



*By popular demand, our Final Edition is being published as part of the **Africa Travel Yearbook**, following the ATA 10th Ecotourism Symposium. This important addition to the schedule allows our international media and photo team to tell the full story of Calabar and Nigeria first hand. The result will be positive, far-reaching coverage for all of Nigeria and her West African neighbors.*

Photos: Left- Slave castles along Ghana's Cape Coast. Below (1) ATA President H.E. Jake Obetsebi- Lamptey, Minister of Tourism and Diaspora Relations opens the 31st World Congress Trade Show. (2) Chiefs gather for ATA Host Country Day presentation near one of the famous Cape Castles.

ATA 31ST WORLD CONGRESS OPENS DOOR TO THE AFRICAN DIASPORA

By Jerry W. Bird

Upon landing at Accra Ghana's Kotoka International Airport, my eyes were fixed like lasers on a banner newspaper headline that shouted its bold, positive message across the arrivals area - "Ghana is Safe." What a confidence builder! Nothing in three exciting weeks of Congress activities, colorful galas and an educational, fun-packed, cross country tour, gave us any reason to doubt the authenticity of that challenging statement. Our 2006 Grand Tour may easily be described as a "Photo Safari," with many new gallery pages on Ghana now available for viewing online, from hundreds of images by Mugnette Goufrani. They feature Cape castles, Kente weavers, Slave River memorials, bead-making art, ceremonies and festivals, with roadside commerce around every bend. Combined with photos by Robert Eilets, we are able to showcase Ghana like never before. Being non profit, ATA seeks no special financial benefit from sharing the sights and sounds of Ghana with a worldwide audience, or with other media upon request.

A Continuous Road Show and Marketplace

This tour, with its focus on roadside commerce, creative crafts and cottage industries, was an eye opener - a tribute to the entrepreneurial spirit so dominant throughout Ghana, as reflected in Dave Fick's new book "Africa: Continent of Economic Opportunities" The experiences en-route during this week long, dawn to dusk tour left a profound impression. Starting with the Lake Volta Region near the Togo border, our journey took us to the provincial capital of Ho, then to the Kumasi area, home of the legendary Ashanti Empire.



Our agenda included Senchi Riverside Resort, Liate Wote, Afadjato Mountain, Wli Waterfalls, Tafi Monkey Sanctuary, Abenyinase Kente Weavers, Cedi Beads, Oumasi, Shai Hills Game Reserve, Bunsu Arboretum, the Bobiri Butterfly Sanctuary, Ejisu Bease, Bonwire Village, home of the Kente Weavers, Ntoso, the Adinkra printing village, plus Ahwiaa, the carving village. We visited the Ghana Tourism Board's Kumasi Crafts Center and a new luxury resort at Lake Bosomtwe. One of the most meaningful sites was NNonsuo, the Slave River Memorial Center. En-route to the Kakum National Forest, we stopped to watch a family producing

palm oil. The final leg of our journey involved Elmina and Cape Coast Castles - an awe inspiring experience we will never forget.



More about Ghana and the ATA Congress will appear in our Yearbook Edition. Visit www.africa-ata.org/ghana.htm