

By Anonymous traveler (2022)

A Grand Expedition into Culture & Wilderness

Embarking on a journey into the heart of the glorious Angola was more than a mere travel experience; it was a grand odyssey that unfolded a narrative woven with cultural richness and the untouched beauty of the African wilderness. Each day was a chapter, revealing layers of history, vibrant traditions, and awe-inspiring landscapes that left an indelible mark on my soul.

Our expedition commenced in Luanda, where the vibrant rhythm of the city echoed through the bustling streets. **The Thomson Art House**, our haven for the night, exuded a delightful blend of modern comfort and local charm. **The Palácio de Ferro**, a historical gem purportedly designed by Gustave Eiffel, offered a glimpse into Angola's colonial past. Our journey was off to a splendid start, setting the tone for the adventures that lay ahead.

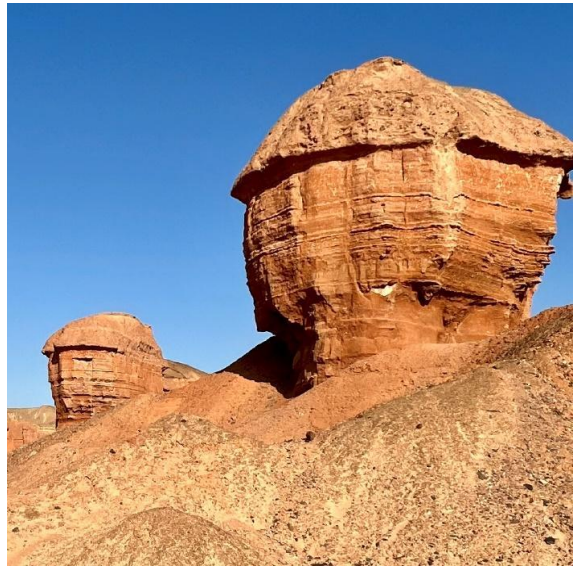


As the sun rose on the second day, we embarked on a journey to **Miradouro da Lua**, a geological masterpiece sculpted by time and weather. **The Moon Viewpoint**, located about 35 miles south of Luanda, mesmerized us with its otherworldly landscape, akin to the surface of the moon. Returning to Luanda, we delved into the poignant history of slavery at the **National Museum of Slavery**. The boat ride on the **Kwanza River**, surrounded by the natural jungle, provided a tranquil interlude, connecting us with the untamed beauty of Angola.

Our exploration continued with a visit to the arts and crafts market, where the vivid colors and craftsmanship of local artisans captivated our senses. **The Kifika Market**, filled with the hustle and bustle of daily life, offered a genuine glimpse into the lives of the locals. A visit to **the Coin Museum** and **the National Bank** added a historical dimension, allowing us to trace the evolution of Angola's currency through the years.

As the sun dipped below the horizon, we returned to the comfort of **Thomson Art House**, reflecting on the day's adventures over a sumptuous dinner. Spiekermann Travel's meticulously planned itinerary seamlessly blended cultural exploration with moments of relaxation, ensuring every participant felt immersed in the rhythm of Angola.

The journey unfolded like a well-paced novel as we departed Luanda for Malanje. En route, we stopped at the **Ndlatando Botanical Gardens**, a green oasis boasting an impressive collection of flora, including bamboo forests and fruit trees. The gardens were a testament to Angola's biodiversity, offering a serene retreat.



Malanje welcomed us with open arms, and the drive through **Cacuso** brought us to the awe-inspiring **Kalandula Falls**, one of Africa's largest waterfalls. **The Pousada de Calendula**, settled overlooking the falls, providing a front-row seat to this natural spectacle. The evening was spent exploring the falls, their thunderous roar creating a symphony that echoed the grandeur of the surrounding landscape.

The following day started with a scenic drive to **Pedras Negras de Pungo Andongo**, a geological marvel featuring monolithic rocks that seemed to take on various animal shapes. The journey back to Luanda marked the end of our time in **Malanje**, a region that had unfolded its wonders with grace and grandiosity. Returning to Luanda marked the beginning of the southern leg of our journey as we set our sights on **Lubango**. The morning flight transported us to the lush valley guarded by the Statue of Christ, a sight that stood as a testament to Lubango's unique blend of colonial heritage and vibrant local culture. **Pululukwa Lodge**, our residence for the next few days, nestled us in the heart of this captivating city.



The day's explorations included a visit to the **Statue of Christ**, inspired by the iconic Christ the Redeemer in Rio de Janeiro. **The Nossa Sra do Monte Chapel**, beautifully perched atop a hill, offered breathtaking views of **Lubango**. The city, a harmonious blend of colonial architecture and the liveliness of the local community, unveiled its charm with every step.

The momentum of our journey continued to build as we dedicated a day to the **Mumuhuila Tribe in Chibia**. This semi-nomadic tribe, known for their agricultural practices and cattle breeding, opened their homes and hearts to us. The encounter with both the **Plain Mumhuila** and the **Mountain Mumuhuila** provided a multifaceted understanding of their traditions, from the distinctive hairstyles adorned with oncula paste to the intricate beadwork that symbolized social and marital status. Women

in tribes prepare a paste made from a red stone called Oncula. They then mix the paste with oil, butter, tree bark, herbs and dried cow dungs before applying the concoction to their dreadlocks.

