

# Kāmbā

AFRICAN  
RAINFOREST  
EXPERIENCES

## Brazzaville Fact Sheet





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# About Brazzaville

The capital of the Republic of the Congo is Brazzaville, a city of 2 million on the western bank of the Congo River. A key port for raw materials bound for export, the city is vibrant and colorful, and a safe and enjoyable place for Kamba guests to explore before or after their journey to the Congo Basin. Evidence of the French colonial period can be found in Brazzaville's architecture, broad boulevards, and the Corniche, a riverside embankment lined with restaurants and cafés that look across the Congo River to Kinshasa, capital of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. (Fun fact: This is the only place in the world where two national capitals face each other across a river.)

We recommend that guests spend two nights in Brazzaville to experience its atmosphere and spirit and discover its restaurants, markets, historic sites, and distinctive culture. Kamba offers various guided tours; guests can also avail themselves of local "green taxis" to explore on their own.





# Need To Know

## Getting Around

Local “green” taxis are safe and readily available; rides generally cost XAF 1000 (US\$2) per stop within the city. Trips from the airport or longer distances are between XAF 2000-4000, and a taxi for an hour will cost you XAF 4000-5000. Bear in mind that some taxis may be in poor technical condition.

## Safety

Brazzaville is generally considered safe, but we recommend taking the same security-first precautions you would take anywhere in the world. Leave valuables in your hotel safe (or better yet, at home). Be wary of pickpockets in busy areas. Don't hop into any taxi that already has a passenger. If traveling late at night, you may encounter roadblocks, but are unlikely to be harassed.

## Currency

Cash is king in Brazzaville, with very few establishments accepting credit cards. Nor is foreign currency generally accepted; you can obtain local currency, the Central African Franc (XAF), from ATMs throughout the city or visit an exchange bureau. The XAF is pegged to the Euro at 655 to €1; dollar rates fluctuate but are approximately XAF 595-610 to \$1.

We recommend carrying small change whenever possible, as there is often no change available and notes bigger than XAF 2,000 can be hard to break (especially in taxis). Note that if you plan to exchange US dollars, most bureaus only accept notes dated 2013 or newer, in denominations of \$5 or greater, and in good condition.

## Tipping

Tipping is at your discretion but always appreciated in Brazzaville. As a guideline, add 10% to your restaurant check. For our city tours, 10% or US\$10-20 per person per activity is a typical amount.

## Customs & Etiquette

Brazzaville is relaxed in terms of dress code, but women may choose to avoid wearing shorts out of consideration for more conservative residents (knee-length and longer skirts are acceptable). Knees should be covered when visiting villages. Locals generally do not like their pictures taken without permission, so be thoughtful about where you point your lens. It is illegal to take images of military, police and government buildings.



# What To See And Do

## Poto-Poto Market

Brazzaville's main market is a kaleidoscope of richly colored and patterned textiles and art. Keep an eye out for works by local artists from the nearby painting school.

## St Anne's Basilica

With its Modernist lines, carved copper doors, and iconic green roof, St. Anne's is one of the capital's most beloved landmarks. Designed by French architect Roger Errell in the 1940s, it was finally completed in 2011. Local legend has it that the green color refers to the generous nature of the equatorial environment. If you're in luck, the choir will be practicing when you visit so you can hear the impressive acoustics.

## Sacred Heart Cathedral

Consecrated in 1894 – the oldest cathedral in Central Africa still standing – Sacred Heart is the seat of the Bishop of the Archdiocese of Brazzaville and has been visited by Charles de Gaulle and Pope John Paul II.

## Pierre Savorgnan De Brazza Memorial

The gleaming white marble memorial along the banks of the Congo River includes a museum, sculpture garden, and giant statue, all dedicated to the memory of the French-Italian explorer who founded the capital in 1880 and for whom the city is named.

## Mami Wata Restaurant

This Brazzaville institution near the Radisson Blu hotel is a favorite of locals and visitors alike for its delicious Congolese cuisine (as well as Western-style fare) and cocktails overlooking the Congo River.

## Marche Plateau Ville

Peruse the market stalls for antique masks, voodoo dolls, local art, and clothing.

## The Cataractes

The sandy and rocky beaches of the Cataractes offer a breathtaking view of the infamous Djoue Rapides and an opportunity to learn about local culture and folklore.

## Les Sapeurs

Meet the famous Congolese dandies of the Baongo district, men (and a few women) whose sophisticated eccentricity of dress began as an act of resistance, claiming ownership of what were originally colonial styles of dress. Best experienced on Sunday evenings.



# Kamba City Tours



## Brazzaville Highlights

Half-day

After lunch at the famous riverside Mami Wata restaurant, your guide will show you key attractions including Poto-Poto Textile Market and Painting School, Marché Plateau Ville, St. Anne's Basilica, and Pierre Savorgnan de Brazza Memorial. End with a drink overlooking the mighty Congo rapids, followed by a sunset drive along La Corniche and the Independence Bridge. This tour is included in all Kamba Journeys.

DURATION: ±4 hours

START TIME: 13:00 (14:00 on Mondays and Thursdays)

INCLUSIONS: Return transportation from guests' hotel; lunch at Mami Wata, including a glass of house wine or two local beverages; all entrance fees; water and snacks on the bus; one local beverage at the rapids. Gratuities for driver and guide and market purchases not included.



## Sapeurs Of Brazzaville

2-3 hours

Experience the unique Sapeurs of Brazzaville, a subculture of “dandies” whose colorful outfits are considered part of Congolese cultural heritage. Members originate from all walks of life and levels of society, from lawyers to street sweepers, and observe rules of elegance and style in their daily lives, and particularly when they parade, dance, and walk the town in their elaborate costumes. To experience the Sapeurs is to understand how fashion conveys deeper messages about society, history, and culture.

This experience is ideal for groups, but also available to individual guests. Advance booking is required as all Sapeurs have full-time employment.

**DURATION:** 2-3 hours

**START TIME:** Afternoon or evening

**INCLUSIONS:** Return transportation from guests’ hotel; water and snacks on the bus; two local beverages per person; photos with Sapeurs (pending individual permission). Gratuities for driver and guide not included.

## Brazzaville’s Finest

Full day

This VIP experience combines the Brazzaville Highlights Tour and Sapeur Experience for an immersive foray into the sights, sounds, and spirit of Brazzaville. Guests will have additional time for local engagement and visit more markets and sights.

This tour is an ideal option for private groups spending 1 or 2 nights in Brazzaville before or after a Kamba Journey.

**DURATION:** ±7 hours

**START TIME:** Afternoon or evening.

Cannot be run on Mondays or Thursdays, unless split across 2 days

**INCLUSIONS:** Return transportation from guests’ hotel; lunch at Mami Wata, including a glass of house wine or two local beverages; all entrance fees; water and snacks on the bus; two local beverages per person; photos with Sapeurs (pending individual permission). Gratuities for driver and guide and market purchases not included.





# Terms & Conditions

Guests are collected from and returned to their hotel. The list of activities is not guaranteed and is subject to availability; some places are closed on Sundays and public holidays. The Sapeur Experience and Brazzaville's Finest must be booked in advance through Kamba and are subject to availability. Kamba cannot be held liable for any activity outside of the tour itinerary; please explore outside of the tour at your own discretion.



If you have any further questions,  
please visit our comprehensive  
FAQs, or just reach out at  
[info@kambaafrica.com](mailto:info@kambaafrica.com).