



Explore Freedom



A welcome from the Minister



Dear reader,

I'd like to thank you for picking up our little introduction to Sierra Leone – we promise you that your time will be well spent reading. Over the next few pages, we hope to take you on a journey to the heart of West Africa, where golden beaches border rich, verdant forests and where the smiles of local people beckon you home.

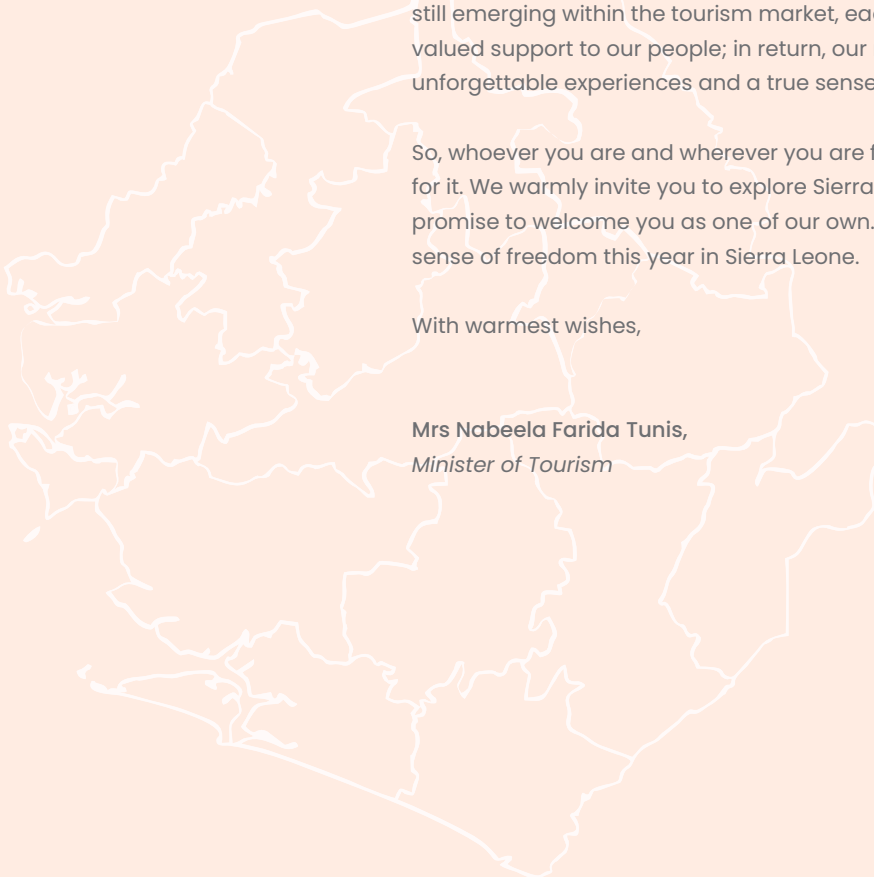
In Sierra Leone, we hold freedom central to everything we do. Over the centuries, our people have faced tremendous challenges, and yet we have always persevered and emerged victorious. We have worked tirelessly to ensure liberty and freedom for our people, and we are now working just as tirelessly to open our beautiful home to the world. From the opening of a new international airport terminal in Freetown to new hotels, tours and restaurants, Sierra Leone is ready and waiting for you to explore.

I firmly believe that tourism and travel can be mutually beneficial, and nowhere is this more apparent than in Sierra Leone. As a country still emerging within the tourism market, each and every visitor brings valued support to our people; in return, our nation will provide you with unforgettable experiences and a true sense of life's value.

So, whoever you are and wherever you are from, don't just take my word for it. We warmly invite you to explore Sierra Leone yourselves, and we promise to welcome you as one of our own. Come and find your own sense of freedom this year in Sierra Leone.

With warmest wishes,

Mrs Nabeela Farida Tunis,
Minister of Tourism



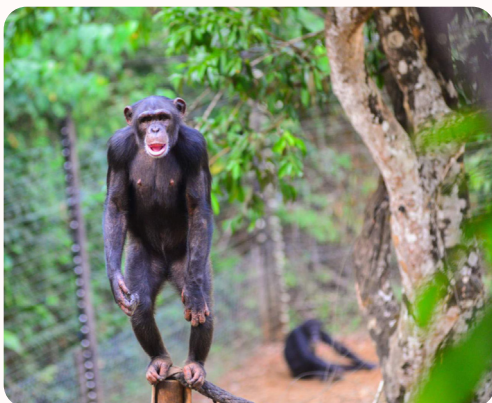
Who We Are

From scenic palm-fringed beaches and misty mountains to lively cities and vibrant culture, Sierra Leone is one of Africa's most captivating destinations. Located on the continent's west coast, the country is an undiscovered paradise for visitors, offering wild national parks, pristine coastline, diverse wildlife and a growing eco-tourism scene. The name Sierra Leone is said to derive from Portuguese explorer Pedro de Sintra, who allegedly named the hills surrounding Freetown 'Serra da Leoa' – the Lioness Mountains. Today, the country and people of Sierra Leone share their namesake's strength, passion and pride.



