

# Wild Earth Travel

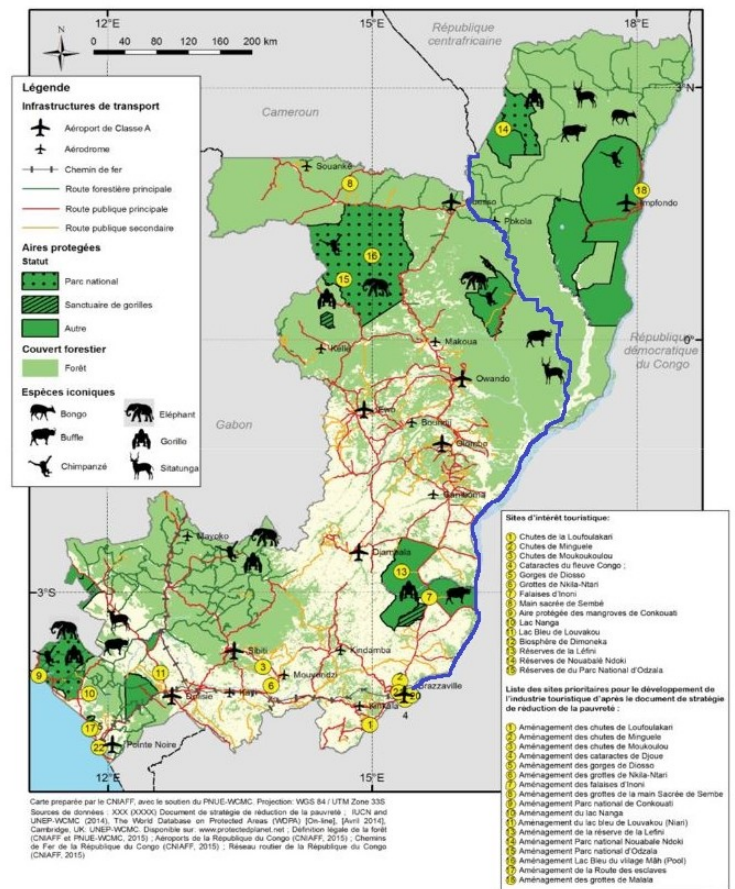
*Small Ships, Big Adventures*

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## THE GREAT CRUISE OF THE CONGO AND SANGHA RIVERS: FROM BRAZZAVILLE - 15 NIGHTS

The Congo Basin is the second largest forest massif in the world. It abounds in exceptional flora and fauna. Little known to the public, this region deserves more recognition. It's a gigantic territory of forests and rivers, sparsely populated. We invite you to enter the heart of Central Africa on the Congo and Sangha rivers. Our cruises allow you to discover the indigenous peoples and the sublime biodiversity of their environment.



### ITINERARY

Day - 1 Arrival in Brazzaville.

Arrival in Brazzaville. Boarding the ship.

Wild Earth Travel

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0800 945 3327 (within New Zealand) | +64 (0) 3 365 1355 | 1800 107 715 (within Australia)

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Night on board.

## Day 2 – Visit of Brazzaville and beginning of the cruise

In the morning, we set out to explore the city, and meet with La Sape - Society of Ambiance-Makers and Elegant People. Then begin the long journey up the Congo River through a landscape of green hills. Behind us, Brazzaville; ahead, the forest. We take advantage of the first miles to get to know our guides and learn about the history of Congo.

Night on board.

## Day 3 – The Téké Kingdom and Kébé Kébé dance

In the morning, we visit Ngabe, one of the ancient capitals of the Teke kingdom. We ascend through the village to visit the current queen. As the guardian of "Nkwembali," the spiritual deity of the Bateke, she is the person authorised to transfer power to the new king, the Makoko. She holds significant influence in the Teke kingdom, one of the powerful kingdoms in the country. We witness a kebe kebe ritual, a dance and an initiatory society from Congo. The ordinary form of the kebe-kebe resembles whirling dervishes, wrapped in raffia robes adorned with feathers from various birds, and manipulating a puppet that generally represents a painted Koyo head showing the specific scarifications of the ethnic group.

Night on board.

## Day 4 Tracking bonobos in DRC

Bonobos are an endemic and rare species of chimpanzee from the DRC. They are the animal genetically closest to humans, with genotypes that are 98.7% similar. Early in the morning, we leave the boat, drive for 2 hours, and start

walking in the forest to witness the semi-habituated bonobos. To fully experience these wonderful animals, we camp overnight on-site in a bivouac camp.

Night in a tented camp.

## Day 5 Tracking bonobos and the “whaleboats”

Early in the morning, we leave the camp and begin walking at 5 a.m. in the forest to witness the awakening of the semi-habituated bonobos. From the observation deck, we watch the fascinating boats, whaleboats and long flat-bottomed transport barges that are pushed along the Congo River. Travelling for weeks at a time and measuring up to two hundred metres in length, these floating villages transport goods, people and livestock from town to town. They play a crucial role in the economy and life of the Congo River communities.

