



Banjul

Photo: Damian Pankowiec/Shutterstock.com



Damian Pankowiec/Shutterstock.com

The low-rise Gambian capital might not be as advanced of a visitor hub as one would, perhaps, expect from a city of such national significance, but it certainly boasts some raw appeal contained within its pulsating and often rather hectic streets. Beyond Banjul proper lies the sprawling Serekunda — Gambia's most populous area — and the vacationer-favoured coastal settlements of Kololi, Bakau, Koto and Fajara.



Moehring/Shutterstock.com



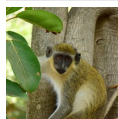
Damian Pankowiec/Shutterstock.com

Featured



Kachikally Crocodile Pool

A place of supernatural significance to locals, the Crocodile Pool is visite...



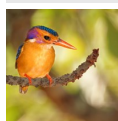
Abuko Nature Reserve

Compact in size compared to some other nature reserves in The Gambia, Abuko ...



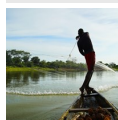
Makasutu Culture Forest

A visit to the Makasutu Culture Forest (about a 45-minute drive out of Banjul...



Bird Watching

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Fishing

The natural environment of coastal Gambia is very favourable fishing grounds...

Top 5



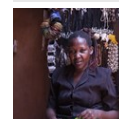
Arch 22

Built to commemorate the coup of 1994, the unmissable cream-colored structur...



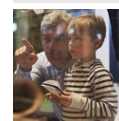
Albert Market

The busy market is one of Banjul's primary attractions, a vibrant kaleidosco...



St Joseph's Adult Educatio...

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Gambia National Museum

The National Museum of Gambia contains a vast collection of artifacts dating...



Bijilo Forest Park

The Bijilo Forest Park is most known for its inhabitants - it is home to a l...

THE REGION



Boudewijn Sluijk/Shutterstock.com

The best time to visit this part of the world is winter, when air humidity drops and temperatures become very bearable. The town of Banjul contains traces of architectural styles dating back to the 19th and 20th centuries, brought in by African migrants, Christian settlers, and European merchants from Britain, France, and Portugal.

The outlying settlements of Bakau, Koto, Kololi, and Fajara are where tourist infrastructure has been developed to accommodate international visitors (this includes some rather refined eateries, top-notch accommodation and bars/clubs, in pleasant contrast to Banjul itself, where nightlife and evening entertainment are virtually non-existent).

Apart from the characteristic street life, Gambia is a country of rare natural beauty, where travelers will get the chance to come in close contact with indigenous flora and fauna. There are several locations to explore in the immediate surroundings of Banjul, but true discovery awaits at slightly longer distances - the River Gambia National Park, for example, just under 300km east into the country.

DO & SEE



Damian Pankowiec/Shutterstock.com

The small, gritty port town of Banjul rarely figures as the final destination on visitor itineraries. If a few hours is all you have, explore the Royal Albert Market - the town's busiest commercial grounds - and shop around Ecowas and Liberation Avenues. If time permits, pay a visit to Banjul's most known landmark (Arch 22) - sweeping views unfold from its top floor. For further pursuits, look to nearby settlements, abundant natural parks and the beaches of Gambia's coastline.

Arch 22



Built to commemorate the coup of 1994, the unmissable cream-colored structure is a great vantage point from which to take in Banjul in its entirety. There is a small museum on its second floor, containing traditional Gambian crafts, artwork, clothing, and even historic weaponry.

Photo: 545611261/Shutterstock.com

More Info: Roundabout next to the Parliament Building

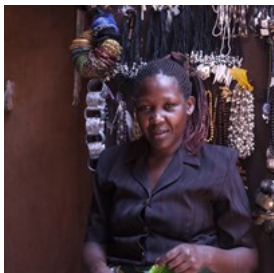
Albert Market



The busy market is one of Banjul's primary attractions, a vibrant kaleidoscope of multi-colored peppers, all manner of foodstuffs (from rather standard fruit and vegetables to salted fish and even dried sea snails), fabrics, jewellery, and beauty products such as wonder-working shea butter.

Photo: holbox/Shutterstock.com
Address: Russel St, Banjul
Opening hours: Daily 8am-6pm

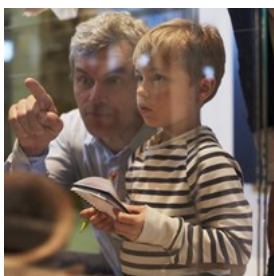
St Joseph's Adult Education & Skills Centre



The local institution has supported disadvantaged women for decades now, offering training in fabric processing, craft-making, sewing, and other practical skills. Hand-made products created by learners and graduates may be purchased at the adjacent shop at very reasonable prices.

