria prophylactic
- Mosquito repellent
- University information and hotel address (for use on arrival forms at airport)
- Toiletries and hygiene products (most can be bought cheaply in Ghana, but it can be difficult to find preferred brands of soap and shampoo)
- Underwear and socks (covering ankles to protect against mosquitos)
- A few dress shirts or blouses
- A few T-shirts
- A few pairs of trousers (very lightweight material; jeans are too warm and not recommended), or skirts for women
- A few pairs of shorts

- 1 swimsuit and beach towel
- Sneakers
- Reasonably nice shoes
- Sturdy sandals (Texas, Birkenstocks, etc.)
- Camera
- Voltage converter (see Section 4.6 for details)

Ghanaians tend to dress to what Americans would refer to as a “business casual” standard in their day-to-day life, but travelers need not feel obliged to adhere to this standard of dress. Ghanaian women wear both traditional and Western clothing. Modest shorts, skirts, and t-shirts are fine for female travelers.

2.5 Books on Ghana

Several excellent fiction and nonfiction books on Ghana can be purchased in stores or online. They include:

- [Homegoing](#) – this novel by Yaa Gyasi won a National Book Foundation award in 2017.
- [My First Coup d’Etat: And Other True Stories from the Lost Decades of Africa](#) – an autobiographical account of the youth of John Mahama, former President of Ghana.
- [Bright Lights, No City](#) – a fun read by Max Alexander.
- [Wife of the Gods](#) – the first in a series of Accra-based mystery novels by Kwei Quartey.
- [Cloth Girl](#) – one of several historical fiction novels by Marilyn Heward Mills.
- [Learning How to Play to Win: What has 50 Years of Independence Brought Ghana?](#) – this book on Ghana’s politics and culture was written by a former Ashesi professor, Dr. Nana Apt.
- [The White Man’s Burden: Why the West’s Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done So Much Ill and So Little Good](#) – William Easterly, the noted economist who authored this book, visited Ashesi and included the university as a case study.

2.6 Ghanaian Languages

English is the official language of Ghana, and there is no practical need to learn anything else. Everyone in Ghana speaks at least as much English as is required in their occupation; many speak English as effectively as a first language.

If you’re interested, however, there are several languages spoken in and around Accra. Nearly half of the country speaks one of the Akan dialects as a first language (and others speak them as a second or third language). Of these, Twi (pronounced “chwee”) is probably the most common. Fante is another Akan dialect (spoken by Ashesi founder Patrick Awuah). Ewe (pronounced “eh veh”) is spoken by a few members of the staff. Ga is another language that is common in Accra.

Books/tapes on these languages are difficult to find, but the Internet is a good source.

Twi

Pimsleur tapes – 5 tapes, about 45 minutes each. Very basic, but good for learning greetings and pronunciation.

Dolphyne, Florence Abena. *A Comprehensive Course in Twi (Asante) for the Non-Twi Learner*.

Kotey, Paul. *Hippocrene Concise Dictionary for Twi-English English-Twi*.

Ewe and Ga

Resources are rare outside of Ghana. Within Ghana, a few bookstores carry Ga dictionaries.

2.7 Money

It's virtually impossible to get Ghanaian cedis (pronounced "see-dees") outside of Ghana, and there's no need. We advise that guests utilize the ATM at our hotel. If needed, you can convert major currencies into cedis at the airport (right near the baggage claim carousel) and at various "forex bureaus" and banks in town. Almost all transactions in Ghana are conducted with cash, so you will want to change some of your money into local currency upon arriving at the airport.

3. Ashesi University

3.1 Contact Information

Addresses

The mailing address (for letters) at Ashesi is:

Jane Doe
Ashesi University College
1 University Avenue, Berekuso
PMB CT3 Cantonments
Accra, GHANA

Phone Numbers

+233.30.2610330 (from within Ghana: 0302.610330)

+233.30.2974980 (from within Ghana: 0302.974980)

All numbers reach the Ashesi receptionist, who will transfer calls to individual offices.

4. Accra / Ghana

This is a short introduction to living and traveling in Ghana, intended for travelers from outside of West Africa. For more details, a travel guide is recommended.

4.1 Personal Safety

Ghana is a safe place for foreigners. You should follow all the commonsense practices of tourists and city dwellers (don't flash large amounts of cash in public, don't walk alone through dark alleys at night, pay attention to your surroundings, keep personal items on your person at all times,

etc.). But unlike other countries where tourists are routinely pickpocketed, mugged, or even assaulted, Ghana is very safe.

Having said that, as a foreigner (especially if you aren't as dark-skinned as Ghanaians), you are immediately identified with wealth. Thus, there are a few things you should watch out for.