Night on board.

## Day 6 – The Congo River’s thousands islands

The Congo River widens considerably (more than 10 km) and a maze of islands forms. Fishing villages are established here during the dry season. We arrive at the confluence of 5 rivers, in a vast marshland area. Further along, we observe hippopotamuses. (in the peak of rainy season, hippos could be difficult to observe) We reach the fishing village of Mossaka, known throughout the country for its smoked and salted fish. Along the way, we stop at a fishing camp. At the end of the day, we arrive in Linkendze, a fishing village where we learn various fishing techniques, about the river's fish, and the process of fish smoking.

Night on board.

## Day 7 – The Likouala-Aux-Herbes and getting into the “Heart of Darkness”





ceremony, where the Pygmies sing and dance.

Night on board.

### Day 10 – Ndoki river and Mbiru botanic walk

In the morning, we set off to sail on the black waters of the Ndoki where we will have the chance to observe other birds of the Sangha. Known for its black water, the river is surrounded by high grass and trees which is a perfect hunting ground and nesting for large birds. In the afternoon, visit the Mbiru monument where the French and Germans fought during the First World War and discover the primary forest during a short walk to discover this unique ecosystem.

Night on board.

### Day 11 to 14 – Immersion in the Tri-national of the Sangha

Situated in the north-western Congo Basin, where Cameroon, Central African Republic and Congo meet, the site encompasses three contiguous national parks totaling around 750,000 ha. Much of the site is unaffected by human activity and features a wide range of humid tropical forest ecosystems with rich flora and fauna, including Nile crocodiles and goliath tigerfish, a large predator. Forest clearings support herbaceous species and Sangha is home to considerable populations of forest elephants, critically endangered western lowland gorilla, and endangered chimpanzee.

### Day 11 – The Tri-national of the Sangha

We sail up the upper Sangha River towards Bayanga in the Central African Republic on launch boats for a comfortable 7.5 hours journey surrounded by pristine forest. Along the way we can see local villages and settlements. Based on the season we observe the many birds or if we're lucky some monkeys of the region. We arrive in the afternoon at our lodge for a nice sundowner

In the morning we reach the Likouala Aux Herbes estuary on launch boats to observe some of the most emblematic birds of the Congo Basin. Based on the season, during our cruise we'll have the chance to see some of the emblematic birds of the region such as ospreys, palm-nut vultures, African fish eagles, hamerkops, cormorans, kingfishers, weavers, ibis, grey herons, storks, egrets, hornbills, pied crows, Brazza's Martin and the elusive turaco. Following the season and the condition, we sail in a canoe kayak on a sangha river into a tributary. Following Joseph Conrad's steps, we definitely leave the plains behind and enter the tropical forest! At the end of the day, we cross the equator. We are in the heart of the great tropical forest. It is the baptism of the Line!

Night on board.

### Day 8 – The village of Pikounda

In the afternoon, we reach the village of Pikounda. The village was once a trading post that flourished with the activities of Mr. Truchot. We explore the different neighbourhoods, the pygmies quartal, the old colonial buildings, and the process of cocoa transformation, from the pod to cocoa butter and the corn wine highly esteemed in the region. We meet the Chief of the Lands, the traditional leader of the Bongili people, who shares stories of the country.

For the sunset, we sail up the Mangui River on launch boats to observe.

Night on board.

### Day 9 – Immersion in an indigenous village

Sailing towards Tokou. We meet the indigenous people (Pygmies). They are among the last hunter-gatherer groups in the world. In the forest, in small groups, we share their daily lives: gathering fruits and plants, collecting medicinal herbs, building a hut, making mats or baskets, and learning polyphonic singing. We experience their century-old way of life and discover their incredible symbiosis with the forest. Our visit concludes with a Ndzeni



overlooking the Sangha.

Night at a lodge on the river.

### Day 12 – The elephant village

Early in the morning we will visit the famous Dzangha Bai. Known as the Elephant Village, up to 150 elephants can be spotted in a day. Sitting high up in the trees we will have a chance to spot many animals including buffalos, bongos, sitatunga, cephalophus etc. We take the time to observe the animals from the platform before return to our lodge.

Night at our lodge on the river.

### Day 13 – The Hokous Salt Flats and its wild animals

Departure in the morning for the seven bays called Hokous bays. During these walks we have the chance to see a variety of animals including elephants, gorillas, cephalophores, forest hogs and many birds. During our walk, our BaAka trackers will find the groups Agile Mangabeys followed by the scientists. These silver-grey monkeys exhibit remarkable gracefulness as they navigate the forest canopy with ease, using their long limbs and prehensile tails. Agile Mangabeys are highly social creatures, often engaging in playful behaviours such as chasing each other, leaping through the trees, and engaging in mock battles. They communicate through a diverse range of vocalisations, including chirps, squeals, and grunts, which play a crucial role in maintaining social bonds and coordinating group activities.