Photo: Fresnel/Shutterstock.com
Address: Ecowas Ave, Banjul
Opening hours: Mon-Thu 10am-2pm, Fri 10am-12pm
Email: stjskills@qanet.com

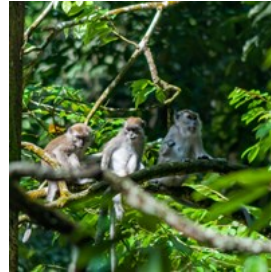
Gambia National Museum



The National Museum of Gambia contains a vast collection of artifacts dating back to various points in the nation's past - from prehistoric and pre-colonial times to the most recent era. Items on display range from folk culture pieces to historic documents and maps of the region.

Photo: Monkey Business Images/Shutterstock.com
Address: Independence Dr, Banjul
Phone: +220 4226244
Email: musmon@qanet.gm

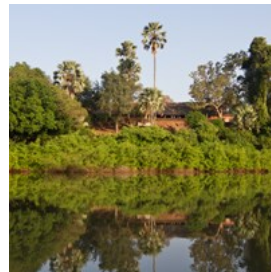
Bijilo Forest Park



The Bijilo Forest Park is most known for its inhabitants - it is home to a large population of monkeys, many of which do not mind interacting with visitors. Beware of unsolicited offers of being guided through the park, as the premises are safe and rather easy to navigate. Remember to bring peanuts, the monkeys' preferred treats (these may also be purchased on-site).

Photo: Safwan Abd Rahman/Shutterstock.com
Address: Serekunda

River Gambia National Park



The River Gambia National Park (or Baboon Island) is a collection of 5 river islands inhabited by all manner of indigenous animal species, from the endangered hippopotamus to omnipresent primates - bonobos and chimpanzees. The best way to experience this natural reserve is to stay overnight - the Chimpanzee Rehabilitation Project Camp (Badi Mayo) offers all-inclusive stays in safari tents on the water.

Photo: antpun/Shutterstock.com
More Info: Approximately 270km east of Banjul

Fishing



The natural environment of coastal Gambia is very favourable fishing grounds - local waters contain a plethora of marine treasures,

including dozens of species of fish, crabs, oysters, shrimp, and many other. Some local companies that offer guided fishing tours on board a traditional pirogue are:

Paradise Fishing Gambia

Denton Bridge Harbour, Banjul

+316 28 21 34 32

www.paradisefishinggambia.com

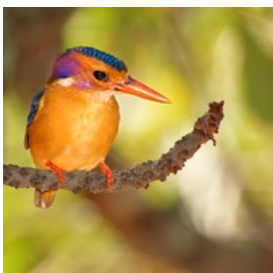
Pa's Fishing Company

49 Gloucester Street, Banjul

+220 729 3785

Photo: La Zona/Shutterstock.com

Bird Watching



Gambia is home to multiple bird species, many of which are present in the wetlands down Kankujereh Road.

To make the most of your bird-sighting, join a guided tour or start by taking a trip to Bijilo Forest Park & Nature Trail, known for its abundant fauna.

Photo: Martin Mecnarowski/Shutterstock.com

Kachikally Crocodile Pool



A place of supernatural significance to locals, the Crocodile Pool is visited by women who have lost all hope to conceive a child - it is believed that a

visit here may help the process along (hence the name "Kachikally" given to some children at birth). The pool is home to well looked-after Nile crocodiles, some of which are so tame they may be pet. Do not miss the adjacent museum, nature trail, and gift shop.

Photo: Dave Montreuil/Shutterstock.com

Address: Bakau

Phone: +220 7782479

Email: kachikally@qanet.gm

Abuko Nature Reserve



Compact in size compared to some other nature reserves in The Gambia, Abuko is a convenient half-hour drive away from town.

The nature reserve offers ample opportunities for bird-watching and interacting with resident monkeys. Skip the on-site zoo if seeing caged animals upsets you.

Photo: Mariusz Drabik/Shutterstock.com

Address: Kombo North District, Banjul

Phone: +220 294 7044

More Info: Approximately 25km south of Banjul

Makasutu Culture Forest



A visit to the Makasutu Culture Forest (about a 45-minute drive out of Banjul) is an experience to be had by visitors to the area looking to

experience Gambian wildlife guided by an experienced local. There is a free to use on-site pool, so do bring your swimwear.