Our accommodation at the **Obama Lodge**, set within the **Mountain Mumhuila** community, allowed us to immerse ourselves in their daily life. The tribal market, a lively affair with wooden headrests, traditional dolls, and vibrant fabrics, showcased the richness of Mumhuila craftsmanship. As the day unfolded, it became clear that this experience was not just a glimpse into a different culture but a profound connection with the heartbeat of Angola.

Moving forward, our journey transitioned to **Oncocua**, a small town settled by the Portuguese in 1940. Here, we witnessed the convergence of tribal groups at a local village and market, a snapshot of daily life that added another layer to our understanding of Angola's diverse cultural tapestry. The night in basic tents under the vast Angolan sky was a humbling experience, surrounded by the sounds of nature and the echoes of tribal gatherings.

The dawn of a new day saw us delving deeper into the rich tapestry of Angolan tribes. Tribal encounters with the **Himba**, **Hakaona**, and **Dimba** groups provided an intimate understanding of their semi-nomadic lifestyles. The distinctive hairstyles, adorned with otjize and colorful jewelry, became windows into their identity and cultural significance. The immersion in local culture continued to be a thread woven into the fabric of our journey.

The journey through the **Leba Mountains** to Garganta Hamlet introduced us to the **Nguendelengo tribe**, one of the most isolated tribes in Angola. Living in forested mountains and speaking the rare Nhaneca dialect, they showcased their unique dwellings and ceremonial totems crafted with meticulous skill. The encounter with the Nguendelengo was a testament to the diversity and resilience of Angola's indigenous people.

The adventure escalated as we headed to **Virei** to meet the **nomadic Mucubal herders**. Nestled in the remote corners of Angola, the Mucubal people live a life deeply rooted in cattle breeding, agriculture, and coal mining. The simplicity of their lifestyle, coupled with the striking visual impact of the women's elaborate square headdresses, left an enduring impression.

Our night in basic tents under the vast Angolan sky was another testament to the authenticity of the experiences curated by Spiekermann Travel. The accommodation, while simple, offered a connection with the environment and the people we encountered along the way.



As the journey reached its zenith, we set out on an early morning drive through the **Namib Desert**, the oldest desert in the world. The vast expanse, home to endemic plant species and occasional wildlife sightings, provided a surreal backdrop to our final leg of exploration. A picnic lunch amid the desert's solitude and a visit to a **Mucubal cemetery**, adorned with cattle horns, added layers to our understanding of the interconnectedness of life in this remote region.

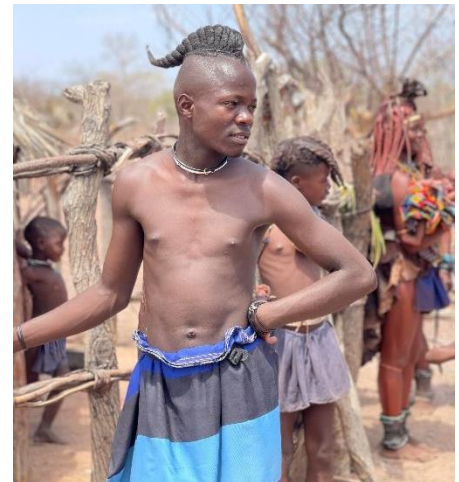
The late afternoon flight back to Luanda marked the closing chapter of our grand expedition. The stunning **Thomson Art House**, our familiar abode, welcomed us back for the final night, providing a space for reflection on the extraordinary journey we had undertaken.

The concluding day, a city tour of **Luanda**, brought us face-to-face with the historical landmarks that encapsulated Angola's complex history. The Mausoleum of Angola's first president, Antonio Agostinho Neto, stood as a symbol of the nation's struggle for independence. **The Fortaleza de São Miguel Museum**, a 16th-century Portuguese fortress, whispered tales of a bygone era.

Our journey into Angola's past continued with visits to the 17th-century **Our Lady of Nazareth Church** and the **Monument to the Unknown Soldier**. Lunch at a local restaurant on the city's peninsula allowed us to savor the flavors of Angolan cuisine, a fitting conclusion to our culinary exploration. The exploration of the Area Governmental section unveiled the colonial-style structures that bear witness to Angola's architectural heritage.

As the majestic sun set over **Luanda**, we bid farewell to Angola, carrying with us memories that transcended the realms of a typical travel experience. The journey, meticulously curated by Spiekermann Travel, had been a transformative exploration of a country that defied expectations and left an indelible mark on every participant.

In conclusion, this grand expedition into Angola with Spiekermann Travel was not merely a trip; it was a comprehensive exploration that unfolded the layers of a nation, revealing its cultural diversity, historical depth, and natural wonders. The meticulous planning, knowledgeable guides, and immersive experiences offered by the agency made this journey not only enjoyable but also deeply enriching. Angola, with its untold stories and unexplored landscapes, beckons to the intrepid traveler, and Spiekermann Travel provides the key to unlock the treasures of this extraordinary land.



Call us on our toll free at
1-800-645-3233

Find the itineraries on our website at
<http://www.mideastrvl.com>

Follow us: 

Facebook page: [Spiekermanntravel](#)

Or request them via e-mail at info@mideastrvl.com