Mauritania
Iron Ore Train Tour
23rd Nov - 29th Nov 2026

INTRODUCTION:

This heart-pounding Saharan adventure begins in Nouakchott, which is likely the sandiest capital city you'll ever see! We'll hit the ground running and head out of the city to the lush and peaceful oasis of Tergit, where we'll have the opportunity to swim and camp in traditional tents. During our desert drives, you'll see incredible rock formations and huge monoliths.

We'll then head to the ancient library city of Chinguetti, now a UNESCO World Heritage site. We'll wander through the mostly abandoned mud-brick buildings, and see firsthand some of the important manuscripts and old tools used by the Mauritanians that once lived here. At night, we'll hear some lively traditional music and maybe even have a dance party!

Of course, the highlight for most people will be riding the massive iron ore train. You can feel the rush of wind while you brave the dust as you lay on top of the iron ore under the stars of the Sahara. Alternatively, get to know some locals and ride in the more comfortable passenger car — the choice is yours!

After a much needed shower and some rest, we'll explore Nouadhibou before heading back down to Nouakchott. Back in the capital, we'll get an in-depth look at the city — bargains at the bustling central market, the colourfully painted boats at the Port Du Pêche fish market, and haggling for a camel at Africa's second-largest camel market.

HIGHLIGHTS:

Ride the iron ore train, the longest and heaviest train in the world!

Explore the brick libraries and winding streets of ancient UNESCO site Chinguetti

Camp in traditional tents at the beautiful Tergit Oasis and swim in its natural springs

Excited? Come with SAIGA to Mauritania!

Tour Details:

DATES: 23rd Nov - 29th Nov 2026

PRICE: EUR 1,575 (Twin Share)
Single Supplement EUR 300

INCLUSIONS:

- Accommodation in twin share at roughly 3 star hotels, breakfast included
- Transport as per itinerary, beginning and ending in Nouakchott
- Entrance fees to all sites mentioned in the itinerary
- Western and local guides
- Dinner at the oasis, and lunch and dinner in Chinguetti

EXCLUSIONS:

- Visa fee if required (many nationalities are visa free)
- Meals other than those stipulated
- Transport to Nouakchott at the beginning of the tour
- Accommodation and any other services before or after the tour
- Personal expenses such as souvenirs or any optional activities
- Any COVID related expenses

Itinerary:

Day 1: Nouakchott, Tergit — Monday 23rd November

- In the morning we'll depart Nouakchott and get our first taste of driving through the Sahara as we head to Tergit Oasis in 4x4 vehicles.
- At the oasis we'll explore the nomadic home structures, swim, and have the option to hike up a nearby cliff to watch the sunset over the desert.
- Tonight we'll camp at the oasis in traditional tents.

Day 2: Tergit, Chinguetti — Tuesday 24th November

- In the morning we'll depart the oasis for Chinguetti, spending the afternoon exploring the UNESCO World Heritage old town, including the Great Mosque and the old libraries — five of which still house medieval Quranic texts and local history.
- Sunset and tea on a sand dune.
- Tonight, an outdoor feast followed by live music from local musicians, and of course some dancing! Overnight in Chinguetti.

Day 3: Chinguetti, Atar, Choum, Iron Ore Train — Wednesday 25th November

- Today we'll drive to Choum for the highlight of the trip, the Iron Ore Train! We'll make stops at Azoughi Oasis and the Amougjar Pass, where we can see 2000-year-old cave drawings and get incredible views of the surrounding areas.
- In Atar, we'll stop at the market to discover local handicrafts and stock up on snacks for the epic train ride ahead.
- In Choum, we'll rest and have tea in a local home as we wait for the train to arrive. Overnight on the Iron Ore Train.

Day 4: Nouadhibou — Thursday 26th November

- We'll arrive in Nouadhibou at some point between 6am and 10am, filthy and exhausted, but full of adrenalin! We'll head straight to the hotel to clean up.
- In the afternoon, we'll visit Cap Blanc, known for its white sand dunes and picturesque coastline, with the option for a swim in the sea.
- In the evening, we'll see a bit more of Nouadhibou. Overnight in Nouadhibou.

Day 5: Nouadhibou, Nouakchott — Friday 27th November

- Today we'll have a full day of driving from Nouadhibou to Nouakchott, with a stop for lunch by the sea in Banc D'Arguin National Park.
- Depending on how the drive goes, we'll likely have some time to explore the Central Market or other parts of the city after arriving back in Nouakchott.

Day 6: Nouakchott — Saturday 28th November

- In the morning we'll visit the fish market, witnessing the bustling trade of fresh seafood and the countless colourfully painted boats on the shore.
- We'll then explore the camel market, where you can observe and interact with camels as far as the eye can see, before visiting the National Museum to delve into Mauritania's history and culture.
- Overnight in Nouakchott.

Day 7: Nouakchott, End of Tour — Sunday 29th November

- This is our final day in Mauritania. Let us know if you'd like to organise anything else while you're here, otherwise you'll be taken to the airport for your departure flight.

Visas:

Many nationalities can visit Mauritania visa free; where a visa is required, the fee is paid separately and is not included in the tour price. Get in touch and we can confirm the requirements for your nationality.

Food:

Apart from breakfast, meals are not included as part of the trip. In our experience people sometimes want to eat different things in different places at different times. We know some great places and will also happily show you some of our favourite restaurants and cafés. Some are luxurious, some are earthier, but all have character. However, we do not pretend to be the arbiters of good taste and are equally happy for you to go off and find your own favourites.

Accommodation:

We do not and cannot offer a uniform accommodation standard on our itineraries. We consider comfort, location, design, character, historical interest and whether the money we spend will go into the pockets of the local community when we make our choices of where to stay. The accommodation is based on people sharing a twin room.

Transport:

When we choose our vehicles and drivers we take into consideration the road conditions, the length of journey and the competence of the man behind the wheel. Your comfort and enjoyment of the journey is the first priority.

Guides:

On this trip you will be accompanied by a SAIGA Tours guide as well as local guides along the route. This allows for a richer, more authentic experience and means there will always be someone on hand to help or assist.

Security:

Trips to this region do create dangers all of their own, and whilst we want you to have as much freedom as possible, the tour leader has the final word with regards to changes in the itinerary for safety reasons. Whilst the route we've chosen passes through areas we consider to be stable, things can change and we may have to alter the route or cancel sections of the trip at short notice. If there is an extra expense incurred due to a change of itinerary, you may be asked to bear part of that cost.