Photo: Gregor2016S/Shutterstock.com

Address: Serekunda

DINING



Linda Hughes/Shutterstock.com

Dining options range widely by cuisine type and service quality, from cheap roadside eateries to fancier, upscale restaurants geared primarily at international visitors. Some traditional local dishes include the domada (a variety of peanut-based stew made with vegetables of the cook's choice, served on rice), benechin (or Jollof rice) — a one-pot rice dish made with meat or fish, chili, and various vegetables, and yassa (a simple chicken or fish dish with a side of rice).

New Dominos Beach Bar and Restaurant (Kotu)



There is something going on at New Domino's on most nights (from live music to dance shows), and the establishment's popularity in the area really speaks for itself. Sunbeds are available to customers. Get here early for the traditional "buffet night" on Wednesdays.

Photo: oneinchpunch/Shutterstock.com

Address: Kotu Strip

Phone: +220 772 8895

Butcher's Shop (Fajara)



Although slightly more pricey than your average Gambian eatery, Butcher's Shop brings quality to show for its ambition - the menu is varied (with a Moroccan touch - the star head chef comes from Morocco himself), with meats and fish cooked to perfection.

Photo: Maksim Toome/Shutterstock.com

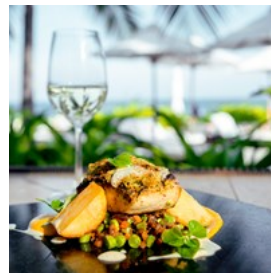
Address: Kairaba Ave, Fajara

Opening hours: Daily 9am-11pm

Phone: +220 449 5069

Internet: the-butchers-shop.business.site

Ngala Lodge (Fajara)



The superb Ngala Lodge (located at the namesake upscale hotel) delivers excellent food and service in an incredible setting with front-row sea views from the dining area. Serves refined, beautifully presented dishes made with fresh locally-sourced ingredients.

Photo: Romaset/Shutterstock.com

Address: 64 Atlantic Blvd, Fajara

Phone: +220 449 4045

Internet: www.ngalalodge.com

Sea Shells Bar & Restaurant (Kololi)



Do not be turned away by Sea Shells' seemingly unfavourable setting in close proximity to a busy road - the restaurant enjoys a good reputation

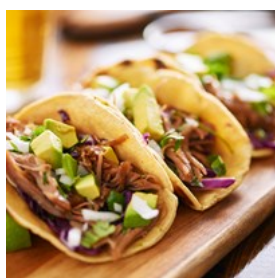
with locals and visitors alike, and serves some excellent dishes unique to the establishment, featuring locally-sourced greens, meats, and seafood.

Photo: Fanfo/Shutterstock.com

Address: Senegambia Hwy, Serrekunda, Gambia

Phone: +220 776 0070

El Sol (Kololi)



Heralded as one of the best eateries in the area, El Sol leans heavily towards Mexican flavours, featuring dishes such as well-expected

enchiladas and fajitas on its extensive menu. The selection extends beyond just Mexican to further local and international offerings.

Photo: Joshua Resnick/Shutterstock.com

Address: Senegambia Strip, Kololi

Phone: +220 732 0000

Internet: www.elsolgambia.com

More Info: Opposite Holiday Beach Club Hotel

La Scala (Kololi)



Beyond doubt one of the best eateries in Senegambia, La Scala is a restaurant whose (comparatively) elevated pricing is more than

justified — food quality is superb and the menu rather varied (order lobster a day in advance, however). To ensure being seated, remember to book in advance.

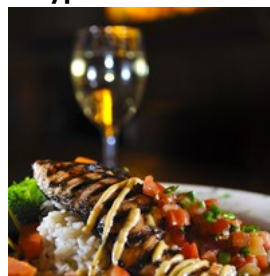
Photo: stockcreations/Shutterstock.com

Address: Senegambia Area, Kololi

Phone: +220 990 4984

More Info: Opposite Kololi Casino

Calypso Bar and Restaurant (Bakau)



This exceptional restaurant is set next to a crocodile pond (no worries — the crocks are all very well-behaved), in a natural environment where bird-watching and animal-spotting are easily done from where you're dining. Serves dishes of regional and international cuisine.

