



WOODABE FESTIVAL

Every year, after the rainy season, The Bororo (Fulani) people, who are nomadic shepherds, with roots lost in prehistoric times, meet in secret areas of the Sahel, straddling Niger, Chad and Cameroon, to celebrate. In a rather privileged region, with salted grazing grounds, Bororos settle down together with their herds both to treat them with salts against parasites – and in order to organize their most important tribal gathering. This feast is actually one of the few opportunities for these people, which are scattered in a large territory, to meet after many miles of horse riding, in case of men, or riding donkeys or on foot in case of women and children. While animals are salt treated, the men devote their time to show off and display their best physical features and celebrate. This is a crucial time to exchange news, make friends, and for love affairs. Bororos are polygamous and only the first marriage is fixed by the family according to tradition. It is during this period of time called “Gerewoll” that men and women can make new relationships. It is therefore during this big and interesting party that the second, third or fourth wedding takes place - it is always a free choice.

September 24+25 - N’DJAMENA

Arrive at N’djamena. Transfer to the hotel. Free day in town. 2 Overnights at the Hilton Hotel.

September 26: Drive N’DJAMENA - DURBALI

Drive south to the Dourbali Area (approx. 160 km), location of the festival, camp placement and approach to the people.

September 27 - October 1: Gathering and Festival of Woodabe in Baguirmi

We shall establish our camp together with the Bororo and shall take part in their spontaneous parties, when women and men let out their joyful creativity and show their taste for disguise and their cult of beauty which has always been one of Bororos way-of-life foundations. The organization is complex and quite interesting. At the very top are the elders who have lost their ability to sing and dance, but have a strong feeling about the whole thing and keep urging and advising the young ones. Women have likewise an important role in that they are those who pick up their mates, for just one night or for the whole life, even if they should break their present link or relationship. With short walk through woodabe’s camp we’ll be able to understand some features of their daily-life. The visit of the colorful and lively Dourbali’s market place, one of the most interesting of all sahel, represent the sedimentary counterpart after this immersion in a totally nomadic world.

October 2: RETURN TO N’DJAMENA

Return to N’djamena, overnight at the Hilton Hotel.

October 3: Depart