Sierra Leone is a multilingual country with a population of approximately eight million inhabitants. The official language is English, though the country is home to around 18 ethnic groups, each with their own language and customs; the most widely spoken language is Krio. The capital city of Sierra Leone is Freetown, named in testament to its heritage as a home for repatriated enslaved people in the late 18th century.

Since then, although Sierra Leone has faced challenges aplenty, the past does not define the country's present. Rather, Sierra Leone has grown stronger as a result of such challenges, and its people truly understand and embrace the meaning of freedom. Over the last 20 years, Sierra Leone has been welcoming intrepid and curious visitors from across the world, many of whom have been completely captivated by its warm and welcoming people and its breathtaking landscape.



Today, people visit Sierra Leone to discover its buzzing cities, encounter its renowned primates and birdlife, hike through its rich rainforest and kick back and relax on its beaches and islands. There is something for everyone in Sierra Leone, from gastronomy, wildlife and culture through to trekking, watersports and adventure.

Top 10 things to see and do

In a country of such rich diversity, it's hard to keep recommendations brief. However, below are the top ten highlights that first-time visitors to Sierra Leone should not miss:



1

Freetown

Sierra Leone's bustling capital city is home to fascinating museums, sobering monuments, thriving markets and vibrant nightlife, and is well worth an extended visit.

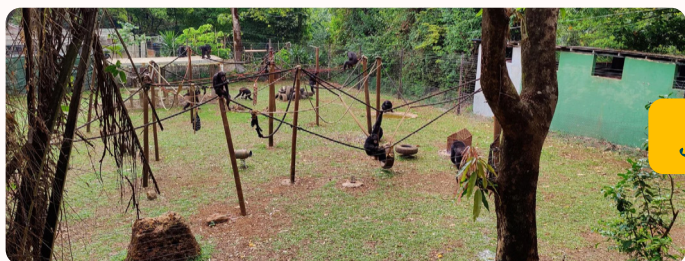
Bunce Island

A key site in the transatlantic slave trade, enslaved people were once held here before being sent across the Atlantic. Today, visitors can take a boat over to Bunce Island to learn about this dark chapter of world history.

2



3



Tacugama Chimpanzee Sanctuary

The team at Tacugama is dedicated to conserving Sierra Leone's national animal, the cheeky chimpanzee, and visitors can learn about their work on guided tours of the sanctuary.

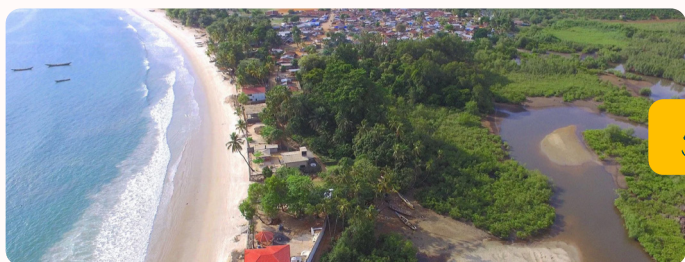
Tiwai Island

This inland river island is home to one of Sierra Leone's most important conservation spots, offering the chance to catch a glimpse of the shy and elusive pygmy hippo.

4



5



Tokeh Beach and River No. 2

Two of Sierra Leone's most picturesque beaches, Tokeh and River No. 2 are home to soft white sand, swaying palm trees, and groups of locals kicking a ball about or simply taking some time to relax on this world-class stretch of coastline.



6

Bureh Beach

This gorgeous sandy beach is the site of a renowned grassroots surf school, the ideal place for taking to the waves as well for enjoying a drink and chat with local people.

Loma Mountains National Park

Home to Mount Bintumani, the highest peak in Sierra Leone and a renowned site for trekking, Loma is also the habitat of over 200 bird species, including the rare and endangered white-necked picathartes bird.