Photo: Kris Wiktor/Shutterstock.com

Address: Cape Point Beach, Bakau

Phone: +220 992 0201

More Info: Next to Ocean Bay Hotel

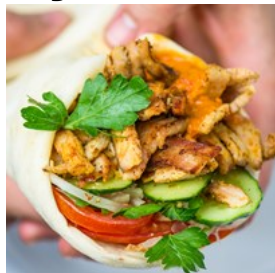
QUICK BITES & CAFES



Banprik/Shutterstock.com

Banjul proper only has a couple of eateries to speak of. These are the Ali Baba Snack Bar (the town's most popular, where live entertainment sometimes takes place in the evenings) and King of Shawarma cafe. In the more touristy areas to the west, cafes are much easier to come upon and the selection is certainly wider. For non-alcoholic drinks, try the health-boosting baobab juice or wonjo juice, made from antioxidant-rich hibiscus.

King of Shawarma Cafe (Banjul)



The authentic local eatery serves mouthwatering wraps that come at very reasonable prices, and offers several kinds of freshly pressed juices to

choose from. King of Shawarma is one of the sparse eateries serving good value, quality food in the capital.

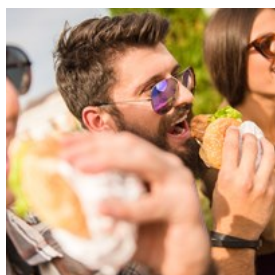
Photo: VikaGeyder/Shutterstock.com

Address: Nelson Mandela St, Old Town, Banjul

Opening hours: Mon-Sat 9am-5pm

Phone: +220 422 9799

Ali Baba Snack Bar (Banjul)



One of the most popular eateries in town, Ali Baba Snack Bar serves excellent shawarma and falafel rolls, along with a few local and

international specialties for sit-down dining. If you're in luck, you may happen to chance upon a live traditional music show in the evening.

Photo: VGstockstudio/Shutterstock.com

Address: Nelson Mandela St, Old Town, Banjul

Phone: +220 422 4055

Paradiso (Kololi)



Known primarily for its thin crust pizzas, Paradiso is a great choice on the busy strip for a low-key, great value meal. The menu offerings

extend beyond pizza to fresh seafood, steaks, salads, and more. A special highlight are the house cocktails.

Photo: Daxiao Productions/Shutterstock.com

Address: Bertil Harding Hwy, Kololi

Phone: +220 777 9333

Mr. Bass (Bakau)



Mr. Bass (also known as Happy Corner or Bendula Bar) is one of Bakau's entertainment hot-spots, especially so on nights during high season. The

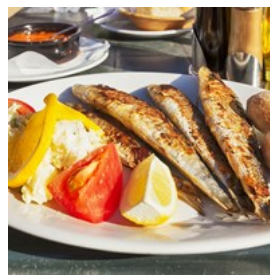
establishment attracts guests day and night with a decent offering of food (grilled fish to lighter snacks and sandwiches) and drink.

Photo: Fanfo/Shutterstock.com

Address: Cape Point, Bakau

Phone: +220 449 8223

Solomon's Beach Bar (Kololi)



The beachfront Solomon's specializes in fish and seafood. It's a prime location in the north of Kololi, with direct views of the sea and live music

on Thursday nights.

Photo: Oliver Hoffmann/Shutterstock.com

Address: Riva Rd, Kololi

BARS & NIGHTLIFE



Thoom/Shutterstock.com

Nightlife is virtually non-existent in Banjul, with its daytime population leaving the city for the Kombos, where many of those who work in Banjul live. For something slightly more exhilarating, see if you can catch a traditional music and/or dance performance at one of the local hotels, or head to the Senegambia strip where something is always happening despite the country's generally rather hushed and low-key night time entertainment.

Senegambia Strip



While Banjul proper may not have much - or any, for that matter - nightlife entertainment to offer, the Senegambia area (only a short taxi drive

away) is quite the opposite in this respect. Here, dozens of restaurants, bars and evening hangout spots sit next to each other in an area frequented by party-seeking locals and visitors.

Photo: bikeriderlondon/Shutterstock.com

Address: Serekunda, Banjul

Nefertiti Beach Bar & Restaurant (Banjul)



The beach side, waterfront Nefertiti is one of the rather few spots in town well-suited for an evening drink. Do not expect an extensive cocktail list, but beer is certainly a drink one can always count on. Food is served here, too - try the BBQ and/or seafood.