Street merchants may be aggressive and persistent in their attempt to sell you things. Children may descend on you at tourist attractions, in the hopes of getting some change. In most cases a firm "no" is all that is required; none of these people pose any real danger, although at first their approach can be alarming. There are "legitimate" beggars (many of whom are maimed or deformed) who may also approach you. They also pose little danger, and could probably use a little change.

Second, never leave valuable (and even semi-valuable) items unattended or in plain sight in vehicles. Muggings are rare, but thefts do occur. Apply the same standards you would in New York City.

Third, although few people will rob you physically, merchants and taxi drivers will automatically hike prices for foreigners. Often, even this more expensive price is still very reasonable. But if you're the kind of person who doesn't like to be cheated on principle, it's wise to do some research beforehand and then to bargain hard. Even then, don't expect to be able to pay the Ghanaian price.

Should you require emergency assistance, help can be contacted at the following numbers:

- Ambulance: 193
- Police: 191

A list of hospitals, clinics, and police stations in Accra can be found in Appendix I.

4.2 Cost of Living

The cost of labor and the cost of essential goods are low in Ghana compared with similar items in the United States. As of March 2018, the exchange rate between dollars and cedis is 1 USD to 4.46 GHC. Non-essential goods, however, can cost as much or slightly more than what they would cost elsewhere. Below is a list of the cost of typical goods and services.

Item	Cost in cedis Updated 2018
Bottled water (1 liter)	1 GHC
Coconut juice (in a coconut)	2 GHS
5 Bananas	2 GHC
3 Oranges	1 GHC
Lunch at the Ashesi canteen	10 GHC
Mid-range restaurant meal	25 GHC
African button-down shirt (non-designer)	70 – 200 GHC
Handkerchief	2 GHC

4.3 Food and Dining

Food in Ghana is distinguished by the variety of regional and tribal cultures throughout the country. Many of Ghana's most popular foods are traditional dishes which reflect the country's long history and agriculture. In general, dishes share a common mix of staple carbohydrates such as rice, millet and maize, and are served with seasoned stews and sauces. Despite the starchy staples, food is rarely bland in Ghana. Many dishes are spicy. Ghanaians love using spices such as cinnamon and hot red peppers. (Chilies and red peppers are the fifth most important agricultural product for Ghana's farmers in terms of revenue.) Local Ghanaian foods include the following:

- Banku (fermented corn and cassava dough) and Tilapia
- Kenkey (fermented corn dough)
- Fufu (Pounded Cassava)
- Omo-tuo (Mashed rice rolled into balls)
- Jollof Rice (Rice cooked with tomatoes, spices, and sometimes meat boiled together)
- Waakye (Rice and beans)

Imported American goods and foods can be bought at certain supermarkets across Ghana, but due to importation costs and currency fluctuations these items are usually sold at two to three times the normal American price.

Restaurants of every type and nationality can be found in Accra. A list is included in Appendix II.

4.4 Transportation

The easiest way to get around Accra on your own is to go by chartered taxis. Taxis will honk at you if they think you might be a potential fare. You should determine the price *before* you get in the taxi. The price will depend on things such as the age of the taxi driver (younger drivers will ask for more), the distance traveled, the time of day (rush hour and late night are more expensive), and the degree to which you bargain. At first, the best thing is to ask for advice before taking a ride; eventually, you'll be able to guess a reasonable fare.

The charter service is called "drop," in contrast to the shared taxi system, whereby a taxi runs a set route and picks up and drops off passengers on the way. These are considerably less expensive, but of course, you will not be taken door to door.

Finally, the cheapest alternative is to take the tro-tros. These are usually mini-vans which transport 12-15 people. Tro-tros take set routes, dropping off and picking up passengers along the way. They have set prices; you are unlikely to be cheated, but you also can't bargain.

Uber is also available in Ghana.

4.5 Culture, Customs, and Etiquette

The Ghanaian culture places much emphasis on hospitality, formality and good manners. When addressing people (especially elders) it is appropriate to use titles such as Sir, Madam, Mr., Mrs., Professor, or Doctor. Referring to people by their title is an important part of showing respect in Ghana. Having a respectful manner is a must, especially when interacting with elders.

In Ghanaian culture, your left hand is considered your 'toilet hand.' Always use your right hand to give and receive items and to eat. It is common practice to give money with your right hand while

at the same time receiving your purchase with the same hand. While Ghanaians do not expect foreigners to be familiar with this protocol, it is advisable to keep it in the back of your mind.

Tipping is generally expected and always appreciated. Workers such as hotel cleaners, taxi drivers, and restaurant servers should be tipped to show appreciation for good service.

Bartering and Bargaining

With the exception of goods sold in supermarkets, high-end shops, hotels, and restaurants, nothing in Ghana has a set price and travelers are encouraged to bargain.