7



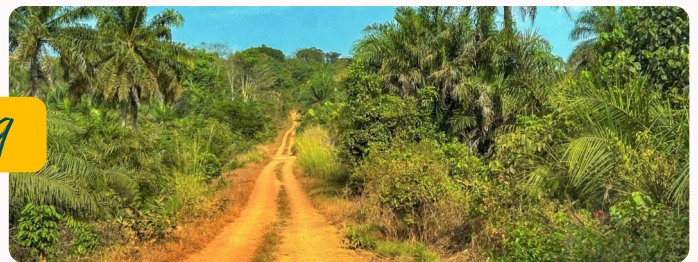
8



Makeni

The largest city in northern Sierra Leone, Makeni is the perfect base for travellers looking to explore Outamba-Kilimi National Park. Makeni is home to the Temne people, and is a great place to learn about their traditional craftsmanship and agriculture.

9



Outamba-Kilimi National Park

One of the country's top wildlife spotting destinations, Outamba-Kilimi National Park is home to a plethora of primate and bird species.

10



Gola Rainforest National Park

One of West Africa's most important biodiversity hotspots, Gola Forest Reserve straddles Sierra Leone's border with Liberia and is home to chimpanzees, over 300 species of birds, and a small number of protected forest elephants.

How to visit us

When to visit

As a tropical destination, the best time to visit Sierra Leone is during the dry season, which takes place approximately between October and April. During this period, temperatures are warm, with averages of around 27 degrees Celsius, and weather is dry and sunny.

How to book

For the best experience, visitors are recommended to visit Sierra Leone with a guide who can inform them of local customs and advise on any questions. The below companies offer authentic experiences in Sierra Leone:

Tourism is Life Tours

<https://tourismislife.com>

Visit Sierra Leone

<https://www.visitsierraleone.org>

IPC Travel

<https://ipctravel.com>

Best Travel Solutions

<https://besttravelsolutionssl.com>

Hello Sierra Leone

Email: info@hellosierraleone.com

Useful information

Visas are required for visitors from many countries. Visit www.evisa.sl for more details.

How to get there

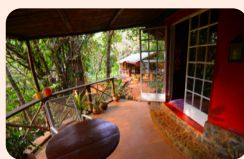
Sierra Leone's international airport is situated in Lungi, just outside Freetown. Once through arrivals, guests can reach Freetown via a fast boat service with Sea Coach Express or SeaBird Express, or can opt to travel by public ferry. Getting around Freetown and travelling more widely around Sierra Leone is best done via private taxi.

Where to stay



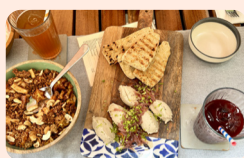
The Place

Located at Tokeh Beach, The Place is regarded as one of Sierra Leone's premier beach resorts, with its luxurious suites and beachside restaurant.



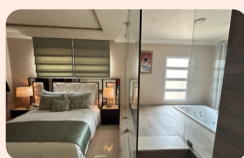
Tacugama Eco Lodges

Located within the Tacugama Chimpanzee, these eco-lodges offer a unique forest experience, with their thatched rooves and terracotta verandas.



The Cole Street Guest House

Situated in Freetown's neighbourhood of Murray Town, The Cole Street Guest House is a family-run boutique hotel with a core focus on local food.



Home Suites Hotel

With scenes of Lumley Beach and Aberdeen Creek from the balcony, Home Suites Hotel provides a luxurious experience in the quieter end of Freetown.



Estuary Resort

On the outskirts of Freetown and positioned within reach of Bureh Beach, Estuary Resort is situated on a lagoon and offers guests the chance to try out a variety of water sports.



Bafa Resort

Situated on the tranquil Banana Islands, Bafa offers eco-camping options, ranging from basic tent to luxurious camping, all with a spectacular sea view.



Sample itinerary (2 weeks)

DAYS

1-2

Arrive in Freetown to explore the capital, soak up its vibrant atmosphere and explore its museums, markets and cultural offering.

Encounter chimpanzees at Tacugama Chimpanzee Sanctuary, nestled in the mountains just outside Freetown.

DAY

3

DAYS

4-5

Discover the world-class beaches and coastline of the Freetown Peninsula, from Tokeh Beach and River No.2, perfect for sun-seekers and explorers, to Bureh Beach, ideal for surfers.

Embrace slow living on the remote and easy-going Banana Islands, meeting locals, taking walks around historic sites and perhaps even enjoying a spot of scuba diving.

DAYS

5-7

DAYS

8-10

Search for wildlife and birdlife at Tiwai Island, the home of cheeky primates and elusive pygmy hippos.

Learn about conservation at Gola Rainforest National Park, taking guided walks in search of rare endemic species such as the Diana monkey.

DAYS

11-13

DAY

14

Uncover the dark history of the transatlantic slave trade at Bunce Island before departing from Freetown.

Get in Touch



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