



# The Gambia

220 / POP 2 MILLION

## Includes ➔

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## Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Calypso (p171)
- ➔ Sea Shells (p172)
- ➔ Butcher's Shop (p171)
- ➔ Gida's Garden (p171)
- ➔ Ngala Lodge (p170)
- ➔ Mandina River Lodge (p174)

## Best Places to Sleep

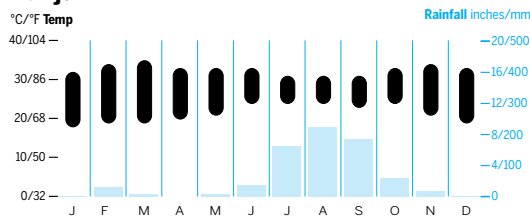
- ➔ Chimpanzee Rehabilitation Project Camp (p175)
- ➔ Mandina River Lodge (p174)
- ➔ Ngala Lodge (p170)
- ➔ Leo's (p175)
- ➔ Footsteps Eco Lodge (p175)

## Why Go?

The Gambia may be the smallest country on the continent, but its captivating array of attractions belies its tiny size. Surrounded by Senegal, The Gambia has a mere 80km of coastline, but what a magnificent stretch it encompasses: golden beaches backed by swaying palms and sprinkled with scenic lagoons, sleepy fishing villages and biologically rich coastal reserves.

Of course there's much more to The Gambia than just sun and surf. Its namesake river is teeming with wildlife, including nearly 600 bird species, plus manatees, hippos, crocodiles and troops of wily colobus monkeys. Boat trips and overnights at forest ecolodges reveal some of the great wonders of the hinterland, from a chimpanzee island reserve to the ruins of a 17th-century British fortress. The greatest treasures, though, are the warm-hearted Gambian people, who more than live up to their homeland's moniker of the 'the smiling coast of Africa'.

## When to Go Banjul



**Nov–Feb** The dry season and the best time to watch wildlife and birds.

**Late Jun–Sep** Rainy season. Many places close but you'll avoid the crowds.

**Oct & Mar–May** Decent weather and ideal for bagging a shoulder-season discount.

# The Gambia Highlights

## 1 Chimpanzee

### Rehabilitation Project (p177)

Boating past river islands where great apes rule.

## 2 Atlantic Coast resorts

(p167) Indulging in fresh

seafood while watching the sunset over the seaside..

## 3 Bijilo Forest Park (p167)

Being teased by monkeys on the 4.5km nature trail.

## 4 Abuko Nature Reserve

(p173) Looking out for rare birds and giant crocodiles.

## 5 Makasutu Culture Forest

(p173) Sailing along mangrove-lined waterways.

## 6 Wide Open Walls (p174)

Checking out the eye-popping murals covering village homes.

## 7 National Museum of

Albreda (p176) Contemplating history at the slavery museum.

## 8 Sanyang (p177) Basking

on powdery sands along the picturesque beaches.