4.6 Electronics and Appliances

The electrical system in Ghana is less than reliable and there are often power surges and power outages. Ashesi is equipped with an external generator that should keep interruptions to a minimum, but to keep everything in running order please adhere to the following guidelines:

- Ghana uses 220V power. Foreign electrical appliances require a “step down” converter in order to be used. If you have electrical appliances from the United States set to take 110volts, do not plug them in without a power converter.
- Turn off all lights and electrical devices (fans, TV, toaster) when you leave a room.

To protect against power surges, please turn all sockets off when you are not using them (the top of the switch should be in).

4.7 Links to Helpful Websites

- Ghanaian news site: www.ghanaweb.com
- General facts and figures on Ghana in the CIA’s World Factbook: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gh.html>
- Lonely Planet travelers’ guide website: <https://www.lonelyplanet.com/ghana>
- www.accraexpat.com/events
- <http://www.accrawedey.city>
- <http://www.ghana.travel>

Appendix I: Hospitals, Clinics, Police Stations

Korle Bu Teaching Hospital

Guggisberg Avenue
Accra
+233(0)302 674 072

37 Military Hospital

near 37 circle, Liberation Avenue Accra
+233 (0)302 769 667

Total House Clinic

(Near Cedi House)
43 Liberia Road
Adabraka
Accra
+233 (0)24 463 1775
+233 (0)54 550 7913
www.totalhouseclinic.com

Total House Mall Clinic

The Health Lane
A&C Mall
Jungle Road
East Legon
Accra
+233(0)244 631775

Akai House Clinic

Fourth Circular Road Cantonments
Accra
+233 (0)302 763821

Lister Hospital

Airport Hills
Off the Spintex Road
Accra
+233 (0)303 409 030
www.listerhospital.com.gh

Nyaho Medical Centre

35 Aviation Road
Airport Residential Area
Accra

Appendix II: Restaurants & Bars

African Restaurants

Azmera Restaurant

No 9 Sir Arko Korsah Road
Roman Ridge Shopping Arcade,
Accra
+233 (0)302 770 606
+233 (0)26 802 9966

Afrikiko

Liberation Road,
Accra
+233 (0)302 229997
www.afrikikoleisurecentre.com

Buka African Restaurant

10th Lane
Osu
Accra
+233 (0)302 782 953
+233 (0)24 484 2464
www.thebukarestaurant.com

805

3 Third Close
Off Volta Street
Airport Residential Area
Accra
+233 (0)200 805 805
+233 (0)201 805 805

Shaka Zulu

Olusegun Obasanjo Way
Roman Ridge
Accra
+233 (0)201 404 164

Gold Coast Restaurant

Near Nyaho Clinic
Airport Residential Area
Accra
+233 (0)302 799 834

Chinese Restaurants

Imperial Peking

At Granada Hotel, Independence Avenue
(near the Tetteh Quarshie Circle)
Airport Residential
Accra
+233 (0)302 761 299
Behind Koala Supermarket

Airport Residential
Accra

Noble House – Accra & Kumasi

Next to Presbyterian Church, Osu, Accra;
near American House
East Legon, Accra
+233 (0)30293 0010
+233 (0)54 2347597

Dynasty

On the corner of Oxford St and 5th Lane
Osu
Accra
+233 (0)302 775496

French Restaurants

Bread & Wine

13th Lane
off Cantonments Road (Oxford Street)
Osu
Accra
+233 (0)57 651 9799

La Chaumiere

215 Liberation Road
(Opposite British Airways and Woolworths)
Airport Residential Area
Accra
+233 (0)302 772 408
+233 (0)244 802 013

Le Must

Orphan Crescent
North Labone
Accra
+233 (0)302 785731

Le Tandem

6 Mankralo Street
East Cantonments
Accra
+233 (0)302 762959

Italian Restaurants

Il Cavaliere Pazzo

First floor of Polo Club House
Airport
Accra
+233 (0)302 823 131

Osteria Michaelangelo

3 Nortei Ababio Loop
Airport Residential
Accra
+233 (0)302 762 792
+233 (0)302 762 791

Mamma Mia

8th Lane
Osu
Accra
+233 (0)54 922 0993

Oriental & Japanese Restaurants

Soho

Marina Mall Airport-By-Pass Road
Airport City
+233 (0)24 288 8884

Monsoon

41 Oxford Street (above the Osu food court)
Osu
Accra
+233 (0)30 2782307

Santoku

Villagio Vista apartment complex
Opposite the African Regent Hotel
+233 (0)54 4311511
www.santoku-restaurant.com