Photo: Joshua Resnick/Shutterstock.com

Address: Marina Parade, Banjul

Phone: +220 422 2400

New Dominos Beach Bar and Restaurant (Kotu)



There is something going on at New Domino's on most nights (from live music to dance shows), and the establishment's popularity in the area really speaks for itself. Sunbeds are available to customers. Get here early for the traditional "buffet night" on Wednesdays.

Photo: oneinchpunch/Shutterstock.com

Address: Kotu Strip

Phone: +220 772 8895

Rainbow Beach Bar, Restaurant & Lodge (Sanyang)



A popular meeting place for visitors to Gambia, Rainbow is an all-in-one establishment that offers dining, entertainment (traditional folk shows every weekend — check their website for current schedules), and well-maintained bungalows for hire. The beach side location makes it a great pick for an evening drink.

Photo: Ekaterina Pokrovsky/Shutterstock.com
Address: Paradise Beach, Sanyang
Phone: +220 972 68 06
Internet: www.rainbow.gm

Aquarius (Kololi)



Located in Kololi's popular entertainment district, Aquarius is a disco club that attracts stylish locals and party-seeking tourists.

Expect mixed music (from Latin beats to hip hop and R'n'B), an extensive drink list, shining lights and party vibes.

Photo: Pressmaster/Shutterstock.com
Address: Senegambia Strip, Kololi
Phone: +220 446 0247

SHOPPING



Phovoir/Shutterstock.com

One rule to remember when shopping in Gambia is to be ruthless at haggling - in most cases, prices may be brought down by at least one-third of the original number. Neither Banjul nor its surroundings offer much of the western-style shopping some travelers may be expecting to find - there are little to none of glass display stores or shopping centres, with most shopping carried out at local markets or straight off hawker stalls. Items worth bringing back home include woodwork (masks, especially), fabrics,

traditional jewelry and crafts, and even local treats and foodstuffs.

Albert Market (Banjul)



The busy market is one of Banjul's primary attractions, a vibrant kaleidoscope of multi-colored peppers, all manner of foodstuffs (from rather standard fruit and vegetables to salted fish and even dried sea snails), fabrics, jewellery, and beauty products such as wonder-working shea butter.

Photo: holbox/Shutterstock.com
Address: Russel St, Banjul
Opening hours: Daily 8am-6pm

Tourist Craft Market (Banjul)



Contained inside the unmissable Albert Market, this compact sub-section specializes in items primarily geared at visitor shoppers - these include textiles and batiks, silver jewellery, traditional crafts (woven baskets and woodwork, especially masks), and more.

Photo: taboga/Shutterstock.com
Address: Liberation Ave, Banjul
Opening hours: Daily 8am-7pm
Phone: +220 7794013

Liberation Avenue (Banjul)



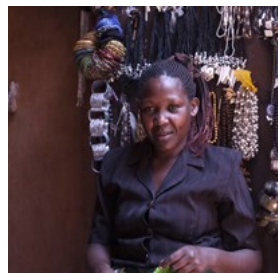
In and around Liberation Avenue is one of Banjul's busiest commercial areas, where multiple small stores and vendors are concentrated. Quality of

goods is hit or miss, but it is very possible to find some worthy pieces at prices significantly lower than Western. Remember to haggle.

Photo: Olesia Bilkei/Shutterstock.com

Address: Liberation Ave, Banjul

St Joseph's Adult Education & Skills Centre (Banjul)



The local institution has supported disadvantaged women for decades now, offering training in fabric processing, craft-making, sewing, and other

practical skills. Hand-made products created by learners and graduates may be purchased at the adjacent shop at very reasonable prices.

Photo: Fresnel/Shutterstock.com

Address: Ecowas Ave, Banjul

Opening hours: Mon-Thu 10am-2pm, Fri 10am-12pm

Email: stjskills@qanet.com

Fish Market (Bakau)



At around 4pm every day, fishing boats that sail out to sea in the morning come back with the catch of the day. Watching locals trade is an

experience in itself, even if you yourself aren't exactly looking to stock up on raw seafood (although it certainly is recommended - bring your fish of choice back to the hotel and have the chef cook it for you at a moderate fee).

Photo: Leonie Pauw/Shutterstock.com

Address: Bakau Pier, Bakau

Craft Market (Bakau)



The small craft market of Bakau might not be enough for a separate trip, but is certainly worth a visit if you happen to be in the area.

Expect to find sand art creations, wood carvings, statues, masks, and various traditional knick knack perfectly fit to become lasting souvenirs.