Night at a lodge on the river.

### Day 14 – A day with the Pygmies BaAka.

In the morning, we set out for an immersion into the world of the BaAka to discover the traditions of these emblematic people of the forest. Depending on

the season, you may participate in a traditional net hunt, discover plants used in traditional medicine, collect honey, or engage in basket fishing. All this in the ever-joyous atmosphere of the forest peoples. Lunch at the Lodge. In the afternoon, we will experience the fascinating water drumming by the BaAka. Striking the water with their palms, the music resonates like a drum from another time. We stroll through Bayanga.

Night at a lodge on the river.

### Day 15 – Return on the Princess Ngalessa

After spending the last three days in some of the least visited places on Earth, we return to the boat on launch boats. The chance to enjoy one last time the pristine forest before seeing it from above the next day.

Night on board.

### Day 16 – Return to Brazzaville and fly over the evergreen tropical forest.

Sailing towards Ouessou on launch boats. Disembarkation at 10 am to reach the airport and then fly to Brazzaville. Through the portholes, we see the canopy. Such a view of one of the largest forests in the world will stay in our memory forever. Departure in the evening by Air France flight to Paris, departure 7:25 pm.

Lunch not included

**Please note:**

Itineraries are subject to change.





## YOUR SHIP: PRINCESSE NGALESSA

<b>YOUR SHIP:</b>	<b>Princesse Ngalessa</b>
<b>VESSEL TYPE:</b>	<b>River Expedition Vessel / Boutique Hotel Ship</b>
<b>LENGTH:</b>	<b>170 feet / 52 meters</b>
<b>PASSENGER CAPACITY:</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>BUILT/REFURBISHED:</b>	<b>2017</b>

This ship left a Belgian shipyard in Kinshasa in 2017. It takes the form of the passenger ships that have for decades transported passengers on the Congo River and its tributaries between the different capitals of Central Africa.

With a robust steel construction, she is powered by two new-generation 380 HP Caterpillar engines, thus reducing noise pollution and fuel consumption. Its draft of 90 centimeters allows it to navigate easily on shallow rivers.

In 2023, she is under refit to launch the first 4 safari cruises in the heart of one of the most mysterious forests in the world, the Congo Basin forest. Its renovation into a comfortable 4-star Boutique Hotel Ship launches a new era for the development of sustainable tourism in the Republic of Congo (Congo Brazzaville).

In May 2024, when the refit will be completed, she will begin the first cruises on the Congo and Sangha rivers, thus reviving the long tradition of river navigation in the Congo.

ON BOARD LIVING AND SOCIAL AREAS: 600 m<sup>2</sup> of common areas

Dining room

Indoor bar and lounge

Outdoor lounge

Outdoor jacuzzi

Massage Room

Observation Deck

CREW

18, including a cruise director and 3 naturalist guides.

WORLD CLASS DINING PROGRAM

A culinary experience nourished by African and European influences

A menu specially prepared by a French Chef rewarded for his work with a Michelin star in 2021

Local products and fine wine.

LAUNCH BOATS FOR SHORE EXCURSIONS

Two auxiliary aluminum launch boats equipped with four-stroke low emission engines. Each boat has a capacity of 15 passengers.

Kayaks for two people

Accommodation

Passengers are accommodated in 14 Design cabins across three decks.



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hree decks.







## PRICING

### 04-May-2026 to 19-May-2026

Deluxe Suite	9525 EUR pp
Master Suite	10600 EUR pp
Forward Master Suite	10600 EUR pp
Forward Superior Suite	11825 EUR pp
Owner's Suite	12575 EUR pp

### 05-Dec-2026 to 20-Dec-2026

Deluxe Suite	9525 EUR pp
Master Suite	10600 EUR pp
Forward Master Suite	10600 EUR pp
Forward Superior Suite	11825 EUR pp
Owner's Suite	12575 EUR pp

### 06-Jul-2026 to 21-Jul-2026

Deluxe Suite	9525 EUR pp
Forward Master Suite	10600 EUR pp
Master Suite	10600 EUR pp
Forward Superior Suite	11825 EUR pp
Owner's Suite	12575 EUR pp

### 19-Dec-2026 to 03-Jan-2027

Deluxe Suite	9525 EUR pp
Forward Master Suite	10600 EUR pp
Master Suite	10600 EUR pp
Forward Superior Suite	11825 EUR pp
Owner's Suite	12575 EUR pp

### 22-Jul-2026 to 06-Aug-2026

Deluxe Suite	9525 EUR pp
Forward Master Suite	10600 EUR pp
Master Suite	10600 EUR pp
Forward Superior Suite	11825 EUR pp
Owner's Suite	12575 EUR pp

### 05-Aug-2026 to 20-Aug-2026

Deluxe Suite	9525 EUR pp
Master Suite	10600 EUR pp
Forward Master Suite	10600 EUR pp
Forward Superior Suite	11825 EUR pp
Owner's Suite	12575 EUR pp