Thai Island

(Located in the Afrikiko Complex behind
Cafe Dez Amis)
Independence Ave, near Flagstaff House
+233 (0)24 9893016

Indian Restaurants

Veda

42 Spintex Road
Accra
+233 (0)54 5300 799
www.vedaghana.com

Heritage Indian Restaurant

Off Salem Road, near Papaye
Accra
+233 (0)302 785 252

Fast Food

Barcelos

Accra Mall food court
Accra
+233 (0)302 823 089

5th Lane, Osu
(Behind Frankie's)
Accra
+233 (0)302 939045

Chicken Republic

Ring Road Central
(Opposite Busy Internet)
Accra
+233 (0)302 233 869

Spintex Rd

Accra
+233 (0)302 81709
www.chicken-republic.com

Frankie's

Oxford Street
Osu
Accra
+233 (0)30 277 3567
+233 (0)24 418 8444

Accra Mall food court

Accra
+233 (0)24 957 0000
www.frankiesghana.com

Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC)

Oxford Street (corner of 17th Lane) Osu;
North Industrial Area;
Community 18 Junction,
Tema
Spintex Rd;
Lagos Avenue

East Legon

Marina Mall
Airport City

Papaye

Oxford Street
Osu
Accra
+233(0)302 773754

Spintex Road

Accra
+233 (0)302 810990

Pizza Inn

Osu Food Court
Oxford Street
Osu

Food Court
Shell Petrol Station
Airport
Accra

Peter Pan

Dzorwulu
Accra
A&C Shopping Mall
East Legon
Accra

Zongo Junction
Madina
Accra

Starbites

Jungle Road
East Legon
Accra
+233 (0)202 266 200
www.starbitesgh.com

Next to Nyaho Clinic
Airport Residential Area
Accra
+233 (0)202 266 203

Contemporary Cuisine**Coco Lounge**

Icon House
Stanbic Heights,
Airport City
Accra
+233 (0)244 222 202

Urban Grill

Icon House
Stanbic Heights,
Airport City
Accra
+233 (0)244 222 202

Yasmina Lebanese Cuisine

Marina Mall Airport-
By-Pass Road
Airport City

Accra
+233 (0)242 888884

Burger and Relish

Corner of 14th Lane
Osu
Accra
+233 (0)54 0121 356

Bakeries, Bistros and Cafes**Café De Paris**

18/6 Collins Avenue
Sekondi-Takoradi
+233 (0)313 1936

DCAFE (Formerly Deli France)

3rd Floor
Marina Mall
Airport City
Accra

Volta Street
Airport Residential Area
Accra
+233 (0)302 770 233

Inside Chase Restaurant
Labone
Accra

Vida e caffe

Icon House
Stanbic Heights
North Liberation Link, Airport City
Accra
+233 (0)54 011 6995

Ci gusta!

Patrice Lumumba Road
Koala Shopping Centre, Airport Residential
Accra
+233 (0)54 010 1444

Arlucchino Ice Cream Parlour

647/2 Oxford Street
Osu
Accra
+233 (0)24 541 0403

La Gallette Bakery Ltd

(Opposite Papaye)
43A Spintex Road
Accra

+233 (0)302 814 620
+233 (0)24 675 2429

Café Kwae

1 Airport Square
Airport City
Accra
+233 (0)20 400 4010
+233 (0)302 781 422
www.lovecafekwae.com

Cuppa Cappuccino

6 Third Close off Volta Street
Airport residential area
Accra
+233 (0)24 820 4441
+233 (0)27 939 9074
www.cuppacappuccino.com/

Bistro 22

22 Josiah Tongogari Labone
Accra
+233 (0)50 826 2222

Bars and Nightlife

Republic

3rd Lane (off Oxford Street)
Osu
Accra
+233 (0)24 631 4044

+233 Jazz Bar and Grill

One of the most popular places to listen to
live jazz music in Ghana
North Ridge
Accra
+233 (0)23 323 3233

Firefly Lounge Bar

11th Lane, Embassy Road
Osu
Accra
+233 (0)302 777 818

Bella Roma

(Behind Frankie's)
Fourth Lane
Osu
Accra
+233(0)24 7474 007

Alliance Francaise

(Behind Opeibea House)

Liberation Link
Airport Residential Area
Accra
+233 (0)501 287 814
www.afacrra.org

Champs Sports Bar

40 Ring Road Central
(Behind Paloma Hotel)
Accra
+233(0)24 095 9406

MINT at Yasmina's

Marina Mall
(Fridays and Saturdays)

Shaka Zulu Bar

Olusegun Obasanjo Way
Roman Ridge
Accra
+233 (0)201 404 164

Sai Wine and Champagne Bar

The Courtyard
Labone
Accra
+233 (0)208 869 492