Photo: Dendenal/Shutterstock.com

Address: Atlantic Rd, Bakau

Senegambia Craft Market



Do not hesitate to haggle at this tourist-gearred craft market - prices here tend to be higher than elsewhere (like Serekunda) but may be

significantly brought down with the right amount of negotiation. Items on sale range from traditional jewellery to wood carvings, woven baskets, and other knick knacks.

Photo: hrijssen/Pixabay.com

Address: Senegambia Rd, Serekunda

Timbooktoo Bookstore (Fajara)



If you're looking to familiarize yourself with West African literary tradition, look no further - the Fajara-based

Timbooktoo book shop stocks a good selection of African literature (and music), and even houses a pleasant upstairs cafe to be made use of for the reading.

Photo: KN/Shutterstock.com

Address: 3 Garba Jahumpa Rd, Serekunda

Opening hours: Mon-Fri 10am-7pm

Village Complex (Kololi)



The so-called Village Complex in Kololi is an open-air shopping area with a multitude of stores, street vendors stalls, restaurants and eateries to fit any taste and budget. There is a children's shopping area on premises and a few useful businesses, such as a dental clinic and a supermarket.

Photo: mangostock/Shutterstock.com

Address: Bertil Harding Hwy, Kololi

Top Shop



The Gambian Top Shop has nothing to do with its well-know British namesake. Instead of latest fashions, the shop's several locations stock authentic African art from the region, and offer a refreshingly hassle-free shopping experience for those who prefer to purchase items at fixed prices rather than go through the stress of haggling.

Photo: Ivan Pavlov/Shutterstock.com

Address: Senegambia Hotel, Kololi

Phone: +220 9989171

Email: topshopgambia@yahoo.com

More Info: Further locations: Kombo Beach Hotel, Ocean Bay Hotel (Cape Point), & Bungalow Beach Hotel (Kotu)

TOURIST INFORMATION



Andy Troy/Shutterstock.com

Banjul International Airport



If no pre-arranged transfer awaits you upon arrival, use one of the car hire or taxi companies available at the airport.

Taxi fares to most resorts

and nearby locations are fixed. The distance between the airport and Banjul is approximately 20km.

Photo: Juan Garces

Phone: +220 447 3000

Internet: www.banjulairport.com

Public Transport



There are a few ways visitors to Gambia may choose to get around. These include green tourist taxis, regular yellow taxis for longer

distances, rickshaw (a budget option for those in no rush), and even quad bike rentals. All of the above are readily available in coastal resort areas and next to major hotels.

Inexpensive ferry transfers across the River

Gambia and to nearby islands are available, and so are smaller (manned) boats for hire.

Photo: Pierre-Luc Auclair

Taxi



Green taxis are the designated tourist taxis, easily available for hire and allowed direct access to areas most popular with visitors to Gambia

(coastal resort settlements such as Kololi, Bakau, etc.), unlike their regular yellow counterparts. Prices for these green taxis are, however, significantly higher.

Photo: ArrivalGuides

Post



There are post office branches in most major settlements. The main post office is located at: 4 Liberation Avenue, Banjul +220

4226114

info@gampost.gm

Mon-Thurs 8:30am - 12.15pm & 2pm-4pm

Fri 8.30am - 12.15pm & 2.30pm - 4pm

Saturday 8.30am - 12pm

Photo: Andy Fuchs

Pharmacy



Banjul Pharmacy
Westfield
Junction/Liberation
Avenue (Banjul)/London
Corner (Serrekunda)
+220

4393344

info@mfhgroup.com

Stop Step Pharmacy

11 Kairaba Avenue, Serekunda

+220 4371344

www.stopsteppharmacy.com

Photo: Gemma Garner

Telephone

+220 Banjul 422



Photo: Jardson Almeida

Electricity

220-240 V, 50 Hz

Three-pin plug type G



Photo: Stirling Tschan

Population

Banjul 34,828

Greater Banjul Area 413,397

Currency

Gambian dalasi = 100 bututs

Opening hours

General opening hours are Mon-Thurs 9am-12am & 2:30pm-6pm, Fri-Sat 9am-midnight. Some businesses (especially during high season) stay open until 10pm.

Newspapers

Daily Observer

Foroyaa Newspaper

Gambia Daily

Emergency numbers

Ambulance 16

Police 17

Coast Guard +220 4497426

Banjul Police +220 4227256

Banjul Fire +220 422 8211

Tourist information

Gambia Tourism Authority
Palma Rima Highway, Kololi, Gambia
+220 4462493
info@gta.gm